

*Tea
Project*
SINCE 1975
TEACHING IN ENGLISH
FOR ACADEMICS
-ULB-

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TEACHING METHODOLOGY

**TEACHING IN ENGLISH IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
THEORY AND EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
FOR AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH**



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Tea Project

SINCE 2016

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THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

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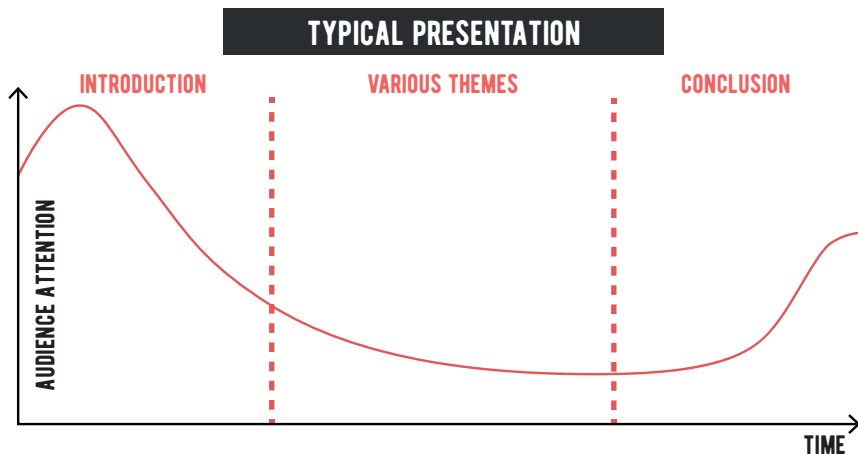
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LESSON CHECKLIST

1.1 CONCENTRATION DURING A LECTURE



We know that concentration does not remain stable throughout a lecture. This is even more the case when the students are learning in a language that is not their first language. They will lose the thread more quickly and find it more difficult to pick it up again.

To increase student concentration levels throughout the lecture, it is important to add interactive learning activities and to give the students talking time.

This serves multiple purposes:

- ◆ It wakes the students up by moving away from listening and note taking.
- ◆ It means that they are more likely to engage more deeply with what follows.

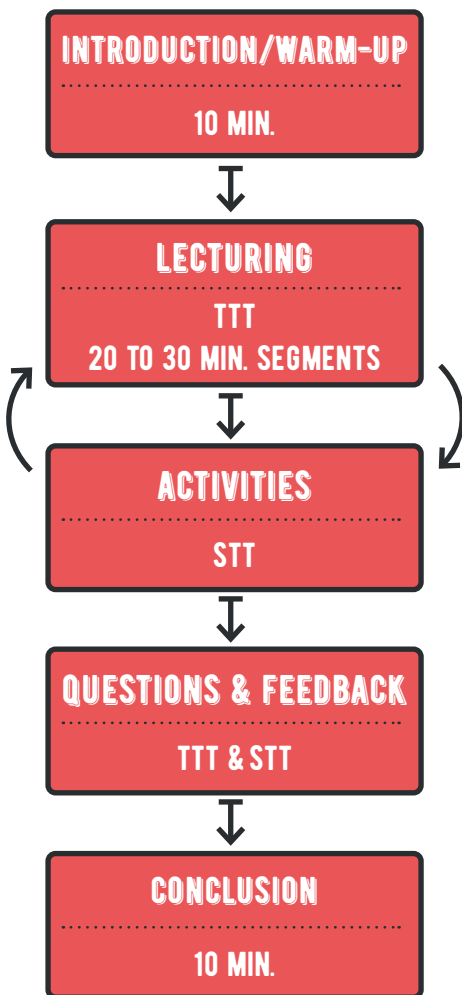
NB. In a two-hour lecture, it would be possible to remove breaks as long as you have regular 'talking' breaks.

1.2 TEACHER TALKING TIME VS. STUDENT TALKING TIME

Lecturing, i.e. **teacher talking time (TTT)**, is useful for giving information. However, teacher input doesn't mean the information has been understood or acquired by the students.

Student input, or **student talking time (STT)**, engages the students and encourages understanding and application of the knowledge.

A two-hour lecture should look more or less like this:



1.3 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Lecturing is one way of transmitting knowledge to a group of students; however, we know that it isn't particularly efficient in terms of long term learning, especially when the students are working in a second language.

Activities are important for understanding and applying knowledge. They might be focused at an individual, pair, small group or whole class level. They help students to move from lower order acquisition of knowledge to higher order skills.

LEARNING INSIDE THE CLASSROOM



Learning activities also:

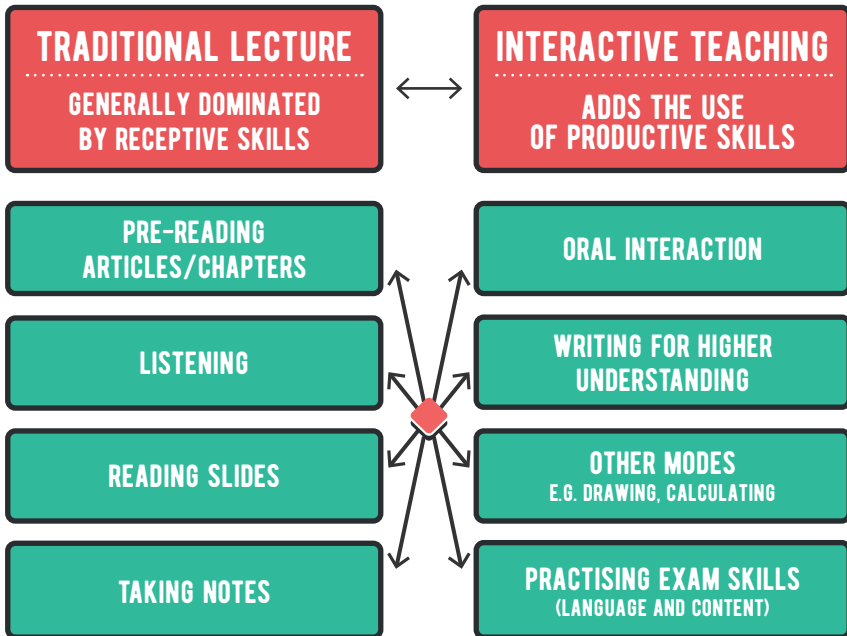
- ◆ Engage students.
- ◆ Enable you (and the students) to check their content learning.
- ◆ Help students to learn new language, for example, terminology and key terms.
- ◆ Help with the development of language skills, especially writing and speaking.
- ◆ Help students to develop more effective listening, reading and learning strategies.
- ◆ Act as models and opportunities for exam practice.
- ◆ Extend thinking and cognitive skills.

1.4 RECEPTION TO PRODUCTION

Research shows that interactive teaching methods improve exam results and are more effective than lectures. This is all the more important for students who are learning in a second language as they need opportunities to appropriate new vocabulary and concepts in active, productive ways. The acquisition of new knowledge and skills is connected with language development and interactive techniques allow students to draw from a wider range of modalities, meaning that there is a greater chance that they will learn the material you want them to cover.

Many teachers organise revision sessions to review the course content, but it is essential that students are also able to practise the **language skills** needed in the exam at regular occasions throughout the course. For example, if they will do a written exam, they need structured opportunities to practise collecting their ideas and writing them down, and this shouldn't just happen in one session at the end of the course.

1.4 RECEPTION TO PRODUCTION

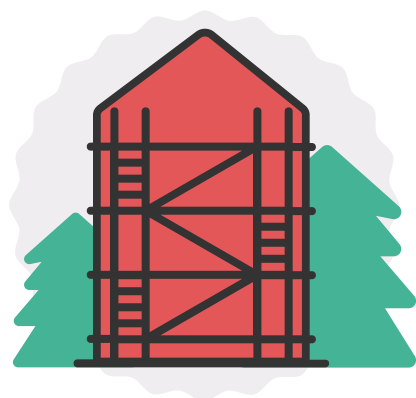


1.5 SCAFFOLDING: SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS

Scaffolding is the progressive and temporary support offered to students in order to help them understand and learn. The ultimate goal is to make them more autonomous, but this takes time and practice. Scaffolding happens at all stages of your teaching and can take many forms:

DELIVERY

- ◆ Vary the register of your language, i.e. use everyday language first and then move to the academic terms.
- ◆ Use French strategically to help students understand a word or an idea.



LANGUAGE SUPPORT

- ◆ Create tasks that help the students to identify, learn, understand and use new language.
- ◆ Plan to give language explanations or opportunities to explore language before, during and after each session. Don't just rely on 'on the spot' explanations.
- ◆ Ask students to develop their own definitions.
- ◆ Use word banks and glossaries for difficult language and key terminology.

SLIDES AND MATERIALS

- ◆ Add synonyms, definitions and translations to your slides.
- ◆ Highlight key terms.
- ◆ Use images, diagrams and graphs to explain key ideas.

1.5 SCAFFOLDING: SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS

LESSON STRUCTURE & ACTIVITIES: JOINING UP LANGUAGE & CONTENT UNDERSTANDING

- ◆ Brainstorm a topic to establish the existing level of knowledge.
- ◆ Ask students to summarise an article/text.
- ◆ Give sentence starters to help students reply more confidently and accurately to questions.
- ◆ Break down complex tasks into simpler ones.
- ◆ Provide templates for written assignments.
- ◆ Use model texts and answers as well as speaking or writing frames to help students construct their answers.
- ◆ Provide constructive feedback.
- ◆ Allow students to use their first language to help support their understanding.

EXAMPLE: SUPPORTING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Students will not understand new concepts properly unless they understand key vocabulary but they won't necessarily learn this vocabulary by simply 'encountering' it in their reading. They need to actively engage with new language through tasks and discussion.

BEFORE THE LECTURE

Preparation activity asking students to translate 10 key terms for the lecture.

DURING THE LECTURE

Check understanding by focusing on 3 common confusions. Ask the students to volunteer new words.

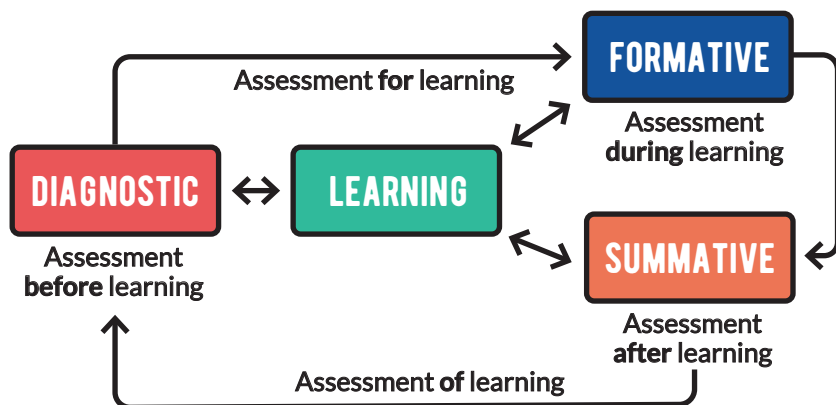
AFTER THE LECTURE

Students create example sentences for 3 new words. Prepare the terms for the next lecture.

1.6 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING, ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING SUMMATIVE	ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING FORMATIVE
The learner receives a grade at the end of a course, based on predefined criteria.	The learner and the teacher are part of a feedback cycle during the course.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Centralised assessment criteria.◆ Tasks.◆ Tests.◆ Exams.◆ Grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Sharing learning expectations.◆ Finding out whether the students have learned what you think they have learned.◆ Finding out what kind of learning is actually happening.◆ Feedback comments.◆ Self-assessment.◆ Peer-assessment.

1.6 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING, ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING



Assessment, teaching, and learning are linked. Assessment **of** learning is a common feature of university education, i.e. end of term exams. Assessment **for** learning is less well known but is an important tool that serves a number of diverse functions:

FOR STUDENTS

- ◆ Provides students with information and guidance so they can plan their learning and possibly adjust their learning strategies.
- ◆ Provides them with a low-stress means of communicating with the teacher, particularly about areas of difficulty.

FOR TEACHERS

- ◆ Helps teachers to understand their students' strengths and weaknesses throughout the course, not simply at the end.
- ◆ Enables them to adapt their teaching, for example to take account of misconceptions.
- ◆ Allows them to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching.

1.7 UNDERSTAND YOUR STUDENTS' LEVEL OF ENGLISH

Ideally, your students would have a minimum B2 level on the CEFR to follow an academic course at university; however, this isn't always the case. Nonetheless, it is important that at the beginning of your course, you take a moment to proactively enquire about your students' language level. This ensures that you are fully informed about the group and allows you to discuss the challenges of learning in a second language.

The TEA Project has online questionnaires that are designed to take around 10 minutes. The quiz is completely customisable with your own questions.

Areas of focus include:

- ◆ Students' first language.
- ◆ A global self-assessment of their English level.
- ◆ Specific self-assessment of their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- ◆ Self-reporting on their confidence in each of those skills.
- ◆ Previous experience of learning in English (as opposed to learning English as a language).
- ◆ Ways the teacher could support them as learners-in-English.

PROFICIENT USER	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
INDEPENDENT USER	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
BASIC USER	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

1.8 LESSON CHECKLIST

1. STRUCTURE AND PLANNING

- ◆ Do you know the level of English of your students?
- ◆ What activities are planned and how will you vary the rhythm?
- ◆ What interactive activities will you use to deepen understanding and help students to move from reception to production?
- ◆ Do you know what the students already know about the subject?

2. DELIVERING THE LECTURE

- ◆ Are the main points of the lecture written on the slide or blackboard?
- ◆ Are students aware of the focus of the lecture?
- ◆ Are student contributions encouraged and integrated into the lecture?
- ◆ Do you clearly indicate when you are changing topic?
- ◆ Can students follow comfortably or are they scribbling notes madly?
- ◆ Are you using scaffolding techniques and visual aids?
- ◆ Can every student see and hear you?

3. ENCOURAGING ACTIVE LEARNING

- ◆ How can students be involved in the class?
- ◆ Do you plan questions in advance?
- ◆ Are you doing regular comprehension checks?
- ◆ What opportunities do you have to get feedback from the students?
- ◆ Have you included assessment for learning?

4. EXAM PREPARATION

- ◆ Does the session give the students the opportunity to practise for the exam?

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**INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES
TO SUPPORT CONTENT
LEARNING**

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IDEAS EXCHANGE

2.1 WARM UP INTO ENGLISH

Prepare an activity or critical question on a slide ready for when your students come into the room. This should aim to review previous material or to introduce them to some of the concepts that will follow in the lecture. This also means that you are using the ‘empty’ time when everyone is arriving and finding their seat.

- ◆ Questions should be specific and focused.
- ◆ Ask for a specific number of points
(‘Give three reasons why...’).
- ◆ Use sentence prompts
(‘The functional method can be defined as _____.’).
- ◆ Avoid general and open questions, such as ‘What did we do last week?’

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To activate students’ language and knowledge.
- ◆ To prepare for the material to come.
- ◆ To move into an “English” space.

2.2 THINK-PAIR-SHARE / PYRAMID DISCUSSION

Students think about a question alone for one minute, and then they discuss it with their neighbour for two minutes. The pair of students can then work with another pair to produce a final answer. Finally, they report back to the class and discuss with the teacher.

You can also allow students to discuss in a language other than English before feeding back to the wider group.

Ask specific, focused questions that you write on the board or on your slide. This gives the students good language models and gives them visual support to understand the question.

You can also ask the students to report on what they have heard from somebody else rather than their own views.

You don't have to take feedback from all of the groups! Instead, go and listen to a few of them as they work.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To activate language and knowledge.
- ◆ To encourage critical analysis and deepen understanding.
- ◆ To reduce the stress of speaking in front of a large audience.
- ◆ To widen discussion and go beyond interaction between the teacher and one student.

2.3 ENTRY/EXIT TICKET

As they enter the classroom, give the students a question or problem that will be addressed during the class. Ask them to think about it for a minute or two and then collect answers either verbally or orally.

At the end of the lesson, the students give you their answer on a piece of paper (or online with *Wooclap*). This could be the same as the entry ticket or a new question based on the content of the lesson. This helps you know what students think of a question/problem and what they have learnt during the lesson.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Entry ticket:

What is global warming?

Exit ticket:

- a) What is global warming? (i.e. how much more do they know after the lecture?)
- b) How is global warming impacted by political decisions taken at national and local levels? (i.e. how have they applied their initial knowledge to a new context?)

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To focus attention on a specific topic.
- ◆ Support for note taking and preparation for self-study.
- ◆ To recall/check background information relevant to the lesson.
- ◆ To reflect on a topic.
- ◆ To collect feedback and assess learning.

2.4 CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENTS

Use several large pieces of paper and write a statement on each one (it works well if some statements are quite controversial). Students rotate (individually or in groups) and mark on a scale whether they agree or disagree and by how much.

In large groups in a lecture theatre, you can rotate small pieces of paper between groups of around 10 students.

Use the papers as a starting point for discussion.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To reflect on a topic.
- ◆ To activate prior knowledge.
- ◆ To create opportunities for low stress oral interaction.
- ◆ To widen the discussion.
- ◆ To encourage critical analysis.

2.5 ONE-MINUTE PAPER

The students have to write about an idea/concept or an answer to a question for one minute. This could be done at any moment during the lesson.

Even though you may not be able to read all the papers, collecting them will give a purpose to the task and will also allow you to read a few. Select good examples and share them with the class the following week. Alternatively, start the next lecture/lesson with a misconception check, addressing an area that many students didn't fully understand.

You could also adapt this to have students make a graphical representation of how ideas link together or vice versa.

Depending on your students, it might be worthwhile allowing them to do this in French first and then repeating in English afterwards.

You can also extend this activity to provide students with practice exam questions.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To form a concise summary of what has been learned.
- ◆ To improve writing skills.
- ◆ To encourage critical analysis and deepen understanding.
- ◆ Exam practice.

2.6 QUESTION CARDS

Ask students to write their own question related to the content of the lesson on a card. Collect all of the cards, shuffle them and create a quiz. This might need to take place the following week. Students could also write exam questions on the material they have just covered in class.

You could enhance this activity by asking students to write questions that reflect different levels of knowledge:

- ◆ Low order questions to define a term or give an example.
- ◆ Higher order questions to explain relationships between concepts or apply knowledge to a new situation.

You could also ask the students to write their question on a small card and pass them all around. Students tick the card if they share the same question. You can then return to these questions in the next lecture.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To review previous knowledge.
- ◆ To engage more deeply with the content.
- ◆ To enable you to check comprehension across the group.
- ◆ To develop an understanding of the style of exam questions that are likely to come up.

2.7 JIGSAW ACTIVITIES

In small groups, students receive one stage/step/part of a process, etc. After deciding what this step consists of, they exchange with other groups in order to reconstruct the whole process. This could also be done with an article that has been cut into different paragraphs.

As this is going on, you can move around the room and discuss with different groups.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To structure content.
- ◆ To check comprehension and reasoning.
- ◆ To work collaboratively.
- ◆ To promote low stress oral exchanges in English.
- ◆ To enable you to assess understanding.

2.8 EXAMPLE CATEGORISATION

Provide students with various categories as a way of grouping data or ideas. Give them a set of examples or data and ask them to organise the examples according to the categories they belong to. The students can then be asked to provide their own examples or applications of those categories.

This kind of activity is probably best done on paper, possibly with the different examples or data on separate small pieces of paper. It might be useful to provide some initial examples to categorise before asking the students to give their own.

As they are working, you can discuss difficult examples or those which cross boundaries and are not easily categorisable.

for example:

There are 3 models of diversity management

- ◆ republican
- ◆ multiculturalism
- ◆ differential exclusion

The teacher gave 5 features of each model in short sentences printed on small pieces of paper. The students each took a piece of paper and decided which model it belonged to.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To map concrete examples onto theories or concepts.
- ◆ To encourage students to give their own examples.
- ◆ To promote low stress oral interaction.

2.9 FORCED DEBATE/ DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

As students come into the classroom/auditorium, ask those who agree with a proposition to sit on the left and those who oppose it to sit on the right. Then, ask them to explain their views (or the views of those on the other side of the room). This could be done orally or also by asking small groups of students to write down their thoughts and reasons.

If appropriate, you could also repeat this exercise at the end of the session.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To encourage critical analysis.
- ◆ To check comprehension and reasoning.
- ◆ To promote low stress oral interaction.

2.10 GRAFFITI WALL

Ask a question or pose a problem which has been written on the board or a poster. Students think and write their answers on post-its (alone or in groups). They come to the board and post their ideas. This activity serves as a brainstorming session.

You can also put the students in groups and ask them to manage the organisation of the ideas themselves.

Wooclap and Socrative offer possibilities for doing this online, including options for word clouds, word walls.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To think about content and generate a lot of ideas.
- ◆ To activate/review prior knowledge.
- ◆ To work collaboratively.
- ◆ To ensure wide participation across the class.
- ◆ To provide an opportunity for low stress oral interaction.

2.11 CASE STUDIES

Case studies are scenarios where the students can apply concepts learned in class to real-life situations. They are often presented in narrative form and often involve problem solving and links to course readings/materials.

Students need to analyse the case, report on it orally or in writing and should be prepared to answer questions.

Make sure that you provide a structure for analysis and questions.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To encourage the integration of theory and practice.
- ◆ To make the content more concrete and related to the real world.
- ◆ To give opportunities in class to actively use the reading done at home.

2.12 QUIZZES/OPINION POLLS

Quizzes help determine the level of understanding of students and can generate starting points for discussion. The questions can take different forms:

- ◆ Multiple choice
- ◆ Sentence completion
- ◆ Matching exercises
- ◆ Rating exercises
- ◆ Opinion polls

You can also ask students to answer on their own the first time and then to discuss it with a partner/group before answering a second time.

Quizzes can be done on paper or interactively with websites like *Wooclap* or *Socrative*. Students can even be given sheets of different colored paper which they will raise depending on their answer.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To check comprehension.
- ◆ To give students an opportunity to reflect on course material.
- ◆ To summarize main ideas.

2.13 LINKING LECTURES TO READING

If you have set reading tasks to be completed before the lecture, it is important to make active links to this reading during the lecture. It also helps you to identify the areas that students have misunderstood, meaning you can adapt your teaching to take account of this.

Ask students to complete short activities on the Université Virtuelle before the lecture (e.g. word definitions, MCQs).

Multiple choice or true/false questions at the beginning of a lecture can also be a quick way to check understanding.

You could also ask the students to write a series of questions about an article.

You could also distribute titles which paraphrase the material in each paragraph. Students match the title to the section.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To push more students to actually complete the compulsory reading!
- ◆ To deepen content understanding through more active engagement with reading material.
- ◆ To enable you to check comprehension.
- ◆ To summarize main ideas.

2.14 SKELETON NOTES

Students are provided with a set of lecture notes that has gaps where selected key details and formulae should be. They fill in these gaps during the lecture. This might include charts, graphs, diagrams and maps which need lines drawn, axis labelled, data values added, etc. These can help to balance the potential cognitive overload that comes with learning new language and content at the same time.

Skeleton notes can be very effective but they take time to build. The TEA Project team can help you with this so do get in touch if you are interested in developing this for your course.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To signpost major concepts.
- ◆ To reduce the writing load.
- ◆ To highlight and focus on key terms.

2.15 MEMORY MATRIX

We memorise less information when working in a second language and so it is important to give students opportunities to repeat and review material already covered.

During your lecture, ask the students to look at a diagram or a definition for a minute and then ask them to reproduce it on their own.

If you want the students to label diagrams, give them a copy on paper to avoid wasting time and to ensure you get to the heart of the area you want to explore.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To signpost the key terms and ideas.
- ◆ To encourage memorisation through the use of repetition.
- ◆ To give opportunities to use key language.

2.16 CALCULATION FEEDBACK CYCLE

Give an example on paper of a completed calculation. Before explaining the various stages yourself, ask the students to identify the steps that have been taken, decisions made, etc. They can work in pairs or small groups, identifying the parts of the calculation they are more confident with and those parts they are unsure of. They can share this with other pairs or with the teacher.

You can also give calculations that contain a mistake. Ask the students to find it and explain the problem.

Use multiple choice options to give various possible solutions to a problem.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To prime students to understand the full process before a demonstration.
- ◆ To engage critical thinking.
- ◆ To encourage collaboration for understanding.
- ◆ To encourage memorisation through the use of repetition.

2.17 DEFINING FEATURES MATRIX

Prepare a handout with a matrix of two columns and several rows. At the top of the columns, list two distinct concepts that have potentially confusing similarities or that are new to the students and you want them to compare (e.g. behaviorist vs. constructivist models of learning; hurricanes vs. tornadoes).

Below, list the important characteristics of both concepts but in no particular order. Ask the students to use the matrix to identify which characteristics belong to each of the two concepts. Collect their responses and you'll quickly find out which characteristics are giving your students the most trouble.

You can adapt this to give a list of features and simply ask students to indicate if they PRESENT or ABSENT in each case.

This could be used as a revision activity with no characteristics provided.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To enable students to quickly compare complex systems.
- ◆ To allow the teacher to assess student understanding.
- ◆ To encourage discussion, negotiation and debate.

2.18 IDEA EXCHANGE

This activity involves students *giving* others their questions and insights and *getting* those from other students. The students write 'get one' on one side of a piece of paper and 'give one' on the other side. At the end of the class, they write down four insights or questions on the side marked 'give one'. They then exchange with their neighbours, collecting their contributions on the other side of their paper.

You can collect these papers in to get a view on what the students have learned and where they still have questions.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To review the material covered in the class.
- ◆ To enable you to understand what has been learned.
- ◆ To encourage low stress oral interaction.

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**INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES
TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE
KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS**

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CONCEPT EXPANDER

3.1 KEY TERMS

Provide a glossary of key technical terms that need to be understood and used.

Refer to this list progressively throughout your teaching, ensuring that you give opportunities for students to explore the meaning of the words and to use them in context.

- ◆ Choose 3 key words from the previous week's lecture.
- ◆ Ask students to write a definition.
- ◆ Ask students to translate key terms into their other language/s.
- ◆ Give multiple choice definitions of key terms.
- ◆ Give 'fill in the blank' exercises with key terms.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To engage with key terms on a repeated basis.
- ◆ To engage with key terms in an active way.

3.2 EXTENDING LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

In order for students to develop the language knowledge and skills required, they need opportunities to explore language in a low-stress but cognitively demanding environment.

Have students check their answers with their neighbours before feeding back to the larger group, or use an online tool, such as *Padlet* or *Wooclap*, to allow everyone to share with each other.

- ◆ **Sentence gap:** write a sentence with one word open. Students speculate on what could complete the gap.
- ◆ Give an **example sentence** with a choice of 3 synonyms for one of the words. Discuss the differences between them. ('The data suggests / indicates / proves that...')
- ◆ Give students '**sentence starters**' as prompts in discussions. ('Economic indicators suggest that...')

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To actively use new vocabulary in context.
- ◆ To support the use of new vocabulary by providing examples.

3.3 PERSONAL GLOSSARY

Encourage students to note down new vocabulary and phrases that they think will be useful to them. Give time in lectures for them to add to this and possibly share words and phrases each week. You could also make the personal glossary part of your final evaluation.

You can ask the students to explore a word by reflecting on a number of categories:

1. GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY

(noun, verb, etc.)

2. A DEFINITION

(or translation to their language if appropriate)

3. AN EXAMPLE IN CONTEXT

(a meaningful sentence or paragraph of text)

4. GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS YOU OBSERVE IN TEXTS OR DICTIONARIES

(e.g. which prepositions are used with the word?)

5. COLLOCATIONS YOU OBSERVE IN TEXTS OR DICTIONARIES

(Adapted from A Riley and P Sours (2014), *Common Law Legal English and Grammar. A Contextual Approach*, Oxford: Hart Publishing, pp. 16-17)

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To focus on the dual language/content challenge of the course.
- ◆ To encourage personalised reflection and language development.

3.4 FILMS & YOUTUBE

When you are playing a film clip, watch with subtitles in English if possible and/or provide a transcript of the spoken text.

- ◆ Always watch films at least twice and if possible ask the students to watch the films before the lecture.
- ◆ Before playing the film clip, give the students a task that will focus their attention and guide their understanding.
 - ◆ Leave gaps in the transcript for students to complete.
 - ◆ Give a list of keywords to listen for.
 - ◆ Write the key questions separately, ideally on a piece of paper.
 - ◆ Ask your questions before and after watching the film.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To reduce the challenge of learning new language and content at the same time.
- ◆ To give multiple opportunities to access new language.
- ◆ To give opportunities to notice new terms in English.

3.5 WORD BANKS FOR WRITING

When you set your students a writing task, provide them with a bank of useful expressions, key terms and starter phrases. This helps to transform passive vocabulary to active vocabulary.

General writing terms are available on a flyer from the *TEA Project* or it can be downloaded from our website. We can also help you create lists specific to your course.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES INCLUDE

- ◆ *The Only Academic Phrasebook You'll Ever Need: 600 Examples of Academic Language*, Luiz Otavio Barros, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
- ◆ *The Student Phrase Book: Vocabulary for Writing at University*, Jeanne Godfrey, Red Globe Press

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To provide visual reminders for new language.
- ◆ To extend vocabulary.

3.6 SPEAKING PREPARATION

Some students will always be very reluctant to speak in English. Reduce this pressure by giving them time to prepare what they are going to say.

- ◆ Pair work before discussing in the wider class.
- ◆ Write a one minute paper (in any language) before discussing.
- ◆ Provide sentence starters to support discussion or debate.
- ◆ Depending on your students' language level, you can allow discussion in any language to ensure that a maximum number of students participate.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To reduce stress.
- ◆ To give time to prepare spoken interaction.

3.7 ACTIVE READING SYLLABUS

Students may find it difficult to engage with compulsory reading in English. They read more slowly, memorise less easily, and challenging language can make it hard for them to get an overview of the arguments. Their reading can end up as somewhat superficial, and indeed many students will completely avoid it.

An active reading syllabus supplements each reading task with a series of activities that are designed to help the students to focus on the key themes, to understand and learn new vocabulary and to come to your class having engaged with the material.

If the tasks are to be done before the lecture, they should probably focus on appropriating new material. You can also ask students to add to their answers during the course, meaning you can move into more analytical types of questions.

Questions/activities for pre-reading might cover areas such as:

- ◆ definitions of key terms;
- ◆ matching words to definitions;
- ◆ labelling paragraphs;
- ◆ structured questions to help check understanding;
- ◆ giving examples from their own knowledge.

Contact the *TEA Project* for help in developing your own active reading syllabus.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To enable more engaged active reading.
- ◆ To ensure more students do the pre-reading for a course.

3.8 CONCEPT EXPANDER

Not only do we want students to remember key concepts, we want them to be able to go beyond a superficial understanding of the vocabulary. A concept expander encourages the students to link new concepts to related words and potential consequences within their specific content learning. Graphically organised, the concept expander may look like this:

TERM	Carbon footprint
KEY WORDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ResponsibilityChoiceSustainabilityDamageLifestyle
SUMMARY STATEMENT	Each person chooses to live a sustainable lifestyle and takes responsibility for reducing damage to the environment.
CONSEQUENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ecological balance (less extreme weather)More secure future (cleaner air)Global citizenship (thinking globally, acting locally)Well-being (fewer respiratory illnesses)
SUMMARY STATEMENT	The citizens of the globe will have a more secure future if they work to reduce each person's carbon footprint and increase ecological balance and well-being.

(Adapted from P Mehisto, D Marsh and M Jesús Frigols. (2008), *Uncovering CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning in Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, London: Macmillian Education, p. 149)

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To encourage language and content development.
- ◆ To support language in context.
- ◆ To use key terms actively.

NOTES

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NOTES

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Tea Project

SINCE 2016

TEACHING IN ENGLISH
FOR ACADEMICS
-ULB-



ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT
ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

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4.1 TECHNIQUES FOR ASSESSING STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

Many of the activities in the previous sections are effective ways for assessing whether learning is happening. It is important to get a regular picture of whether the students are learning what you think they should be.

We make a lot of assumptions about the acquisition of knowledge of our students, but we are very often wrong!

THIS MIGHT FOCUS ON:

- ◆ The acquisition of specific knowledge or concepts.
- ◆ Their understanding of specific terms (possibly in comparison with the same terms in French or another language).
- ◆ Their capacities in key skills for your course (e.g. the application of scientific data about environmental change to the analysis of newspaper articles).

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4.2 SELF ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

In self assessment, students reflect on and assess their own progress and knowledge, ideally against a clear set of criteria.

They don't always need to communicate the results to the teacher, but if they do, it does enable the teacher to adapt their teaching if there are major areas of misunderstanding.

TECHNIQUES INCLUDE:

- ◆ **General rating** (e.g. How confident do you feel about the material learned in today's lesson? Rate from 1-5).
- ◆ **Specific rating** (e.g. Rate the following areas covered today from 1 (easy) to 5 (hard)).
- ◆ **Specific feedback** (What did you find difficult about the preparation exam that we did last week?).

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To enable students to reflect on what they have learned, their strengths and weaknesses.
- ◆ To deepen their understanding of the expectations of the teacher by engaging with assessment criteria in an active way.
- ◆ To give the teacher a portrait of how their students feel that they are doing.
- ◆ To open up channels of communication and help students feel less anonymous in a big course.

4.3 PEER ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

In peer assessment, students assess each other, ideally against a clear set of criteria. It is useful for the students to follow the same assessment procedure that you follow. This helps to deepen their understanding of what you will expect in the final assessment and how you will evaluate them.

FOR EXAMPLE:

The students are invited to complete a feedback sheet for presentations given by their peers. They can give a grade and a comment under a number of criteria including: critical analysis, quality of the presentation, language, time-keeping and originality.

Even if you don't give students the final word on grading, always ask for their evaluation before giving yours. When you give your feedback, explain your thinking and justify your grades at each stage. Compare the two assessments to identify gaps.

NB: Students may need time to become effective at peer assessment. Some are overly generous, others unnecessarily harsh!

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ By giving feedback, students engage more meaningfully with what is expected of them and what they will need to do in their exam.
- ◆ To give the teacher a picture of the students' perceptions of the exam requirements.

4.4 BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONNAIRE

Give your students a short, simple questionnaire at the start of a course or before the introduction of a new unit. It could be designed to uncover students' preconceptions, but you can adapt it to address any areas you wish.

Use the questionnaire again at the end of the unit, and repeat the exercise, or share the initial findings with students.

You could ask the students why they signed up for your course or what they hope to get out of it.

Add in a section that requires the student to write a short paragraph for a quick view on their written skills.

TEA Project advisors can help you to analyse the work from a language perspective.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To obtain a quick picture of the students' knowledge or experiences in an area.
- ◆ To establish early dialogue between the teacher and the students.

4.5 THE MUDDIEST POINT

At the end of a lecture, ask the students to write down 'the muddiest point' on a piece of paper or an internet platform. This means that they indicate the part of the lecture that they found the most difficult to understand because it wasn't clear, it was challenging or it was confusing.

Extend the question to check whether language confusions were part of the problem.

Your experience will also tell you what students are likely to find difficult, so you can give them options to choose from.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To enable students to communicate which areas are difficult for them.
- ◆ To enable the teacher to establish whether they need to return to a particular subject or not.

4.6 MODEL EXAM QUESTIONS

Give students several examples of previous answers to exam questions which are similar in style to the questions that they will need to complete. Ask the students to grade the answers, giving reasons for their decisions. Ideally provide them with the same rubric that you will use.

Provide a weak, average and strong answer to the same question.

Compare your grades to the students' and explore the discrepancies.

Give students clear feedback on the strengths, weaknesses and common mistakes from previous years.

Use the opportunity to stress that language is less important than content.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To demystify the exam grading process.
- ◆ To give students deeper engagement with what will be expected of them.

4.7 WRITING EXAM QUESTIONS

When you are writing your exams or assessments, consider different question types to minimise the interference of language related problems that might block communication of the student's content knowledge.

Research shows that students working in a second language are more likely to be penalised by long form exam answers.

LOW LINGUISTIC DEMAND

- ◆ Multiple choice questions.
- ◆ Multiple choice gap fill.
- ◆ Matching (text with visuals).
- ◆ Sequence texts.

MEDIUM LINGUISTIC DEMAND

- ◆ Graph analysis with sentence matching.
- ◆ Full sentence answers.

HIGH LINGUISTIC DEMAND

- ◆ Open questions with short answers (250 words).
- ◆ Questions with 'justify', 'discuss', 'argue'.

4.8 VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

Ask the students to review what they have learned by presenting information in a graphical or visual format. This might use charts, concept maps or diagrams and can include the use of both key words and images. Depending on the needs of your students, you will need to decide how much initial information you want to give, and whether you provide a template for the concept map. You could consider:

- ◆ No pre-prepared template or information. The students have to choose the key words and/or images themselves and construct a diagram to show the relationships between them;
- ◆ A partial template with some key elements provided but with space for students to add their own words and ideas;
- ◆ A full template with blank spaces and key words provided. The students then fill in the gaps.

Use these mindmaps to gain an understanding of how well the students have grasped the course material as well as to give feedback. You may not have time for individual feedback but taking two or three examples (anonymised if necessary) and sharing your evaluation with the whole group will be very valuable.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◆ To give students the opportunity to synthesise their knowledge and understanding.
- ◆ To gain an understanding of how they understand relationships between ideas and concepts.
- ◆ To give feedback on higher level conceptual understanding.

NOTES

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