

BACKGROUND TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

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- Presentation techniques and introductory activity
- Practice activities and tasks for language skills development
- Assessment types and tasks

Presentation Techniques and Introductory Activities

- Presentation techniques are ways used by the teacher to present (introduce to learners for the first time) new language such as vocabulary, grammatical structures, and pronunciation
- Introductory activities are those used by a teacher to introduce a lesson or teaching topics

There are many techniques or ways to present new language

- Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP)
- Task-based learning (TBL)
- Presenting new language to learners after they have met in a reading or listening text which is first used for comprehension
- Holding a discussion on a topic and introduce a new language in a context of the discussion
- Giving learners a task that requires them to use the new language, then after the task, present the new language to them, then give them another task to practice the new language (test-teach-test)
- Genre based teaching

There are two kinds of introductory activities: warmers and lead-ins

- Warmers are often used to raise students energy levels or to make them feel comfortable. They are not always connected to the topic of the lesson. e.g. a quiz, game, or pair work activity.
- Lead-ins focus on the topic or new language of the lesson. They can also focus and motivate students and make a link between the topic of the lesson and the students' own lives. For example, if in one lesson students are going to read a text about internet, rather than giving them the text immediately, we could do one or more lead-in activities such as discussing with students how often they use the internet, what they use it for, what their websites are, etc.

Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) lesson

- Aim: Students learn the difference between countable and uncountable nouns, and when to use a and some with them

Procedures

- 1. Ask students what food and drink they like at birthday party
- 2. Stick on the board the magazine pictures of different party foods (they should be a mixture of countable and uncountable nouns)
- 3. Ask students the names of the food items, write the names on the board under each picture and then do a quick choral drill on the pronunciation of these words
- 4. Say to students: I am having a birthday party this weekend. I'd like a box of sweets and a cake for my party. And I'd like some ice cream, some cola and some fruits. I'd also like some sandwiches, some bananas, and some chicken legs.
- 5. Say and ask students to repeat each sentence chorally:
 - I'd like a box of sweets
 - I'd like a cake
 - I'd like some ice cream

- 6. Point out to the students that you can count some nouns but you cannot count others. These are called countable and uncountable nouns. You use a with countable nouns and some with uncountable nouns or plural countable nouns
- 7. Ask students some concept questions:
 - Which of the food items on the board are countable nouns/uncountable/plural/singular
- 8. Students do a written gap-fill exercise, filling the gaps with a or some
- 9. Students work in pairs with a worksheet of pictures of food and drink items. One student tells the other what they like for their birthday party. E.g. “I’d like some/ a ...”, while the other student takes notes. Then they swap the roles.

In PPP Lesson

- The teacher:
- Presents a new language in a context
- Gets students to practice it in controlled practice activities
- Asks the students to use the new language in less controlled activities, in a communicative way.

Task-based Learning (TBL) lesson

- Aim: Students choose food and drinks for a birthday party

Procedures

- 1. Hold a discussion with students when their birthdays are, what presents they would like, what good birthday parties they have been to and what they like to eat and drink at the birthday parties.
- 2. Put students into small groups and give them a worksheet with the pictures, names and prices of lots of party food and drink on it.
- 3. Tell students to do this task: Choose the food and drink they would like for a birthday party for ten friends keeping within a price limit.

- 4. The students do the task while the teacher goes round the class listening and answering any questions.
- 5. Each group tells the other groups what decision they have made
- 6. The students ask the teacher questions about any language they needed for the task and the teacher tells the students the new language she noticed they didn't know while they were doing the task
- 7. The students do a written exercise on the new language

You can see in the TBL Lesson, the teacher:

- 1. gives students tasks to do
- 2. presents new language after students have needed to use it, and only presents new language that he/she or students have identified as needed

PPP Approach

- Presenting a new language that gives students opportunity to practice language in a safe learning environment where it is difficult to make mistakes. It can therefore be quite a confidence-building approach for students. But it makes students learn language items that they may not be interested in or ready to learn. There are few opportunities to really use the language for communication.

TBL Approach

- Allowing students to find new language when they want to, and to use language experimentally and creatively for real communication. In this way, it puts the learners in a situation which is quite similar to the one in which children learn their first language.
- Some learners may find this approach quite exciting and challenging. Others may wish for more guidance and structure to help them.

Consideration in choosing the techniques depending on the students: their level, interest, what language they already know, learning styles, resources available, etc.

Example of practice activities and tasks

- Complete these sentences about yourself with can or can't.
- 1. I.....swim.
- 2. I.....speak Mandarin.
- 3. I.....play the guitar.
- 4. I.....use a computer.
- 5. I.....run very fast.
- Write an invitation inviting your friends to your birthday party:
- Invite them.
- Tell them:
- The date
- The time
- The address of the party

Explanation

- It is a controlled/
restricted practice
activity because can
only use certain items
of language
- Focuses on accurate
use of language
- It is a gap-fill exercise
- It is a less-controlled/
freer practice activity
because the language
the learners will use is
not carefully limited or
controlled.
- Focuses on
communicating a
message.
- It is a task

Other kinds of activities

- What skills or sub skills/ language do they focus on? What is the name of the activity?

Read the story . Then answer
these questions

- How old is the girl?
- Where does she live?
- What is her friend's name?

A. Listen to the tape and choose
the best answer

Other kinds of practice activities

- 1. choral drilling of pronunciation
- 2. role-play
- 3. dictation
- 4. discussion
- 5. story writing
- 6. copying words
- 7. repeating new words
- 8. describing pictures
- 9. learning conversations by heart
- 10. problem solving
- 11. etc.

Assessment types and tasks

- Assessment means judging learners performance by collecting information about it.
- Assessment tasks are the methods we use for assessing learners (informal or formal)
- Informal assessment is when we observe learners to see how well they are doing something and then give them comments on their performance.
- Formal assessment is when we assess learners through tests or exam and give their work a mark or a grade.