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This paper serves as a vehicle to explain the necessity and effectiveness of criteria-based assessment of pair debate in a senior English Practice classroom of Linguistic University. The aim is to describe peculiar features of pair debate and, considering a range of factors, to develop a set of relevant criteria for pair debate assessment.

**A. E. Sereda** (*Minsk, SBMT*)

## THE ROLE OF PRESENTATION IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Достаточно часто преподаватели сталкиваются с неприятием нового материала со стороны учащихся, что выражается в низкой усвояемости знаний и неудовлетворительных отметках на экзаменах. Как правило, в такие моменты редко ставится вопрос о том, что проблема может быть не в знаниях студентов, а в методике преподнесения новой темы. В данной статье будет рассмотрен аспект подготовки к проведению презентации и умения заинтересовать учащихся, а также подходы к организации занятия по изучению иностранного языка. Данные подходы основаны на установлении взаимопонимания между преподавателем и студентами, что достигается посредством правильной организации и балансом профессиональных и эмоциональных качеств преподавателя.

To be a great teacher means to be empathetic towards students you have been entrusted with. The common trait that such teachers share is the ability to understand their students, to be on the same wavelength with them, which requires much beyond the knowledge regarding one's subject. After all, it is not only about being a skilled educator with an abundance of facts and theories to demonstrate during the lesson. The problem that many teachers are faced with is that there are always some students who just don't seem to be interested in the subject or are bent on avoiding any activities in the classroom. The reasons for this are mostly the following:

1. The reluctant students might be genuinely not interested in the subject;
2. Peer pressure exerts too much influence, which puts them off studying.

As British economist Tim Harford stated, there is no kid who isn't rational in their behavior, and students who don't express their fondness for learning are no exception either [1, p. 134]. It is not that they can't due to the physical condition (which is extremely rare); the reason is rather they have some other stuff going on in their lives which completely crowds out the knowledge they are supposedly gaining at school or university. According to the economist Stephen D. Levitt,

people tend to do things that pay off; it is all about reward – something that satisfies our desires and meets our needs [2, p. 72]. Therefore, the logical conclusion here would be that children who don't learn just don't reap the reward for their learning, which is something that makes others responsible for providing the learning environment seem at fault. And for a good reason by the way.

**The reluctant students might be genuinely not interested in the subject.** There is no teacher who wouldn't be afraid of such a student, is it? However, it's a task entrusted to a teacher to make their students want to learn, to make them excited about the subject! Going by the assumption that Tim Harford was right in his assertion about everyone being rational, I will guess that what those students need is the insight why they have to learn this stuff. Honestly, we are geared with a perfect security device whose main purpose is to protect us from the unwanted information – our brain! If we don't believe we are going to need something in terms of information, we will either forget it as soon as possible or not notice it at all.

If that is the reason why some students don't seem to want to learn a second language, teachers will have to make learning process more appealing to them, which should start by changing the routine first. Making students excited about the subject means a lot of work, the most part of which is presentation. Yes, presentation. It is the way our mind works – whatever we see must be intriguing, unusual, or exciting to stir our interest. And, more importantly, it should coincide with the interests we already have to turn us on. This simple fact means that teachers will have to enhance the quality of their teaching by investing time and energy into upgrading their teaching strategies that will match their students' personalities. As of today, it is still novelty, which justifies the statement that one of the most common mistakes teachers make is being lazy or incompetent at presenting their material [3, p. 23]. This is the follow – up of yet another heavy mistake teachers make: they don't bother to get to know their audience (students). Why is it so important to get to know students better in the first place?

As was stated above, our mind works the way that absolves us from the information which can potentially turn out harmful, or simply useless [4, p. 211]. It is a natural protection mechanism that our brain is in possession of. It logically follows then, the information given to students should be outstanding or, at the very least, have some ways of being practical to be noticed and, consequently, internalized. If a teacher can't exercise control over his class, the first guess to make should be whether this teacher is competent; his teaching strategies may be lacking in presentation. There is a clear parallel with business; for a product to be solved it should be actively advertised, right? So why is education different? Many adults mistakenly consider the benefits that education might have the reason enough for children to strain themselves at school or students to study hard at university. Wrong. Children, as well as students, don't really spend time thinking about that kind of stuff. The very thing that motivates them most is their place in the peer hierarchy and popularity they might have or not. To gain what they want,

they will go to great lengths, which does not rule out studying hard. Therefore, education should be advertised as well. Under no circumstances it should be a must; otherwise, it will incite resistance!

Whenever we are faced with the dilemma to do something that we don't really want to, our brain will activate the mechanism that makes it very difficult for us to move, think, even stay awake [2, p. 214]. That is the reaction to a must – endure lesson as well. It falls to a teacher to do his homework with regard to this; the preparation for the lesson should entail not only the material, but the ways to present it which may include various methods to convey information apart from just standing on one spot and monotonously reading the material. Many of the teachers think it impossible to make lazy students study, but the question is not «how to make them do», the question is «how to make them wanna do», which is a whole different level of teaching. The passive mindset that such teachers espouse is something that should be looked down on and avoided by beginners at any cost.

As a solution to this problem might be the teacher's willingness to spend time getting to know his or her students, preparing outstanding presentations which will capture the attention of the audience, and working on the personality aspects (behavior, looks, voice, attitude, etc.). As for the teaching strategies, the following elements should be taken into consideration:

A. Using social media as a tool for gaining practical knowledge (vocabulary, expressions);

B. Turning to a popular culture as a talking point and the source of inspiration for the students;

C. Incorporating music into the lesson in order to set the mood for a certain topic or exercise;

D. Utilizing various decorations with the aim of creating scenes that may sparkle creative thinking in the students;

E. Trying to engage slow learners by encouraging them to participate in creative activities.

Of significant importance is to place emphasis on the ways that being able to speak a foreign language can enhance the quality of the student's life; it will demonstrate the practical use of the subject. Especially, the teacher should make it a point to advertise his or her subject as something that can not only be interesting, but also can help reach a higher position in the hierarchy among children or students. It is not enough for them to be told that the material will be on the upcoming test; if it makes them look cool not to learn, they won't!

**Peer pressure exerts too much influence, which puts students off studying.** We all have heard of peer pressure, but somehow we keep mistaking it for something else (for example, bullying). Peer pressure is nothing like being physically forced to do something because you are told to. Peer pressure manifests in students willingly conforming to their group's norms. The key factor here is that they WANT to conform; those who don't are deemed weirdos and probably sanctioned by peers. So, how come peer pressure might be exerting influence on students? This is a very easy question to answer. Let's look at the example of black

students in America. Black culture has always been somewhat opposed to education in general; it is believed that black kids will do just fine without all that «white stuff». Ever heard of «acting white»? This is the label that black kids are getting smacked upon their heads whenever they put some effort into their studying. It is offensive for a black man or black woman to be called someone who is «acting white» [1, p. 176]. Then let's take a look at statistics. Black kids, while having all the capacity and ability to excel at school, are still lagging behind [Ibid, p. 179]. The conventional wisdom that blacks follow is that you don't need to study, for you won't be hired because you are black, so you might as well not bother. But the real reason why blacks are hired less often than whites is that blacks are less educated than whites [Ibid, p. 184]! It all constitutes a vicious circle of the flawed education system: they don't study because they don't believe they are going to ever need it, and they don't get hired because they don't study! There are more examples.

We, as humans, are very good at imitating one another, which can be seen as a form of either survival instinct or an over millions of years acquired trait that helped us satisfy our demands for food, sex, and power. In the end, we managed to form a society that is glued together by existing norms, traditions, and language. It is all passed down to the generations to come by means of imitation. According to the American psychologist Judith Harris, any norms, traditions, as well as language, for the most part, are taught not by adults (in our case, teachers) but by teenagers on the streets; it is where the acquisition of the very knowledge about the society and the world starts [4, p. 314]. Whether we want it or not, it is in our genes to conform to the peers' influence, and if you do, you will be rewarded by the group you belong to. The same principle applies to students as they form groups within the one devoted to studying. This happens especially fast if there are people who turn out very much alike in whatever trait you can come up with. This group will have by far more influence on you rather than the teacher, for he or she belongs to the so-called outsiders [Ibid, p. 318].

Do you need more convincing? Here it is, so stripe yourself in. There are studies conducted in order to see how come immigrant children pick up the second language much easier than their parents. It was established that the linguistic miracle came about due to them having been accepted into the group of local children whose norm was to speak English, or whatever language it was. They (the immigrant children) were rewarded for speaking English, so they strived to learn it in order to be like others. Unlike them, their parents, who hardly were interested in having lots of friends outside their immigrant community, remained almost untouched in terms of grammar and slang, which impaired their ability to fully assimilate. Their children, however, no longer belong to the culture their parents came from; they are now fully accepted members of the society whose norms they have adopted. They didn't need «no teacher to do so, no parent to tell them how it's done». However, the same mechanism can prevent children from learning [Ibid, p. 219].

For most of the students, school is an extremely boring place; you are forced to sit still for half a day, read excruciatingly long texts, write a lot, you name it. And sometimes you are unpopular, which means you are getting bullied. Only a few like school – they are usually called nerds. But there are not many of them to leave things the way they are; school must become interesting for most children to successfully acquire knowledge! The more students strive to get the highest marks, the cooler studying will appear. The goal here is to incorporate studying into the teenage lifestyle, make it something that appears trendy. Being smart should be something that people look up to, not frown upon as the majority of kids do. As it happens, this not easy task to make school popular rests with teachers and those who legislate education system. The most common mistakes teachers make with regard to this aspect of school life are the following [3, p. 67]:

1. Teachers fail to acknowledge that they are the least important people for their students; the ones they care most are the popular members of their group who are at the top of the students' hierarchy. Not thinking about this, teachers act as if everybody wants to pay attention to them, which often leads to students hardly ever displaying enthusiasm during the lessons;

2. It is never emphasized that knowing a lot is a cool thing; it is often presented as a must-do just because it is on the test. On-the-test excuse is not enough for the majority of students to want to internalize knowledge! Even if they manage to pass by the skin of their teeth, they will most probably forget the stuff the second they march out of the examination room. This should not happen if we are to teach properly!

3. Popular kids are hardly ever asked to collaborate with teachers because, well, they are often the ones who don't study very hard. That is the crux of the matter – they don't strain themselves. Teachers should get them to learn and learn properly by giving them a chance to shine. It might be any form of activity, including creative ones.

In order to rectify the mistakes listed above, teachers should put in a lot of effort so that they can think along the same lines as their students. The importance of this can hardly be stressed enough, for the quality of education and the future of next generations are at stake. Some of the steps that can be made in order to overcome this hurdle might include the following:

1. Teachers should shift focus of their attention from their material (and themselves also!) to their students; it will greatly contribute to the presentation and, consequently, to how much students will take away from the lesson;

2. Material should be presented as something interesting and useful. Students should be learning it because it is cool to do so, not because it is on the test. Nobody cares whether it is on the test – especially those who never paid attention to the material to begin with! Make it sound and look exciting first, then expect popular kids (and the rest of them) to want to know it better;

3. It is of crucial importance to give anyone a chance to shine in the lesson, be it some kind of test or creative activity. As it often happens, those who don't know

much when it comes to the subject are quite active or talented in terms of music, dancing, sports, etc. Why not combine all their interests in one lesson so that no one will be left behind? It will definitely increase interest towards the subject.

In conclusion, it would be hardly an exaggeration to state that the most important aspect of literally every lesson, be it a science or an art, is presentation; more than 80 per cent of success depends on this. The right way of presenting the material would allow you to instill in your students a desire to learn, make them want to let the knowledge set in and use it at an appropriate time and in a right place. No matter how bored a student may seem, the job of the teacher is to make the lesson an event worth telling friends and family about. This is an art of teaching indeed. Difficult as it may sound, it doesn't require one to be gifted with enormous creativity supply as well as one need not be extraordinarily energetic and open-hearted to master it. It calls, however, for hard work and dedication to pull it off.

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This article touches upon the importance of presentation in teaching foreign languages and the ways it can be improved. The main idea is that students should learn because they want to and not because of what is going to be in the test.

**А. В. Бер** (*Ижевск, ИЖГСХА*)

## ПУТИ И СПОСОБЫ ОБОГАЩЕНИЯ КУЛЬТУРОВЕДЧЕСКОЙ ОСВЕДОМЛЕННОСТИ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА

Статья посвящена вопросу формирования межкультурной компетентности для преодоления затруднений, возникающих в процессе взаимодействия представителей различных культур. Для успешного диалога культур обучающимся необходимо достичь определенного уровня становления личности, необходимым условием которого является овладение ключевыми компетенциями межкультурного взаимодействия. В статье затрагивается тема повышения уровня культуроведческой осведомленности и развития критического мышления, которые входят в лингвокультуроведческую компетенцию, являющуюся одной из ключевых компетенций. Особое внимание автором было обращено на