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Topic 5

**The Stratified
Teaching Unit**

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The 7 Stages

- **STEP 1: Motivation**
- **STEP 2: Globality/ Input Presentation**
- **STEP 3: Analysis Phase/Focus**
- **STEP 4: Synthesis Phase/ Practice**
- **STEP 5: Language**
- **STEP 6: Reinforcement/ Follow up**
- **STEP 7: Assessment Phase/ Tests**

STEP 1. Motivation

This is essential to get everyone working. Stimulate students' interest through a variety of channels and try to understand what students already know about the topic. Extrinsic motivation is when "students are motivated to learn when teachers offer them the opportunity to make their own decisions and exercise some control over their learning process" (Mc. Combs and Pope, 1994). The techniques used at this stage serve to stimulate learners' ability to anticipate content in a text by exploiting every possible redundancy (expectancy grammar). But deep motivation (the intrinsic one) has a lot to do with emotional issues. This is the most important phase of a teaching unit, both for SEL and inclusion. The phase where curiosity is created and which touches the inner self. It deals with the deepest parts of the " who am I?" question. This is why teachers have to pay special attention to this phase. Whatever the subject taught, it is important to prepare an activity that involves students' self-awareness. The circle can be used as it is the best interactional scheme for SEL and focus on how specific knowledge already presented has been dealt with, (in the case of scientific subjects such as Maths) or how they feel (using pictures, short videos) about what they are going to learn, talk about, or if they have ever come across certain feelings. Obviously, the subjects taught are very different and require very different approaches but it is ESSENTIAL to prepare emotion-related activities, creating curiosity and modifying the expected routine. Some examples could be to ask students to observe pictures, and photos, listen to music, watch videos or sketch thematic drawings/word webs or spidergrams and maps.

There are many digital tools that can be used to aid both the teachers' preparation and delivery, as well as the student's experience. Coggle is one of these.

Are you aware of it or have you ever used it? It is really easy to use! If you want to find out more about it, you can view a short video tutorial made available on YouTube by Coggle entitled "Coggle Tutorial: Introduction". Just click on the title to be directed to the video. You can also find an example of a Coggle map in the Exercise File of this topic, entitled Coggle Diagram Example.

STEP 2. Globality/ Input Presentation

This is the global comprehension phase whereby work on exploring keywords, and words without which comprehension of the text is not to be presumed. The teacher guides comprehension by assigning a short task to be performed during the listening, reading, or viewing phase.

The cognitive role of comprehension skills is fundamental. Therefore, priority is given to receptive skills over productive and integrated skills and to oral reception skills over written skills.

Vocabulary and activities for active and motivating learning

- Repetition (words from texts or videos, choruses of songs)
- Visualizations from pictures from which keywords emerge keywords
- In the second step, dramatic reading and/or the use of cued cards are proposed, depending on the subject/topic.
- The input proposed by the teacher should be brief. A good method is to use division into paragraphs or sequences. Highly graded activities of global understanding should be proposed.

The techniques to be used are:

- MULTIPLE CHOICE
- GRID
- JOINING (lines of dialogue; words; sentences; paragraphs)
- JOINING (word-image/definition)
- TRANSCODIFICATION
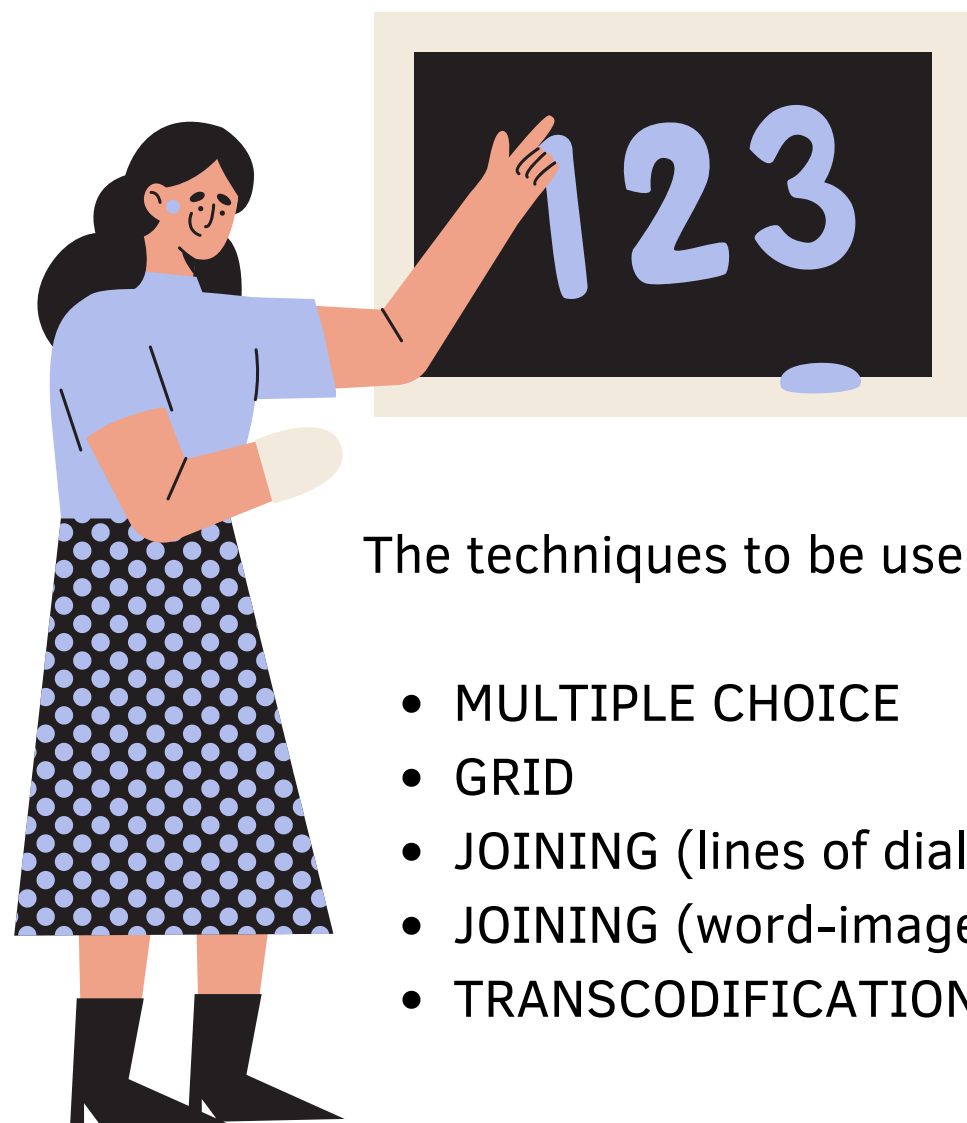
Examples

Here are some examples:

- Match words to pictures, match words to their meaning with an arrow, active listening with comprehension questions, and individual reading with open-ended answers. Examples can include, analysis of characters, setting, and searching for specific information.
- Jigsaw/ pairs/ small group
- Concept maps with keywords that can be used before reading or listening to a text or watching a video (or afterwards and it is VERY PRODUCTIVE).
- Search for information on the web related to the topic and create glossaries with web tools (for example, Padlet). Create digital or paper Flashcards Matching activities, tests, quizzes

Would you like to learn more about jigsaw groups? You can find out more information in the following resources by clicking on their titles.

- Aronson E. (2022) The Jigsaw Classroom, Social Psychology Network.
- TeacherVision (2019) Jigsaw Groups for Cooperative Learning, Sandbox Networks Inc.

STEP 3. Analysis Phase / Focus

Here a teacher assigns a challenging task to be performed on the initial text. You can stratify the activity in this way:

- True/false activity
- Multiple choice activity
- True/false/not given activity

These activities help the students focus on content and meaning. It's important to give them the correct answers for a self-check and to not elicit answers, before moving on to the next step. This is essential as it keeps the affective filter low and shows students they are not evaluated. It enhances the "I can do it" feeling and increases self-awareness. They can then correct their answers and reestablish their focus before moving on to other more structured activities (individual/ Jigsaw / pairs/ small group).

STEP 4. Synthesis Phase/ Practice

This stage is dedicated to the reuse and fixation (understanding and memorizing) of content. Activities aimed at repetition and at completion are carried out. Simulation activities that promote increasing autonomy in oral production are to follow. The stratified exercises which we propose help students talk about the topic and acquire the academic language needed. Example could be activities that ask students to choose the best sentences to describe, summarize, and talk about the topic, among the given ones.

This kind of exercise can provide various scaffolding elements:

- Choosing between 2 sentences (Easy)
- Choosing between a given number of sentences presented in a scrambled order or choosing among those sentences that are related to the topic and those that are not related to it
- Copying the sentences in the right columns, using the sentences to summarize the text, true/ false/ not given and correcting false sentences
- Summarizing the text and explaining it with your own words.

The exercises are stratified and the learners can choose among them according to their abilities. If they don't the teacher can assign them. It depends if the class is new to layering or not. You can also use dramatization techniques as role playing, role taking, role-making using cued cards…
Individual /scaffolding technique.

STEP 5. Language

Any teaching unit should also include specific work on language. it is extremely important that students learn to use specific and correct language structures. This phase helps students to acquire and improve their language in order to gain both fluency and accuracy together with academic language. Moreover, it provides vulnerable students with a suitable scaffold. This scaffold, as usual, will be used only when and if needed. Our experience indicates that such a technique can be useful to all students.

Examples of stratified activities:

- Join the sentences with the appropriate connectors (three layers: two connectors given to choose from, a list of connectors to insert, an empty cloze to fill in)
- Cloze test on the summarised text.

Great attention should be given to the interpersonal function of language. It is an important part of SEL. Teaching and providing scaffolding on it, is an essential part of teaching social skills through group work activities. Remember that the interpersonal aspect of language is reflected in how teachers talk with students and how students interact with one another. Modeling is very important and peer modeling is to be encouraged through group work. The interactional schemes you use are essential in developing the interpersonal function of language (small group/ Jigsaw/ individual).

For more information on the interpersonal function of language you can download the material made available in the Exercise File of this Topic, entitled BE-IN: The Interpersonal Function of Language.

STEP 6. Reinforcement Phase/ Follow up

Any teaching unit should also include specific work on language. it is extremely important that students learn to use specific and correct language structures. This phase helps students to acquire and improve their language in order to gain both fluency and accuracy together with academic language. Moreover, it provides vulnerable students with a suitable scaffold. This scaffold, as usual, will be used only when and if needed. Our experience indicates that such a technique can be useful to all students.

This is were the techniques of fixation (see glossary) are used. The follow-up phase can be either a simple work of questionnaires with or without cue cards or true research work on a linked topic which follows the same structure as the main topic in the presentation.

In the Exercise File you will find material with more information on this stage of the Stratified Teaching Unit. The article entitled "If We Know it ...I know It" presents activities that can help reinforce the use of ludic didactic techniques to fix the concepts treated without perceived effort. This is part of SEL. The games allow the teacher to take notes of the way students interact, the way they collaborate, the language they use, and the emotions and self-awareness they show.

BE-IN

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STEP 7. Assessment Phase/ Tests

How do you monitor and evaluate progress and understanding?

The assessment might be in writing or oral and it is implemented using the same techniques tested throughout the unit, but scored. It is the assessment of the learning process, which can be done through an oral test – multiple choice – information gap activities. The use of ludic approaches, as stated before can be very useful before the individual testing stage, to review and take part in the process of fixing the acquired concepts. This will be useful for the next evaluation phase. This kind of assessment is very important to know what the student is able to do alone before we know what to scaffold next (Pairs/ individual).

Resources

Aronson E. (2022) The *Jigsaw Classroom,* Social Psychology Network, Available at https://www.jigsaw.org/.

Coggle YouTube Channel (2013) Coggle Tutorial: Introduction, YouTube, Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b3K74cE6q0.

McCombs b. and Pope E.J. (1994) *Motivating Hard to Reach Students,* American Psychological Association, Available at https://doi.org/10.1037/10151-000.

TeacherVision (2019) *Jigsaw Groups for Cooperative Learning,* Sandbox Networks Inc, Available at https://www.teachervision.com/group-work/jigsaw-groups-for-cooperative-learning.

BE-IN Material

- BE-IN: The Interpersonal Function of Language.
- BE-IN: "If we know it...I know it".