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Giving a lecture: example “short presentation”

Goal

This teaching suggestion substantiates some of the points raised in #30 with a simple example. It aims to further the competences of acquiring, processing and presenting information. The linguistic goal is an appealing presentation in terms of word choice, speech rate, tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions, that encourages interested, careful listening.

4th–6th grade

45–60 minutes



Materials:
artifacts from the culture of origin
(or pictures of objects).

Hints:

- It is best to distribute this exercise over a period of two weeks: introduction and clarifying of the presentation in the first week, presenting the speeches in the second one. It is the students' assignment to find an appropriate object and to prepare a presentation of 5-10 minutes in length.
- If computers are available, the presentation may of course be supported with Powerpoint or Prezi.
- It goes without saying that the competences acquired through this exercise will benefit students in further presentations in HLT or regular curriculum classes.

Procedure:

- The instructor informs the students (whole class or group level) about the project: to give short presentations about an artifact or a personality from their culture of origin (e. g. an item of clothing, a culinary specialty, a souvenir from vacation, a picture of a building, painting, or a person...). The instructor then models the assignment in providing the students with a short sample presentation of (5–10 minutes). In doing so, s/he may also deliberately violate some of the criteria, e. g., speaking too softly or in a monotonous voices.
- Based on the instructor's sample presentation, the students enumerate (or repeat) the tips for a successful oral presentation. See #30, list of relevant tips.
- As another form of help, the instructor discusses with the class how to structure a successful presentation and provides and elaborates the language means or sentence building blocks in the first language for individual parts of the presentation:
 - greeting, introduction and explanation of the procedure. Example: "Welcome to my presentation about XY. First, I want to tell you something about A, then B..."
 - present three to four sub-themes in an illustrative manner, always declaring the transitions ("So much about this point. We're now proceeding to the next sub-theme, namely...").
 - a conclusion, in which the introduction is once more referenced and/ or the most important points are summarized. Provide an opportunity to clarify questions. Thank the audience for their attention. ("I have told you something about XY. I hope that you understood most of all... Are there any questions? Thank you very much for your attention.")
- As a memory aid, the students receive a sheet of paper with the most important tips (see #30), or perhaps a more simplified copy of the materials in M14 of the volume "Learning strategies and techniques for HLT"

- Time permitting, the students should already begin to think about their object for discussion and to outline the presentation in form of a mind-map. Assignment for next week: prepare and practice the short presentation of 5–10 minutes length.
- In the following week, the presentations are given with subsequent discussions in terms of quality of content, language, and adherence to the established tips for presentations.

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For evaluation: flashlight

Goal

The students familiarize themselves with a simple procedure for learning evaluation, which is suitable for any situation (following a discussion, a recitation, a presentation, etc.). In order to apply the procedure, students must have carefully listened and learned to summarize their thoughts succinctly and concisely in at most two sentences.

1st–9th grade

5–10 minutes



References:
Ernst & Ruthemann 2003,
p. 51 (see bibliography).

Hint:

- The use of the flashlight is well suited to conclude a learning content or lesson sequence. Owing to its brevity, it has the advantage that all students get a chance to speak and reflect their learning. However, the flashlight does not replace more comprehensive criteria-oriented forms of discussion and learning evaluation. See chapter 3d in the introduction.

Procedure:

- Pursuant to a lesson, a presentation, a discussion, etc., each student summarizes in at most two sentences what s/he particularly liked (what s/he thought was very good and/or where s/he finds potential for improvement. (The questions have to be modified, depending on the event to be assessed.) The feedback should be phrased in the I-form, see also #13 “providing feedback”.
- The instructor concludes the flashlight round with an evaluation of 1–2 sentences on her own or a short summary of the student contributions.

Comments:

- Sentence building blocks can help the students with converting their thoughts into sentences. Example: (“The highlight of this ... was for me ...”, “I had difficulties with ...”. “I was bothered by ...”)

Variant:

- Sentence gifts: each student pays a one-sentence compliment to a selected classmate or a learning partner (e. g. on the occasion of this person’s birthday). This method must be practiced as well. Finding and expressing genuine compliments as well as accepting them is not easy for many students.