

*'How much importance should we give to finishing an activity and how much to fulfilling our class' expectations/needs'?*

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# *Classroom Research*

- **Classroom-based research EVO 2017**

*It is generally discussed that when teaching preschool learners, flexibility is something we should take into account all the time. My question is how much importance should we give to finishing an activity and how much to fulfilling our classes' expectations/needs. To what extent should we give up activities/miss out stages/change the initial planning in order to have our children's constant attention. And even more, if there are activities that do not engage them at any rate, should we consider giving up on them or rather carry on and insist on reestablishing the discipline in the meantime?*

*(Questions raised before starting the research)*

## *What is your research question?*

My question is 'how much importance should we give to finishing an activity and how much to fulfilling our class' expectations/needs'?

# *Ethical considerations*

*With respect to any ethical considerations, the classroom research I'm planning is rather reflexive which means no one will be directly affected because the conclusions I will be drawing will be mainly from a different organisation/approach of the daily activities.*

*My intention is to continue with the initial syllabus and slightly juggle with the initial planning just enough to see in what way carrying on or interrupting an activity will affect my children's intrinsic motivation and their willingness to rediscover the language.*

# *Identifying themes*

*One of the aspects I decided to focus on during this research is analyzing the 'Teacher Talking Time' and the 'Student Talking Time' (theme 1). It goes without saying that a child's ability to express their feelings is reduced and that is because they do not master the language and the vocabulary to express what they feel. And we all know that the more information they gather, the more they would want to express it, share it with the others.*

*Later on (theme 2) I will focus on 'the importance of modeling tasks and collaborative learning'*

*The last area of focus within this research would be the aspect of 'establishing a positive Teacher – Student relationship' (theme 3).*

# *Research Questions*

1. Do my students prefer more STT (Student Talking Time) activities rather than the TTT (Teacher Talking Time) centered-ones?
2. How do my students feel about modelling tasks and collaborative learning
3. In which way establishing a positive Teacher – Student relationship will affect their motivation/behaviour?

# *How will you analyse?*

*For the 1st theme, I will try to introduce as many student-centered activities as possible (assistants nominating other students, brief Q&A between two pupils – T. will do an example before and C. will have to follow – role plays, mime, etc.) and observe in which way the approach will affect student's engagement in the activities.*

*Modelling tasks and collaborative learning' (theme 2) is meant to outline in what way adapting our tasks will help us maintain our students' motivation to learn English. I will try to keep my mind open and always have a Plan B under the sleeve when their attention is lost, or even listen to their suggestions.*

*During the 3rd theme I will focus on the importance of keeping a positive environment. I will introduce welcome/goodbye positive formulas, interact individually when entering/leaving the class, encourage them, etc., and write down any improvements in their attitude with respect to the overall atmosphere of the English class.*

*The analysis will be made using my personal written reflections and notes as well as my students' performance on tasks, level of engagement and behavior. I will also analyse the lesson plans that brought out the maximum level of enthusiasm and positivism in contrast with the ones that seemed to be rather draining than fulfilling.*

# *Sources of evidence*

- Evidence:
  - Students involvement/performance within an activity
  - Lesson plans, materials and reports
  - My own written reflections and notes
  - A critical friend's notes about my lesson
  - Pictures of my class

## *Research plan*

- Time: the research will be conducted during the first two weeks of the second semester (12.02 – 24.02.2017)
- Analysis strategy: based on the tools selected for collecting evidence I will keep records of my students' behavior, level of motivation and their performance on tasks.

# *Research questions and sources of evidence*

RQ1. Do my students prefer more STT (Student Talking Time) activities rather than the TTT (Teacher Talking Time) centered-ones?

- Data collection tools: *notes on student's attention and motivation, a critical friend's notes about my lesson*

RQ2. How do my students feel about modelling tasks and collaborative learning?

- Data collection tools: *Students involvement/performance within an activity, lesson plans*

RQ3. In which way establishing a positive Teacher – Student relationship will affect their motivation/behaviour?

- Data collection tools: *Pictures of my class*

# *Evaluating evidence*

- Do my students prefer more STT (Student Talking Time) activities rather than the TTT (Teacher Talking Time) centered-ones?

Data collection tools: *notes on student's attention and motivation, a critical friend's notes about my lesson*

*Children became particularly interested when I assigned an assistant to help me with the activities and also explain the others what they had to do. Also, when I introduced short role-plays with them asking the questions, meeting and talking in different circumstances (hunter-animal, 2 friends talking about clothes, etc.) their motivation attained an impressive level.*

*Asking a teacher assistant to provide me with some feedback while telling the children a story and asking them to repeat some vocabulary using images, she noticed that they were easily distracted by any movement around and suggested to rather tell briefly the story and assign characters to play and act out the vocabulary to be taught.*

# Evaluating evidence

- How do my students feel about modelling tasks and collaborative learning?

Data collection tools: *Students involvement/performance within an activity, lesson plans*

Objectives:	Starter:	Main Teaching	Plenary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- children integrate the vocabulary in sentences and context</li> <li>- cdn. Consolidate the 2 characteristics of clothes – long/short</li> <li>- consolidate the song and the poem</li> </ul>	<p>Revision.</p> <p>T. revises the previous vocabulary (clothes) – children will unveil flashcards and say what they discovered.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Role-play.</b> G. and B. come in front of the class. B. asks 'what do you have?'; G. picks a card and answers 'I have ___'.</li> <li>2. Girls come in front and say what clothes they have.</li> <li>3. <b>Game – Guess the child.</b> Teacher thinks of a girl, she describes her clothes using colors + long/short, and children guess who she is.</li> <li>4. Revise a poem (<i>Stop, look, listen!</i>)</li> </ol>	<p>Revise <i>Old Brass Wagon</i> (song)</p>

# *Evaluating evidence*

- *Students' involvement and participation in the activities was particularly good during the ones in which they were the subjects of the stage – the dialogue, clothing presentation and the guessing game. I noticed however a certain motivation when they interacted directly with each-other during the collaborative role-play because the situation was even closer to the reality, giving them thus the chance to feel like they fled the class for an instant and just interacted with each other like they normally do.*
- *The lesson plan I provided is a successful experience in my teaching and I will try as much as possible to follow the pattern*

# *Evaluating evidence*

- In which way establishing a positive Teacher – Student relationship will affect their motivation/behaviour?

Data collection tools: *Pictures of my class*

*Closely monitoring their reaction, attitude and behaviour I am more and more convinced that a positive environment is not only a pleasant place to learn something but also a stimulative approach. As you may see in the pictures to follow, when children find something agreeable in an activity, their entire attention and concentration is there. Large smiles, greetings, jokes and funny videos/games/activities are also an endless motivator as well as an indiscutable discipline tool.*

*Of course they will have to know the circumstances in which the activity is going to take place (in silence, not leaving your place) and in time they will be so familiar with them that having such a lesson will come naturally.*

*3-5 years old watching 'What do you see? Song', during the Wild Animals lesson. The song contained short videos with animals in their environment.*



*7- 9 years old learning feelings and emotions. During the activity we tried to create faces that best express our emotions. I always insisted on getting their opinion on the relevance of the face and tried to find together special ways to draw them and thus keep their interest alive.*



# *What are your findings?*

*I've conducted this research within the first 2 weeks during the second semester and my conclusions to whether we should focus on our lesson plan more than on our children's needs is that forming agreeable and close relationships, caring about their needs and providing a positive attitude and enthusiasm is by far more important than following a lesson plan or making sure we checked all the activities we planned the day before.*

*Welcoming students' ideas and giving them the time they need to assimilate an activity evolves not only in an individual performance and motivation but also in one of the group. No to mention that when students are engaged at all levels (mentally involved, positive feelings) they will also have a good behavior.*