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4 SKS

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# Learning difficulty

- 1. Learning difficulties are problems that affect the brain's ability to receive, process, analyze, or store information. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who isn't affected by learning disabilities.

- 2. Learning difficulty doesn't have anything to do with a person's intelligence - after all, such successful people as Walt Disney, Alexander Graham Bell, and Winston Churchill all had learning disabilities.
- 3. Sign: there's a deep gap between how much someone studied for a test and how well he performed.

# Factors affecting it

- Genetic influences (However, researchers are still debating whether learning it is, in fact, genetic, or if it shows up in families because kids learn and model what their parents do).
- Brain development (both before and after birth)
- Environmental impacts

## Teacher's claim 1:

- “My students are reluctant to do the homework/assignment”.

What are the possible causes?

How to overcome the problem?

# Some possible facts:

- 1. The task is too difficult.
- 2. Students do not see any advantage.
- 3. Teachers never return the worksheet.
- 4. The worksheet is returned with only a tick sign on it.
- 5. No following actions.

# What teachers may try:

- 1. Always return the homework
- 2. Give appropriate feedback
- 3. Discuss their work in the class
- 4. “Future-oriented homework”, use the homework as the learning materials

## Teacher's claim 2:

- “My students always have problems with lessons involving reading comprehension”.

Why?



# Difficult reading comprehension tasks:

- Does it involve complicated structure?
- Does it contain too many difficult words?
- Does it involve students' schemata or previous experience and background knowledge?

Teacher's claim 3:

- “I think my students do not like my subject”.

(Investigate why)

## Ways worth trying:

- 1. Am I a book reader instead of a learning facilitator? (boredom, monotonous ways)
- 2. Create more interesting activities in addition to conventional lectures (Games? Role play? Group work? Pair work?)
- 3. How about the teaching resources? Aids? Media?

# Should I correct my students' mistakes? When? How?

## Mistakes versus Errors:

- Genuine errors are caused by lack of knowledge about L2 or by incorrect hypotheses about it.
- Unfortunate mistakes are caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, slips of the tongue.

# Competence versus Performance

- Competence: knowing what is correct
- Performance: what actually occurs in practice

# Causes of errors

- Mother-tongue interference
- Overgeneralization  
e.g. *She dranked water.*
- Errors encouraged by teaching material or method  
e.g. “I’m ... ing” structure is quite likely to produce “*I am go to Malioboro*”.

# Teachers' attitude to errors

- Behaviorists: Error is a symptom of ineffective teaching and an evidence of failure. When errors occur, they are to be remedied by a bombardment of correct forms, i.e. intensive drilling.
- Mentalists: error is inevitable, it is an integral part of the learning process.

## **Eclectic approach:**

- Structural drills can be useful in attempting to eradicate errors, but remember that the learner is doing his best to sort things out for himself.
- Teachers may allow errors to go uncorrected on many occasions.
  - e.g. If a new structure is being practiced, the teacher may ignore minor pronunciation errors.



# Notes:

- Teachers' attitude is crucial.
- Nothing will undermine students' confidence as much as a series of comments and interruptions on his performance
- Corrections during oral work can be damaging or discouraging
- Harsh written comments may discourage revisions.

# Dealing with a Weak Class

- Four types of learners: the very able, the able, the less able, and the unable

They are afraid of using the language:

Production: not more than a string of L2 items tied together by the grammatical system of their L1.

Recognition: pesters for translation

# Three principles:

- **1. Limitation of aims and objectives**

*Understanding* rather than *using* the language

- a. Q and A in L1
- b. Q in L2 and A in L1
- c. Q that does not require production at all

- **2. Simplification of material**

- **3. Tighter control over learner production**

# Dealing with a Heterogeneous Class

- Group-work: organize groups that are representative of different ability levels
- Make the fullest possible use of the very able students
- Create activities that enable the more able students to assist the weaker ones.

# Case 1

- Teacher: “Hey, listen everybody! This topic is very difficult. If you don’t concentrate, I am sure you won’t get it”.
- Students: ??

(Please give your view)

## Case 2

- “C’mon, be realistic. You see, there are many university graduates who are jobless. Why study hard?”

# Strategies:

- Periodic analysis and evaluation
- Peer teaching
- Cram schooling with different teachers
- Focus on test taking skills and strategy

# Teaching resources:

- All the sources of information about language and about teaching that we can refer to for help in lesson preparation



# Three important foreign language teaching determinants:

- 1. Appropriately-trained teachers
- 2. Favorable public attitudes
- 3. High quality materials

# Authentic materials

- i.e. the use in teaching of texts, photos, videos, and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes.
- They contain authentic language and reflect real-world uses of language.

# Authentic vs. Created materials

Authentic materials → pros and cons:

- 1. **Advantages:** motivation, cultural information, real language exposure, creative approach to teaching
- 2. **Weaknesses:** may contain difficult language and unneeded items, not systematic

# Teaching Media

- **Visual:** pictures, sketches, diagrams, photos, newspapers, dictionaries, cartoons, comics, maps, brochures, timetables, demonstrations
- **Audio:** tapes, records, reports, discussions
- **Audio-visual:** films, TVs, videos, role-playing
- **Tactile:** objects, models, tools, toys
- **Virtual:** internet, website, e-mail, cybernews

# Teaching with appropriate media

## Related to instructional English:

- reinforcing
- basic questioning
- variability
- explaining
- introductory procedures
- closure
- advanced questioning

# Why media?

- to create enjoyable learning → motivating
- to avoid boredom
- to make the TLP more systematic
- to help teachers present the materials
- to help students understand the context  
(creative learning, concrete thinking)

# Realia and authentic materials

- Realia: the use of real objects in the instructional process
- For teaching new vocabulary, new structures, role play
- Authentic materials → learning will be more meaningful and effective if it is related with real contexts.

# Evaluating Materials

Good materials will:

- 1. arouse students' interest,
- 2. remind students of earlier learning,
- 3. help them get feedback,
- 4. encourage them to practice.



# Commercial Textbooks

- **Advantages:** maintain quality, efficient and effective, visually appealing, built around the syllabus, dependable teaching sequences, offer teachers something to fall back on when they run out of ideas of their own
- **Negative effects:** may contain inauthentic language, distort content, deskill teachers (teachers as materials presenters)

# Two Criteria in Selecting Text Books

- External (what we have): learner characteristics, physical environment, resources, class size
- Internal (what the materials offer): choice of topics, skill covered, proficiency level, grading exercises

# Questions to consider

- **1. Price:** How expensive? Who will pay? Can the students afford it?
- **2. Availability:** Is it available? Are all its components in the shops now? What about the next level/term/semester? Has it been published?
- **3. Layout and design:** Attractive? Feel comfortable? Do the students like it? How user-friendly is the design?

- **4. Methodology:** what kind of teaching and learning does the book promote? Is there a good balance between study and activation?
- **5. Skills:** Cover 4 skills adequately? Is the language of the reading and listening texts appropriate? are the speaking and writing tasks likely to engage the students' interests?
- **6. Syllabus and topic:** Is it appropriate? Does it contain a variety of topics? Culturally appropriate?

# Reasons for Adapting Materials

- Not enough practice
- Containing too much difficult points
- Too easy, not challenging
- Inappropriate, not culturally acceptable
- Too formal
- Too much or too little variety in the activities
- And, because not everything in the textbook is wonderful, and teachers want to bring their own personality to the teaching tasks

# How to adapt?

- Adding (insufficient exercises, too difficult)
- Deleting (inappropriate, irrelevant)
- Modifying (rewriting, restructuring)
- Simplifying (grammar, lexeme, length)
- Reordering (adjusting the sequence)

# What to do with these media?

- 1. Leaflets, e.g. supermarket sale, bus times
- 2. Signs, e.g. “Keep off the grass”, “No smoking”, “Do not enter”, “Wet paint”, “Sale”
- 3. Procedures (written), e.g. how to prepare instant noodles, owners’ manuals
- 4. Announcements (spoken), e.g. in the airport, railway stations, telephone operator, cell reminder
- 5. Invitations (written): wedding, birthday party
- Family photos, pictures
- 6. City map, globe, bus route, restaurant menu
- 7. Bills, labels, recipes, messages

# Online Resources

- <http://www.esl-lab.com/tel1.htm>
- <http://www.englishmedialab.com/>
- <http://www.englishmedialab.com/listening.html>
- <http://www.eslus.com/LESSONS/LISTEN/listen1.htm>
- <http://www.mes-english.com/>
- Listen and answer the question in the slide 1. [Download audio script](#) 2. [Download listening worksheet](#). 3. [Download answers](#).



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