

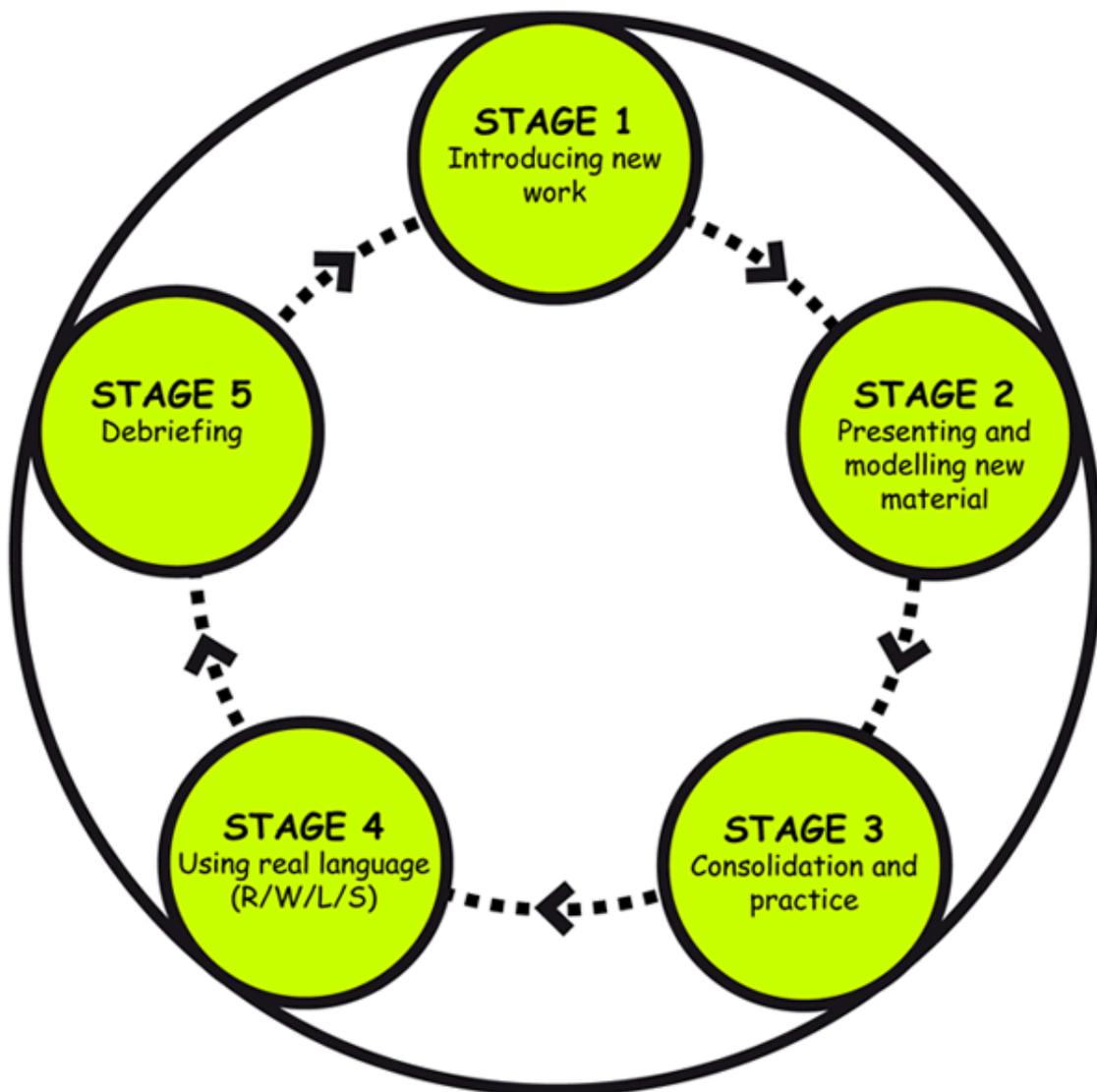
DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

STRUCTURING LEARNING: THE 5-STAGE CYCLE

If learners are to engage with and share responsibility for learning, they need to understand their part in the learning process. This implies the need for a dialogue between teachers and learners about what will be learned, and what learners need to do in order to reach that goal. This is true of learners of all abilities.

STRUCTURING A UNIT OF WORK

It helps if teacher and learners have a shared vision of the process that can be referred to as they progress through a unit of work, can help to structure an on-going dialogue, and can serve as a guide to progress. Without that vision, lessons can appear to learners as if they have no purpose other than to 'turn to page 6' and do a series of exercises that also appear to have no purpose other than that they should be completed.



The cycle illustrated above provides one possible framework for structuring such a dialogue. It can also help with lesson planning, and provides a means of auditing current practice (see Workshop 12).

The cycle is based on a sequence of 5 stages into which teaching and learning activities might be divided. It shows what teacher and learners will do at each stage of the process. Although each stage is important, not all the stages will take up the same amount of time, and each stage may contain number of internal 'loops' as different aspects of the current theme are tackled.

1. INTRODUCTION

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Clarify expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- unit plan- lesson plan- outcomes: what you will be able to do |
| Recall prior learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- what do you know already that we can use again now? |
| Prediction | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- what sort of things will we need to learn in order to achieve the outcomes? |

2. PRESENTATION

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Presentation of new material | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- small chunks (vocabulary items)- larger chunks (sentence patterns) |
| Modelling | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- guided practice in using new and recycled material- provide conceptual and multi-sensory 'pegs' to improve retention at later stages- establish access to reference material (notes/posters etc.) |

3. CONSOLIDATION

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|---------------------|--|
| 'Practice language' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- pupils manipulate vocabulary and structures under controlled conditions in order to internalise them (eg games, software)- opportunities for clarification and revision- combining ing new material with existing language store- building familiarity and confidence |
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4. USING REAL LANGUAGE

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|----------------------------|---|
| Experiencing real language | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- listening, reading- opportunities for extending and personalising own language store |
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Using language for real

talking, writing

- opportunities for creative use of language and producing a decent end product, performance or event
- where possible, establishing international communication for real purposes
- target language used for classroom interactions

5. DEBRIEFING

Review

- what have we learned?
- what can we do now that we couldn't do before?
- in what other contexts could we use this?

Evaluation

- what did we do well?
- what could we have done better?

Planning

- what would help us to remember what we have learned?

CONSOLIDATING LEARNING

Of the 5 stages listed here, Stages 2 and 4 usually receive the most attention. The Assessment (is) for Learning programme helps teachers to develop Stages 1 and 5. The stage most often ignored or passed over is Stage 3, yet this is arguably the most important. This is the point at which learners need to become familiar with the new knowledge recently encountered, to experiment with the new structures, to see how these combine with previously learned material, and to transfer all of that from working memory to long term storage.

If Stage 3 is omitted, or given scant attention, and if learners are moved on to Stage 4 without having 'processed' the new information, they will find the work more difficult than it need be, they will find the work difficult, or perhaps impossible. Result: lack of confidence, expectation of failure, demotivation, reluctance to engage, and - in some cases - activation of avoidance strategies.

If Stage 4 is well managed, with plenty of opportunities for games and game-like activities that allow learners to manipulate the new language for them selves in non-threatening pair and group situations, and which allow for randomised repetition (less boring than 'repeat-after-me...'), then they will be ready to move on confidently to the textual activities, with much increased chance of success and consequent motivation.

The reason most often given for underplaying Stage 3 is that there isn't time. But schools that have taken the time to develop stage 3 have found that improved confidence and motivation at Stage 4 have actually saved time and led to more satisfying achievement.

USING THE TARGET LANGUAGE

Teachers who have made use of this structure with their classes have found it useful to explain the distinction between language for practice and language for real purposes and to make explicit the transition from Stage 3 (where it is legitimate to use English to make things clear) to Stage 4 where using the target language for real classroom interactions is part of the rationale.

Working towards a situation in which learners can confidently use the target language for classroom interactions is no different from other topic work. The words and phrases need to undertake the desired task need to be presented, modelled and practised in just the same way, before they can confidently and consistently be used for real.

NOTES

Memory

Understanding is not the same as remembering. In order to remember what has been taught today, the learner must engage with it in some way, in order for the new material to be transferred from working memory (like RAM in computing) to 'storage' memory (ROM) where it can be held until needed.

Recall

Remembering is not the same as recalling (as many senior citizens will agree!) The understanding and knowledge will be there, in storage, but some learners have difficulty in retrieving the information from memory where it is stored. Allowing 'thinking time' will help, as will providing visual or kinaesthetic 'prompts' that have been put in place during Stage 2.

Chunking

Some learners have smaller working memories than others. This means that they can retain less information in a single operation than the teacher may expect. However, this does not mean that they can't learn, just that they need to be presented with new material in smaller chunks. For example: if 15 words of new vocabulary need to be learned in order to cope with a certain task, some will be unable to learn 15 new words all at once. But they may be able to learn 5, then another 5, then 5 more.

Assessment (is) for Learning

Note that the 5 stages listed here correspond with strategies used in the Assessment (is) for Learning programme:

1. Sharing learning goals
2. Effective questioning to ensure accuracy of learning
3. Individual and group work; use of self and peer assessment
4. Group work; peer support and assessment; tutor feedback; marking strategies
5. Reflecting on learning

Downloaded from: <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/cyclenotes.pdf>

See also:

Why aren't they learning? <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/why.html>