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November's Edition of
eCL
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The Teacher is a Ghost



Functional Language Without a Word - a sample lesson plan
by J. Werdelin

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Every time the teacher opens his mouth is a time the students' are told to close theirs. 'Nuff said.

The following sample lesson explores the tried and tested CELTA functional language lesson plan that most ESL teachers are familiar with, but replaces all stages and the ubiquitous pair-share-and-open-class-feedback with cooperative learning shells. Teacher's talk italicised. You don't get to say anything else. Essentially, as with most CL this is a *discovery exercise*, but micromanaged to ensure the precise timing, the individual accountability, the simultaneous interaction, etc. which distinguishes CL from chaotic group work.

Note that the details of picking who starts in mixed ability groups, alternative presentations of instructions and questions, choice of mobile and stationary pairs, ICQs (Instruction Checking Questions) etc. are outside the scope of this brief presentation. Please add in as you please and/or write suggestions at cooperativelarning.info. Also, the choice of target language is random, and tasks for Controlled and Free Practice are assumed available in course books, etc; as clarified on the blog, the shells as such are empty. The meaty bits are inserted by the individual teacher.

The class is placed in teams of four, preferable two pairs facing each other. Lesson duration is 60 minutes.

Functional language lesson				
"By the end of the lesson the students will be able to use the target language phrases correctly and appropriately when asking for and receiving advice."				
Stage/ Interaction	Time/Total	Stage aim	Instructions	Shells, step-by-step
1. Lead in & Set context	5/5	To generate interest in the topic of advice and to enable the students to understand the context of the language and therefore be able to access it more readily (<i>activating schemata</i>).	Teacher: <i>My tenure at your school ends Friday. I don't know what to do, can you give me some advice?</i>	<u>Word round:</u>
			<i>In turns, one suggestion pr. turn, 1 minute, go!</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher poses question /organises task. 2. Each student in the team takes turns giving one piece of advice to their teammates until time runs out. i.e. <i>"He could find another job..."</i>
			Teacher: <i>Each team, split into two pairs, both write all the ways you gave advice in the team, such as...(elicit one example from one team.. i.e. "If I were you, I'd..."). Open brainstorm. 3 minutes, go!</i>	<u>Double Notary Brainstorm</u>
				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher poses question/organises task. 2. Two members from each team write simultaneously as team brainstorms to remember and formulate their different statements.¹

¹ If teams are teacher-designed mixed ability, the weakest learner should write. Also, Word Round (as above) may be used in this stage to support passive students in having a say.

2. Elicit/give language	20/25	<p>To focus on functions of the language and reinforce meaning already set with context</p>	<p>Teacher: <i>One pair from each team, get up and walk to next team with your list. Share your lists and write down every phrase you don't have already. Discuss if you disagree. Take notes on disagreements.</i></p> <p>NOTE: the number of teams visited may be limited by time constriction: a class of 20 students in 5 teams, each pair getting 3 minutes at each team + 1 minute to move and settle, takes 20 minutes (5 tables @ 4 minutes each).</p>	<p><u>Two-for-Tea</u>² (See Fig. 1, p.5):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The selected individuals sit down at the next team's table. 2. Taking turns, newcoming pair and home pairs present their teams' ideas to each other from their individual lists, and write down input. 3. On teacher's signal, the mobile pair thanks, stands and moves to next team. 4. Repeat 1-3 until arriving back at their own "home teams." <p>By the time this is done, most functional language related to giving advice already known within the class should have been discovered, discussed, written on all the lists, whether grammatically correct or not, and shared throughout the class,</p>
		<p>Teacher: <i>Pairs, compare your lists one phrase at a time and discuss formulation and grammar. Every time you agree on phrase, run to the board and write it. If your idea has been written by another team, <u>only</u> write if your formulation differs.</i></p> <p>All suggestions on board: <i>If I were you, I'd...</i> <i>If I was you, I...</i> <i>Why didn't you..</i> <i>Why do you ...</i> <i>Why don't you...</i> <i>You could...</i> <i>You can...</i> <i>You must..</i> <i>How about...</i> <i>Etc...</i></p>	<p><u>Pair-Compare</u> including <u>Boardwalk</u></p> <p>All students are now back in their teams with two copious lists inflated by input from tables visited by the mobile pair as well as from visitors passing by the stationary host pair.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One phrase at a time, the mobile pair travelling the class presents the additions to their list picked from the other teams they have visited and discuss formulation and grammar. 2. One phrase at a time, the other pair (the host pair) presents additions from their visitors and discuss formulation and grammar. 3. As they agree, they send a representative up to write it on the board.³ 	

² In other situations, one may leave the home table while the remaining three members stay to receive only one guest. When to do what is another discussion outside the scope of this presentation.

³ Running dictation competition might be used here to stir up a tired class.

3. Focus on form	10/35	<p>To enable accurate use of TL :</p> <p>Correct target language.</p> <p>Clarify grammatical issues <i>of infinitive vs. gerund</i> on board.</p>	<p>Teacher: <i>I am going to point out two or three similar phrases. Then in your teams, discuss which one you believe is correct. Then I will appoint a random person from all teams to give your decision.</i></p> <p><i>[The person furthest from me]in each team, raise your hand when I point to the phrase your team decided on. If other teams disagree, explain your stance in open class.</i></p>	<p><u>Team Vote Representative</u>⁴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher points out similar phrases on board, i.e. <i>Why didn't you.../Why do you ... /Why don't you...</i> 2. In an open team discussion, teams are given time to compare selected statements, spotting the correct statement, i.e. why didn't you...Why do you ...<i>Why don't you...</i> 3. A random person in each team is selected by teacher to signal as his/her team choices. 4. The teacher allows representatives to discuss differences between teams in open class, but usually - because the previous discovery work - disagreements will be limited. 5. Teacher deletes incorrect statements, leaving only target language on board.⁵ <p>OPTIONAL: skip step 4 and simply confirm and/or correct phrases on board.</p>
		<p><i>I am going to split all the phrases into two groups. Every time I put a statement into a group, you get 30 seconds to discuss which rule you think I am following. Give your team's suggestion in open class. Go!</i></p>	<p><u>Team-based Guess the Rule:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher classifies one or two statements into unnamed categories (by writing them on different sides of board, underlining existing statements with two different colours, numbering them, etc.) 2. In the open team discussions, teams attempt to come up with the hidden rule behind the classification. If they cannot guess, the next statement is classified by teacher, etc. 3. Once the correct rule is elicited, the successful team presents their reasoning to other teams in open class, teacher makes corrections as necessary.⁶ 	

⁴ Note that this shell is ideal for team competitions.

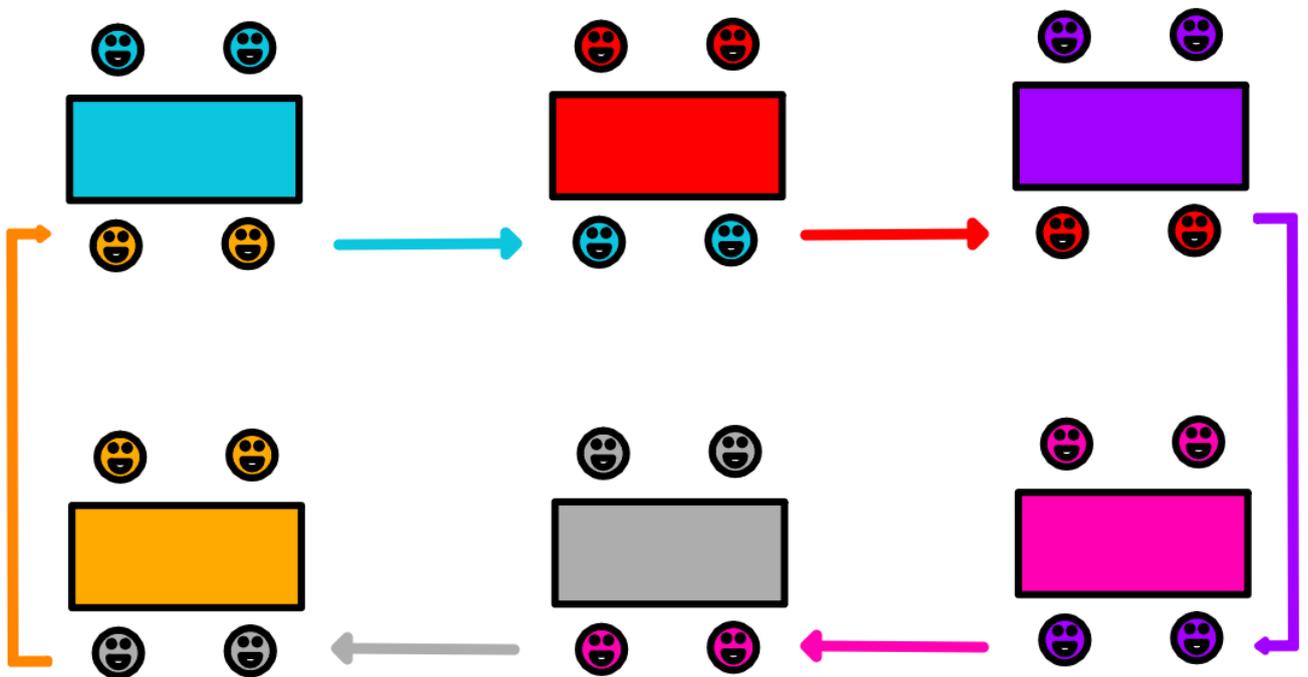
⁵ Note that a more student centred form such as *Carrousel Presentation* might be inserted here prior to board feedback if teacher monitoring reveals a lot of grammatical problems. In this way the ensuing open class feedback is reduced.

⁶ In this case the use of infinitive vs. gerund are clarified: *Why don't you find a job* (infinitive verb +) VS. *Try... finding a job* (gerund verb +)

<p>4. Focus on pronunciation</p>	<p>5/40</p>	<p>To enable accurate pronunciation and intonation of target language.</p>	<p>Drill and correct, individually and chorally.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Controlled Practice activity</p>	<p>10/50</p>	<p>To provide controlled practice of target language form.</p>	<p>Two gap-fill exercise sheets pr. four man team. <i>Teacher: All teams, work in two pairs each, sharing one pencil and one sheet Partner A, solve exercise one orally and explain your rationale to Partner B. Partner B write down the answer if you agree. If you don't, then discuss. Call me only if your whole team can't reach an agreement.</i></p>	<p><u>Boss&Secretary</u> with built in <u>Pair-Compare</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Partner A orally solves a problem and explains rationale. Partner B writes partner A's solution⁷. In case of disagreement, partners discuss. Swap roles and continue until sheet is empty or time runs out. In case of insoluble disagreements, pair compares with other pair's solution. When all exercises are solved, all answers are compared. <p>FILLER ACTIVITY: If several teams finish prematurely, send two-for-tea (see above).</p>

Fig.1: Two-for-Tea

(First move of six)



⁷ Especially with younger learners, the social skills aspect of giving and receiving praise and thanking for help and advice is crucial here, and should always be integrated with exemplary phrases and gambits.

6. Free Practice activity	5/55	<p>To provide freer practice of target language, including appropriate responses.</p>	<p>PREPERATION: Teacher: <i>How can we answer when people give us advice?</i></p> <p>Teacher elicits max two gambit to advice answers (i.e. <i>Thanks, I'll try that</i>), Write on board, drill.</p> <p>OPTIONAL: Teacher: <i>With the person next to you, give advice and thank using these answers.</i></p> <p>MATERIALS: solicit advice to problems they have made up, taken from course book, flashcards printed by teacher or written by him on board, etc.</p> <p>Teacher: <i>Stand up, material in hand, walk around and find a partner. Ask for advice and give advice. Don't forget to thank for the advice. (OPTIONAL: Swap material/questions.) Bid farewell, find a new partner and proceed from step one. Go!</i></p>	<p>See Shell#2 <u>GrabPartner</u> in July's Newsletter.</p> <p>A: <i>"I've discovered one of my classmate's cheating on his exams!"</i></p> <p>B: <i>"Well, you could help him prepare for the test instead!"</i></p> <p>A: <i>"Thanks, I'll try that."</i></p>
7. Feedback	5/60	<p>Giving feedback to content and language</p>	<p>Teacher asks about content: <i>did you get some good advice?</i></p> <p>Teacher goes through one or two items picked up during monitoring in open class feedback.</p> <p>FILLER ACTIVITY: ask for advice to personal problems.</p>	<p>OPTIONAL: Use <u>Word Round</u> described above for content feedback.</p>