**ALL London Webinar: Steve Smith 'Teaching with Texts'**

**14.09.14**

**Link for recording:** [**http://lancelot.adobeconnect.com/p565kmtb0g5/**](http://lancelot.adobeconnect.com/p565kmtb0g5/)

**Notes of session (taken by Helen Myers):**

**Helen's notes of webinar**

**Notes.**

Introductions from Helen

Steve chose topic 'teaching with texts' - staple for language teachers

Select text - ask questions in target language.

Has since discovered other strategies

Text = comprehensible input

Need to exploit to allow the 'multiskill' approach

**What can you do which maximises this?**

1. Pre-reading

Get them interested in the topic of the text -

- show Youtube

-word association game on topic of text

-work in pairs (one person object if not relevant)

(Same for listening - something to 'whet the appetite' .. even not in TL - anything to stimulate class)

2. Reading aloud

You can control the speed of reading .. Could get them to follow with their finger

Good model of listening - so 2 skills at the same time

Helps for intonation e.g. in French - rising intonation

But don't spend too long reading aloud

Reference: Frenchteacher.net ...

3. Jigsaw reading .. cut up and they reconstruct

Can now be done electronically, but they also enjoy it with paper

Downside: silent reading, not much communication (though in pairs they do - but **pairs may end up speaking English together - OK, but not optimal practice**

4. Matching headlines to paragraphs / matching summaries to paragraphs

But does not bring in multi skill exploitation

NB students enjoy activities when they communicate .. especially 6th form

5. 'Find the French / German'

Put together vocab list to complete

Can be done orally / as a whole class - to control pace

6. Find cognates .. synonyms, antonyms ...

Key = good quality input

7. Questions ...

open-ended / true/false. .

variations ...

Deliberately give false statements which they have to correct

Pairs better than groups

**Discussion: Use of target language?**

Steve feels it should be TL to maximise use of target language

English may be best for testing - but backlash is that there may be too much English in the classroom

8. Memory aural/oral Gapfill .... after seeing the text - instant aural gapfill

Good filler.. if going too fast / Good plenary ... turn over / check / what do you remember?

9. Dictation - teacher dictation (rather than pair dictation) Steve's preference though if motivation/ fun needed, you may want pair

10. Purely authentic tense rarely the best 'adapted authentic' better for Steve -

Needs to be pitched one step beyond. Krashen: 'Knowledge plus 1' .. take what they know and push them a bit beyond. Acknowledge the reality of teaching in the classroom.

Controversial view possibly as some may feel you must prepare pupils for experience in the country. Argument: to get to that point you need to go through a series of stages. Authentic rarely has kind of input which lead to the result.

**Discussion**

Bottom line: will they find it interesting? Can you relate it to their experience?

**Sources:**

Wikipedia .. English / French sources - own translations / adaptations ... 2/3 different .. adapt ... Problem when Magazine / newspaper articles .. level of language is beyond A level

Steve avoids topical - limited shelf-life ...

Please share what you can ...

11. Translation -into English

Positive: detail - motivational

Negative : temptation to use English in lesson

Steve avoids translation into English

Trans into TL can "fix grammar" . On avoiding trans into English - point that it becomes a test of English as much as comprehension at A-level. Good fun and useful, but there are better things you can do.

12. Translation into TL

Students enjoy this .. 'this is a session when you ask any questions you like' ....

BUT

Uses up time which could be used to practise in TL

Send any ideas to Steve ....

Free resources ...::Resources / samples / 'The Modern Language Teacher's Handbook' .. Compendium of blogs etc .. 70 pages ...

**Ideas from participants:**

S.Hurlet:Students read aloud only one word at a time

Rachel Britt:Or could read 5 words, 7 words or 10 words then say 'popcorn' or 'rhubarb' and choose next pupil

Charlotte:Teacher reads aloud, but in a pattern (every other word / only nouns / words that end in a consonant) and students have to follow and then see if they can work out the next word the teacher will say. They can then go into pairs and read their own patters out to a partner.

felizz7:www.ados.fr has good short articles that could be adapted

Sandra:http://1jour1actu.com/ is also good for adapting authentic texts

Claire Parker:I find pupils love "retranslation" after translating first.

S.Hurlet:Change key words into strange words (i.e. bradebo) and work out the key word from the sentence / text

Claire Parker:rom French to Eng then cellotape onto table so they can't see and they have to translate it back

Claire Parker:Fold over the original

**Chat Transcript**

Helen Myers:Welcome everyone!

Claire Parker:Hello Helen and Steve. I'm CLaire from Worcester

Sandra:Hello!

Aurélien Cassan:Hello!

miriam collinson (newbury):Hello everyone , especially Zoe !

Aurélien Cassan:My laptop is playing up.

Claire Parker:I have a lovely Toulousain accent!

Helen McCrory:Hello

Zoe Johnson:hello everyone.

Claire Parker:Should we mute our speakers?

Sandra:I think we lose the sound if we mute them

Claire Parker:k merci!

Steve Smith:Hi from Steve

Zoe Johnson:I'm prepping after this. Already marked this morning! hoping to get some ideas for my lessons!

Steve Smith:Hope you have a cuppa nearby.

felizz7:Hello all!

felizz7:Sorry, Rachel Britt!

Steve Smith:Hi felizz7

Steve Smith:Hi Rachel

Steve Smith:It's the first time I have done this. Be forgiving!

Aurélien Cassan 2:I think it's working now! hi everyone :)

Steve Smith:Hi Aurélien

Anita Welsh:Hi Steve

Steve Smith:Hi Anita

S.Hurlet:Hi everyone

Anita Welsh:looking forward to this Anita

Steve Smith:Hi S Hurlet

Claire Parker:Hi Joe!!

Joe Dale:Hi everyone!

Anna Pethybridge:Hi everyone

Sandra:Hi Joe!

Steve Smith:Hi Anna

Steve Smith:Hi Joe

Steve Smith:Hi Claire

Joe Dale:Hi Claire, Sandra and Steve!

Joe Dale:Yay!

Steve Smith:Yay

felizz7:Hola gatito!

Steve Smith:Hi Nancy

Zoe Johnson:Zoe Johnson Newbury Head of German

Gillian Peiser:HI everyone. I am a PGCE tutor at Liverpool John Moores University.

Steve Smith:Hi Gillian

Rachel Britt:I teach in Hampshire. Deputy Head of MFL

Nancy Serrao 3:Hello Steve :-)

Charlotte:Hello, I'm Charlotte, from Manchester :

Anna Pethybridge:I'm lead practitioner for MFL at Biddick Academy in Washington, Tyne and Wear

Nicola Knott:Hi everyone, I'm Nicola. Currently teaching A level Spanish in Rochdale

Nathan J:Hi all, I'm Nathan, a Head of French in London

Vicci Harrison:Hi everyone. I'm a French & Spanish teacher in Halifax (Yr 7-13)

Nancy Serrao 3:I teach French and Spanish to A'level. Head of French also in Hinchley Wood school,surrey

Claire Parker:Hi all Claire Parker @ceparker71 HOD from Worcester French, German. yr7-11

Joe Dale:Hi all, I'm an independent languages consultant and soon to be daddy!

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Hi - NQT French & Latin, London

Helen McCrory:I teach at West Lakes Academy, Cumbria, 2nd in MFL

Dee:Dee Quigley I teach French and German in Essex

Nancy Serrao 3:Congratulations Joe !!

miriam collinson (newbury):Hi, I'm Mim and I teach French and German in Newbury,Berkshire

Omarah Aziz:Hi. NQT - French

Aurélien Cassan:hi, NQT French and Spanish in Cambridge

Nolwenn Burkey:HI everyone, I am Nolwenn, I teach French, Spanish and Latin

Joe Dale:Thanks Nancy!

Steve Smith:Hi Nolwenn

Steve Smith:Hi Omarah

Nolwenn Burkey:Hi Steve, your website has become my favourite to teach A Level, the listening exercises are a real gem

Omarah Aziz:Hi Steve!

Anna Pethybridge:Love Frenchteacher.net

Nolwenn Burkey:absolutely read the text with them and then use it for dictation

Helen Myers:See 'key links for today' to open Steve's site

Helen Myers:V good points Steve

Rachel Britt:Yes 83% said yes

Vicci Harrison:We saw the results of the poll!

Gillian Peiser:I cannot hear Helen.

Nolwenn Burkey:I hve seen the first results, not the second one

Rachel Britt:Yes we can see that

Charlotte:I depends on the level and the purpose of the questioning ... for example for GCSE practice, it's better to question in Enlgish as that is what the exam is like?

Nolwenn Burkey:Yes we can

Vicci Harrison:Second results on show now.

Helen Myers:Thanks to everyone for humouring me!

Anna Pethybridge:Any chance you could move the poll box away from the chat box?

Anna Pethybridge:Thanks :)

Nolwenn Burkey:many thanks for all of this Helen

Helen Myers:Gillian : can you hear anyhting at all?

Helen Myers:Great idea Steve - never domne this .. will fdo it next week!!

Helen Myers:(sorry about typo)

Anna Pethybridge:Like that idea

Nolwenn Burkey:thanks for this Steve, I will use this with my year 8 Spanish together

Vicci Harrison:I'm going to try this Period 1 tomorrow!

Gillian Peiser:yes, I can hear everything Steve is saying.

Rachel Britt:Really like the turn over sheet, memory check idea. Checks they were on task

Aurélien Cassan:I always make my own and I feel they work better as they feel confident to use prior knowledge and are also challenged with new structures, vocab etc

Zoe Johnson:for a level German gutefrage.net or yahoo questions are good as the answers are short but has a lot of up to date topics and opinions

Nolwenn Burkey:choose carefully some texts from ouest france can be done, le mond's are too difficult

Gillian Peiser:For cultural learning the authentic is not always best - an 'insider' may not necessarily be explicit about a cultural issue.

S.Hurlet:How long are you spending on a text?

Nolwenn Burkey:absolutely even the bilingual kids will find it tricky

Gillian Peiser:can others hear Helen?

Anna Pethybridge:Q how would Ofsted feel about lack of authenticity?

Nolwenn Burkey:i can hear Helen

felizz7:I agree that authentic texts are best WHEN adapted. Mini trip advisor reviews are great as are cartoons

Claire Parker:Q do we have any ideas about the sort of texts that might be in the new GCSE's?

Anna Pethybridge:Thanks

Zoe Johnson:trip advisor is good and you can do a 5 you know, 5 you guess, 5 no clue with them

Claire Parker:That is good to hear Helen

Sandra:I agree, we also want students to feel that they can go on and use the vocabulary in writing or in conversations.

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Completely agree - spent ages on Fr & Sp World Cup - for very short self-life :-)

Anna Pethybridge:lightbilb languages has good source of world cup stuff each time round

Anna Pethybridge:lightbulb\*

Charlotte:The poll is closed for me?

Helen Myers:Yes - Anna.. great site from Clare Seccombe (Light bulb)

Helen Myers:(Charlotte - did you see it eventually?)

Charlotte:Yes, thank you

Helen Myers:Great Charlotte!

Aurélien Cassan:I am not sure I understood your views on translation from English into TL, Steve?

Rachel Britt:I also enjoyed Whitmarsh!

Claire Parker:Q if it is in the new GCSe then we will need to practise anyway

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Is there a value in paraphrase?

Charlotte:I agree Claire ... It would be great to teach lessons with content that we desired, and in ways that we desired, but if we are ultimately judged on exam results, we HAVE to practise the skills contained in the exams!

Claire Parker:It also gives pps the chance to think about grammatical issues that they may have found tricky

Claire Parker:i remember adding to that!

Helen Myers:http://www.frenchteacher.net/teachers-guide/using-film/

Rachel Britt:I have that Steve and it was very useful in our Dept. NQTs really appreciated it too

Nicola Knott:Thank you very much! It's been great!

Joe Dale:Great session Steve

Aurélien Cassan:thanks a lot :)

Alaina Smith:Thanks very much - it was really useful!

S.Hurlet:Thank you, great ideas

Nathan J:Very useful session, thank you very much!

Anita Welsh:Wonderful session Steve

Claire Parker:Many thanks Steve. I look forward to hearing from you again!

Gillian Peiser:thanks very much Steve - lots of ideas to share with student teachers!

Helen McCrory:Thank you very much

Vicci Harrison:Merci beaucoup

miriam collinson (newbury):Thanks very much Steve and Helen .

Sandra:Thank you!

Rachel Britt:Thank you Steve! I'll be using these ideas next week!

Omarah Aziz:Thank you Steve and Helen - great ideas

Charlotte:Thank you both, very useful!

Nancy Serrao:Thank you very much Helen and Steve!!

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Thanks so much!!!

Zoe Johnson:so sad my broad band crashed and has only just come back on :(

Claire Parker:Many thanks Helen for organising the Webinar! Merci Beaucoup

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Vasskervitvh

S.Hurlet:See you at the language live show !

Joe Dale:Claire, you should offer to do a webinar!

Steve Smith:thank you all for tolerating me

Lee Lyons:Hi there,

Claire Parker:It's great!!

Claire Parker:From French to Eng then cellotape onto table so they cant see and they have to translate it back

Lee Lyons:My broadband has struggled with this webinar for some reason - I'm hoping that I'll have more luck with the recording. I was wondering - will you be sharing the ideas with the link too?

Claire Parker:they love it!

Helen Myers:If anyoen want to activate audio . web cam feel free!

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Very very interesting point about not penalising lack of imagination!

Aurélien Cassan:I agree with Helen and I feel translation gives them the tool to really understand language and opportunities to be more creative.

S.Hurlet:It boosts their confidence if they can translate some sentences from Eng to TL

Sharon Waszkiewicz:Congrats Joe! You will need those noise blocking headphones in the weeks to come...:-)

Vicci Harrison:Fingers crossed everything goes OK Joe!