

Learning Strategies

1. **What did you learn about culturally relevant teaching from this observation? Include at least one in – text citation from the current class readings to support your response.** Is there something that was particularly useful in this lesson? Was there clear evidence of a high quality lesson? Were the learning goals and objectives clearly reviewed and evident?

The most useful thing I learned from this observation is just how powerful kinetic learning can be for motivation and engagement. The Board Race activity seemed to excite the students. Now I couldn't glean a lot about the cultural relevance, though the backgrounds of the students seemed varied, and everyone seemed to be treated equal. I think if the video had been longer, had I seen more of the day's teaching, I might have seen how the students and teacher knew each other. But, there was evidence for the truth of Lisa Delpit's quote from her book *Other People's Children* of "In order to teach you, I must know you." It seemed the teacher knew the student fairly well, and knew that Chocolate bars would be a motivating factor to keep the students trying to win the game and not just get through the lesson. All if it adding to an exciting and fun lesson.

2. **What have you learned from this observation that relates to your current TESOL class?** Discuss two strategies from your current course work and readings that were evident in this lesson. Was there a section where learner engagement and student understanding could be improved?

One strategy, the teacher in the Board Race video applied was simply treating everyone equally. Each student had the same role in the game. Each participated. There didn't seem to be any distinctions between anyone that left anyone out. Another strategy, that worked well, was correcting and giving feedback on answers, particularly when students used the words from the game in a sentence. The corrections were about very subtle matters, (including an article in the sentence when one was missing, for instance) but were very important for student understanding. I wish I had seen more of the context and set up of the lesson. This was about comparative adjectives, and I would have liked to have seen how she explained when -er is used and when the "more" form is used. But I suspect that obviously happened, just not in the portion of the lesson I saw. But reinforcing that reasons behind the form or the rules and exceptions to the forms, would strengthen student understanding.

Connecting to TESOL Classwork

3. **Discuss the learner engagement for this lesson.**

I don't think you can get students more engaged than they were in this video. I think getting the students up and moving fast, thinking fast, playing a game made it very engaging using many senses. The students seemed to be having a blast while they were learning.

4. **Were there informal assessments (checking for understanding) during this lesson that prove understanding and clarity on the part of the student?** Describe these assessments in detail. Were they stressful? What additional assessments could you add if you were the teacher?

There were a couple of assessments the teacher used. First at the end of the game, to confirm the winner, she went through the word list to check that each answer was correct. She asked the students for their input on it, which gets the students to think about it one more time, building and reinforcing the skill by repetition. She also then asked students to use the word in a sentence, further reinforcing the skill – and getting them to hear the sound, speak it, and put it in context. She would also correct the sentence for any errors that might occur. I thought it was really well done. As I said in an answer above. Repeating the reasons why a word might use the -er or the “more” form would have been a further useful repetition and enforcement.

Things to Remember

5. **Is there something from this observation that really stands out?** With your example/s, justify your reasoning.

Getting the students up away from their desks and moving around in a purposeful manner like that demanded from a board race was very effective. Sometimes coming up with the proper form of a new word can be mentally taxing and make people shut down and even not be able to think of something that they ordinarily would have no problem with. But by getting people moving, and concentrating on being fast and writing something on the board, I suspect, makes students focus not on the mental challenge so much and they’re able to engage and come up with correct answers in a less stressful, fun way.

Current Classwork

6. **Based on the classroom environment, did you find the space to be designed to be inclusive of all learners (race cultures, special needs, genders, religions, SES, etc)? In other words, is it a culturally relevant environment?** Explain.

The space seemed pretty neutral to me. There was not a lot of decoration. There were two pictures on the otherwise plain walls: a landscape and a drawing of a flowering plant. Certainly nothing objectionable. It was set up to be fairly equal and importantly, for the way the teacher taught the lesson, was very well arranged to allow the students room to move around the whiteboard.