More on CLT / TBLT activities

A sample CLT lesson (CLT or hybrid CLT-PPP design, with communicative goal), with the following outline:

1. Language presentation, i.e., demo (with authentic material)
2. Explanation & discussion
3. Focused practice
4. Activity (communicative practice, goal directed)
5. Student presentation
6. Discussion

Lesson: Restaurant activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stage</th>
<th>class activity</th>
<th>objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro Presentation</td>
<td>T introduces topic. T shows media clip of customers ordering food in a restaurant (e.g., from TV show or movie)</td>
<td>Intro topic, present authentic language sample</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explanation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Ask general comprehension questions (what kind of restaurant, where it might take place, etc.) Explain non-familiar routines or food items mentioned</td>
<td>Make sure Ss understand dialogue &amp; culturally unfamiliar elements (e.g., names / types of Western foods)</td>
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<td>Focused practice</td>
<td>Ask specific comprehension questions Choral repetition of phrases Role play the conversation as a whole class</td>
<td>Enhance understanding, practice forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group activity</td>
<td>Groups create their own restaurant dialogues / skits</td>
<td>communicative practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student presentation</td>
<td>One or more groups performs for the whole class</td>
<td>communicative practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Teacher goes over student performances, notes any errors, suggests alternative phrases or ideas</td>
<td>correcting errors, making Ss aware of other possible expressions</td>
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Variation: Use the humorous ‘Soup Nazi’ epidodes from the American TV Seinfeld (available on youtube.com), which takes place in a soup cafeteria setting, and do humorous skits with oddly behaving servers or customers.
A task-based approach

Task-based Learning offers an alternative for language teachers. In a task-based lesson the teacher doesn’t pre-determine what language will be studied, the lesson is based around the completion of a central task and the language studied is determined by what happens as the students complete it. The lesson follows certain stages.

Pre-task
The teacher introduces the topic and gives the students clear instructions on what they will have to do at the task stage and might help the students to recall some language that may be useful for the task. The pre-task stage can also often include playing a recording of people doing the task. This gives the students a clear model of what will be expected of them. The students can take notes and spend time preparing for the task.

Task
The students complete a task in pairs or groups using the language resources that they have as the teacher monitors and offers encouragement.

Planning
Students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class what happened during their task. They then practice what they are going to say in their groups. Meanwhile the teacher is available for the students to ask for advice to clear up any language questions they may have.

Report
Students then report back to the class orally or read the written report. The teacher chooses the order of when students will present their reports and may give the students some quick feedback on the content. At this stage the teacher may also play a recording of others doing the same task for the students to compare.

Analysis
The teacher then highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for the students to analyse. They may ask students to notice interesting features within this text. The teacher can also highlight the language that the students used during the report phase for analysis.

Practice
Finally, the teacher selects language areas to practise based upon the needs of the students and what emerged from the task and report phases. The students then do practice activities to increase their confidence and make a note of useful language.

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1 The following is taken directly from: http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/a-task-based-approach.
**The advantages of TBL**

Task-based learning has some clear advantages

- Unlike a PPP approach, the students are free of language control. In all three stages they must use all their language resources rather than just practising one pre-selected item.
- A natural context is developed from the students’ experiences with the language that is personalised and relevant to them. With PPP it is necessary to create contexts in which to present the language and sometimes they can be very unnatural.
- The students will have a much more varied exposure to language with TBL. They will be exposed to a whole range of lexical phrases, collocations and patterns as well as language forms.
- The language explored arises from the students’ needs. This need dictates what will be covered in the lesson rather than a decision made by the teacher or the coursebook.
- It is a strong communicative approach where students spend a lot of time communicating. PPP lessons seem very teacher-centred by comparison. Just watch how much time the students spend communicating during a task-based lesson.
- It is enjoyable and motivating.

**Consciousness-raising activities**

The simplest way of raising awareness is by providing feedback (e.g. “you said X, but you should have said Y”). Depending on how it is done, there is nothing wrong with this, but (1) it can be perceived negatively, (2) does not particularly involve the students in the learning process, and (3) tends to become rather repetitive. Jane and Dave Willis⁴, two of the most well-known names in TBL, suggest a much richer menu of CR activities to add to our repertoire. They include the following ideas in their list:

1. Ask students to search a set of data (this could be a text or examples you have selected yourself) to identify a particular pattern.
2. Ask students to group a set of language examples according to similarities or differences.
3. Give students a generalization about language (a language ‘rule’) and ask them to check it against a set of data.
4. Ask students to find similarities or differences between English language patterns and patterns in their own language.
5. Ask students to recall and reconstruct elements of a text that will draw their attention to significant language features.

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3 The following is from [http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?catid=59430&docid=146389](http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?catid=59430&docid=146389)
4 [http://www.willis-elt.co.uk](http://www.willis-elt.co.uk)