

Putting Learners in the Driving Seat

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How do we involve all our students in class? Shyness, little motivation or large groups make it easier said than done. I will share classroom techniques, and a range of ideas, that go from zero preparation activities to integrating technology, that promote memorable class experiences where all students take control by **personalizing**, **collaborating** and **creating** during their language learning journey.

Ana Isabel Fernández has been an English teacher for over twenty years and is currently working at EOI A Coruña. Nowadays her focus is on feedback and on encouraging students to become autonomous learners. She is also interested in finding where languages and learning meet technology, which is why she is constantly experimenting with blogging, social networks and mobile apps.

Let's help learners drive!

- ✚ Using sticky notes and paper stripes to personalize vocabulary learning and help them create their own and games and maps.
 - For brainstorming/writing wishes or messages. *Follow-up idea: keeping them and using them in future classes for revising, explaining.*
 - For brainstorming pros and cons: A class mingle activity to help them with the use of linkers and essay writing. *Follow-up: writing a composition.*
 - For learning and revising vocabulary:
 - Learners' choice: *After some lessons, students are asked to write down the words or phrases that they found most interesting, or the ones they feel would be difficult to remember, and afterwards, we post them on our notice board. After a few lessons, during which the words remained visible all the time, the students are given the notes at random and we play any of the following 1) a defining game. 2) General revision with translation 3) learners make gap-filling sentences for their partners to guess the missing word. For more details:*
<https://learnerfirstdiary.wordpress.com/2014/11/07/helping-words-stick/>
 - Teacher's choice: *The teacher chooses some relevant language that came up in past classes and uses sticky notes to make them work out collocations, verb phrases or verb patterns. An example is*
<https://learnerfirstdiary.wordpress.com/2014/11/30/the-post-it/>

- Headlines: students are asked to write headlines that summarize a classmate's presentation or talk. *Follow-up idea: keeping them all together and bringing them to class and play a game in which they should try to remember what the talk was about and some details.*
 - Asking students to write gap-filled sentences with the missing word at the back to use in class.
- ✚ Classroom techniques: the notice board and classroom display.
- The notice board and the information it may display: *Word of the week / quotes (students bring them to class)/QR codes that link to interesting texts, blog posts and sites/ headlines and summaries of students' talks and presentations / collections of sticky notes and games from class / topic questions for #classroomhashtag ...*
 - Classroom display: It is probably one of the most fundamental aspects of the classroom to allow a more inclusive and learner-centered atmosphere.

Learners as drivers and...makers!

I will show you some examples of classroom work resulting from learner's collaborative work and involvement:

- ✚ Posters
- ✚ Digital presentations
- ✚ Classroom materials
- ✚ Podcasts

All the examples will be made available on this blog: learnerfirstdiary.wordpress.com

Many can be seen already on our classroom blog: [One Click Closer](#) and our classroom Twitter account [@oneclickcloser](#)

I hope this talk has been a worthwhile stop in your own learning journey!

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