

Artifact I

Classroom Observation Report

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Name of observer: Yang ZhangLevel of class observed: Elementary Spanish Class
(for undergraduates)Topic of the day's lesson: Introduce several basic verbs and how to use them in a context**Indicate whether the teaching strategies below were *effective* or *ineffective*.****Briefly JUSTIFY your assessment.**

- Use of target language [quality and quantity of L2; teacher talk vs. student talk] :
√ **effective** **ineffective**

The instructor speaks Spanish fluently. During the instruction, she spoke Spanish most of the time, except for the situations when the students couldn't follow her and she needed to explain something or give direction in English. Students spoke basic and simple Spanish when asking or answering questions, and speaking to the whole class. However, in pair discussion, they preferred to speak English, especially when they needed to clarify themselves and negotiate meaning.

- Use / integration of 4 skills [listening, speaking, reading, writing]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

The instructor did well in integrating these four skills. Through the whole class, students had lots of opportunities to practice speaking Spanish by using what they had learned before. Besides listening to their teacher, they also did two listening exercises including conversations and short passages. The reading and writing materials were comparatively easy. Students were asked to read statements and find the verbs and subjects or answer the questions in sentences after reading.

- Use of visuals [book, board, technology supported]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

The instructor successfully employed a variety of visual tools. She used PowerPoint slides to introduce vocabulary. Every word was matched with a picture to demonstrate its meaning. When explaining the meaning of the words, the instructor used her body language to make the input more comprehensible to students. For example, she pretended to play basketball and tennis when explaining the word "jugar" which means playing in English. She also used the board to explain words. For instance, she explained "amar" which means loving in English by drawing two hearts linked by an arrow on the board. Of course, the book is a basic tool. She asked students to go back to their textbooks to review after she explained the vocabulary.

- Length / variety of activities [indicate average # of minutes per activity]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

There were various activities in this class, including review, pair discussion and class game. Every activity went around 10 minutes, except for the game at the end of the class. This activity lasted a little bit longer, because the instructor tried to involve everyone in. In this game,

every student was picked by one of their classmates and was asked to answer a question about whether they did a particular activity. I like this game a lot because the instructor made use of the learners by asking them self-related questions and let them more actively participate in learning.

- Personalization of materials [relevance to students' lives]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

I think the materials were greatly personalized. Since the topic of this lesson was verbs, the instructor gave students lots of examples relevant to their lives when explaining the vocabulary. For instance, she mentioned Justin Bieber, a Canadian singer when explaining “cantar” which means singing in English. When teaching “danzar”, the Spanish-version “dance”, the instructor talked about prom, which undergraduates had experienced before. The materials of the exercise in which the students were asked to find the verbs and subjects in sentences were designed in the format of Twitter that they are quite familiar with. The students were also asked to thread a piece of their own twitter after class.

- Small group work [number of students, purpose of activity]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

In this class, students were asked to work with their peers in pair. Due to the odd number of the students, there was one group consisting of three people. The purpose of the pair discussion was letting students have a better understanding of the verbs by working together and negotiating meaning. The students discussed with each other and reached an agreement upon answers to the questions. During the discussion, sometimes they explained the materials to each other, which I think improved their understanding.

- Error correction [frequency and kind]:
√ **effective** **ineffective**

The instructor didn't correct students' error too often. Usually, she did this when the students failed to express themselves or passed on the wrong message. Instead of pointing out their error directly, the teacher repeated students' sentence in a question form at first, trying to let them find mistakes on their own. If they failed to do this, she would say the correct sentence and made sure that the students got her point. After they tried again and gave her the right information, she encouraged them by saying “Excellent!” in Spanish.

Was this lesson successful? BRIEFLY justify your overall evaluation of the class.

very successful √ somewhat successful not successful

In my mind, this class, in general, was very successful. Although this was an elementary class for very beginners, the instructor insisted on speaking Spanish for instruction. She employed a variety of visual tools to make language input more accessible to the students. The usage of PowerPoint slides,

facial expression and body language not only facilitated the students' understanding, but also engaged them in learning. I noticed that even though some of the students couldn't understand the teacher at first, they finally made it after she repeated and emphasized for several times. The teaching materials were not so authentic, but they were greatly relevant to students' lives. The language was used in an authentic way. Considering that the students are very beginners, it is understandable that they negotiated with each other in English during the small group work. The teacher tried to let her students speak Spanish as much as they can by walking around the classroom and sometimes participating in the discussion. Also, through the pair discussion, the students had a better understanding of the verbs and how to use them correctly. Another thing I noticed is that the students in this class weren't afraid to try, even if they made mistakes. When they had questions, they asked the teacher without hesitation. I think it was because the instructor corrected their errors in a kind way and created a safe learning atmosphere. Of course, not everything is perfect. As the class approached, some students began to lose their attention. It seemed like that their minds were wandering. I'm not sure whether it was because the class was at noon or because the substantial Spanish input made students feel tired, but it definitely was not a good sign. The instructor needed to take more measures to engage students in. Overall, I think it was a successful lesson.