

English UK South West

Annual Conference and AGM, 27th October 2018
Millfield School, Somerset

The Facilitation Thing

Adrian Underhill

adrianpronchart.wordpress.com
demandhighelt.wordpress.com

Overview

1. **Is there a difference** between teaching and facilitating?
2. **Factor X** Essential to high level teaching artistry?
 - We're all facilitators, yet no significant discourse on facilitation
3. **The domain of facilitation. Origins in humanistic psychology**
 - Relationship
 - Being in a group; power/control; listening, etc
4. **MAP A: Six Categories of Teacher Intervention**
 - Issues of power/control, and validity
5. **MAP B: How it fits together:** Lecturer - Teacher - Facilitator
6. **Tips for loosening control**
7. **Listening: The Queen of skills**

Factor X...

Activity: Recall a teacher from your past whose qualities made a positive difference, left a strong impression, remain with you

What were her/his qualities that were good for you? That made a difference? How did that affect you?

Are these qualities important to you now?

Memory, Meaning and Method (Stevick 1976)

Earl Stevick proposed a riddle:

“You have two quite different methods, **Method A and Method B**, based on different assumptions about how people learn..

Yet one teacher gets excellent results with A, and another with B.
How is this possible? “

Stevick asked: *“Why it is that Method A or B sometimes works so beautifully and at other times so poorly?
“*

The 'depth' factor

Stevick suggested that each method, regardless of its surface methodology, can fulfil a set of other requirements that *goes beneath and beyond any of the methods*

He proposed that the *the deeper the source* of an utterance within the student's personality, *the more lasting value* it has for learning the language.

This same "depth" factor ... is *more to be reckoned with than technique, or format, or underlying linguistic analysis.*

A less visible process...

There is a less visible process going on, which:

affects everything

is independent of the surface methodology

makes more difference than the method itself

And if we remain on the plane on which methodological matters are usually discussed ... we may miss it

The key variable is: *“What goes on in and between people”*

Is it less visible? Why?

Origins of Humanistic Psychology

Maslow: “Freud mapped out the “sick half” of human psychology,

- Where is the map of the “well half”?
- Hard wired to strive for towards self actualisation .. BUT.. Prior needs have to be met...

Rogers: Focus on becoming fully functioning persons.

- Too much school learning is “from the neck up”.
- → insufficient relevance, feeling or personal meaning.
- → lack of motivation, boredom even a sense of failure.
- **Kolb** (1984) Experiential Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience
- Only the learner knows if the experience is engaging, if there is personal meaning.
- Facilitator is less *dictating content*, more *facilitating climate*

Carl Rogers: The fully functioning facilitator

Rogers proposed **three core conditions** that are *necessary and sufficient* for learning to take place.

They are *facilitator* qualities focussing on psychological climate....

1. **Acceptance:** Non judgmental. Positive regard without conditions
2. **Empathy:** Open to subjective world of learner. Able to 'stand in their shoes'
1. **Genuineness:** Authentically oneself. Does not pretend, defend

The presence of these qualities is sufficient for learning to take place....*whatever the surface methodology*

Psychological learning atmosphere

Activity: Thought experiment: Sitting at the back of the class

Recall a teacher from the past, and yourself sitting in that classroom. What was the psychological atmosphere of that teacher? How did you feel?

What is it like to be taught by you? Can you know it? We know the other person's atmosphere. Do we have a blind spot for our own?

Activity: You're having a coffee with a work colleague. What is the personal atmosphere that extends from her/him? What can you talk about/ not talk about? Laugh about? Not laugh about?

The domain of facilitation

Essentially it's about *Relationship*

Sometimes referred to as *Process*

Individual and group process; psychological climate; self esteem; creating personal meaning; power & control over what happens to oneself; group belonging, risk, inclusion / exclusion, and so on

Teachers who don't take Process into account, may miss out on key ingredients of successful learning. Could be because:

Training and school culture do not recognise facilitation,

Not a feature of my own schooling,

It is "not my job" or I am too pressured.

Being in a group, safety

Control over what happens, power and decision making

Listening: The Queen of Skills

1. Being in a group

- How safe will I be? Will there be in/out groups? Will it be competitive, cooperative? Will the teacher/leader offer a safe haven?
- Will I be accepted? Will I make a fool of myself? Will it be safe to be me? Had I better pretend? What roles and defences should I adopt?
- Will mistakes be ok? Or no longer *part of the learning* adventure.
- Will I protect my self esteem best if I strive to be correct (or good or well behaved) in the eyes of teacher or self or peers?
- Will my self esteem grow? Or get damaged?

2. Control, power and decision making

Question: As teacher, what do you control that you don't need to?

Activity: Take any bit of a lesson plan.

Ask “what is the *assumed* power structure behind this?

How does it enable me to control, lead, keep order....?

Or to follow, support, endorse, draw out?

What decisions do you take (without realising)

Before the lesson, During the lesson, After the lesson....?

The classroom may not cooperate with your desire for a certain outcome, what do you do then?

3. Listening: The Queen of skills

Activity: While listening to a student, what else do you do that is not listening?

What is good listening?

- Attentive, respectful devoid of judgment of the person
- Let's speakers get to *what matters*, become authentic.
- Begets good speaking, allows people to self express
- “Listen someone into being”
- Is infectious in a group

In ELT we are easily distracted to listen to the language rather than to the person behind it

MAP A: Six categories of teacher intervention

- 1.. Prescribing:** Advice or suggestion to influence the trainee's thinking and action ...yet encouraging their self-direction.
- 2.. Informing:** Giving precisely the relevant information needed to foster their self-direction.
- 3.. Challenging:** Challenging blind spots, attitudes or gaps in self awareness in supportive ways that lead to insight and learning.
- 4.. Feeling:** Enabling feelings to inform their learning through emotional competence and positive use of emotional energy
- 5.. Catalytic:** Drawing out personal experience through self-discovery talk and exploration, leading to insight and change.
- 6.. Supportive:** Affirming worth of the trainee, their self esteem their capacity to take worthwhile action. Empathy, acceptance.

The six teaching interventions

	Prescriptive Informative Challenging
	Feeling Catalytic Supportive

Who takes the initiative?

Facilitator takes the initiative <i>"I tell you"</i>	Prescriptive Informative Challenging
Learner takes initiative <i>"You tell yourself"</i>	Feeling Catalytic Supportive

Valid and Invalid interventions

	Valid Facilitator intention	Invalid Facilitator intention
Facilitator takes the initiative <i>"I tell you"</i>		Prescriptive Informative Challenging
Learner takes initiative <i>"You tell yourself"</i>		Feeling Catalytic Supportive

Four kinds of power

	Valid Facilitator intention	Invalid Facilitator intention
Facilitator takes the initiative <i>"I tell you"</i>	Authoritative Prescriptive Informative Challenging	Authoritarian
Learner takes initiative <i>"You tell yourself"</i>	Facilitative Feeling Catalytic Supportive	Abdicated

MAP B: How it fits together

Lecturer	Topic	
-----------------	--------------	--

Lecturer → ??

Lecturer	Topic	?
-----------------	--------------	----------

Lecturer – Teacher

Teacher	Topic	Method
Lecturer	Topic	?

Lecturer – Teacher → ??

Teacher	Topic	Method	?
Lecturer	Topic	?	

Lecturer - Teacher - Facilitator

Facilitator	Topic	Method	Relation- ship
Teacher	Topic	Method	?
Lecturer	Topic	?	

Tips: to reduce distance, loosen control, and *connect...*

- **Make plans** but don't expect them to work out
- Give up trying to be interesting, and **reach out and connect.**
- Start conversations about **whatever matters** to whoever is there
- Stop trying to control, and **encourage connectivity**
- To introduce change, **shift the relationship** ... Work with the relationship, not the individuals
- Involve others in framing the **situations of the day.**
- ***Learning itself*** is a way of getting things done. By *learning your way* into and through a situation you *change the situation.*
- Use the whole school as an **adventure park** for your learning.

Three interventions for listening

- 1 **Free attention: Get free inside;** relax your body: gaze
- 2 **Following:** Silence, non judgmental, empathy
- 3 **Responding** Check understanding, summary, catalytic questions.

Listening draws speaker and listener (and “spectators”) into the zone of *inquiry*.

Bolton, R 1986 *People Skills* Touchstone

Hadfield, J. *Classroom Dynamics* OUP

Head, K. & Taylor, P. 1997 *Readings in Teacher Development*
Heinemann

MacIntyre and Gregersen Eds 2016 *Positive Psychology in SLA*
Multilingual Matters

Moskowitz, G. *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class*
Longman

Rogers, C 1994 *Freedom to Learn*, Merrill.

Underhill, A. 1999 *Facilitation in Language Teaching in Affect in*
Language Learning, Ed Arnold, CUP

Underhill, A. 2013 *The Inner Workbench: Learning itself as a*
Meaningful Activity in Meaningful Action: Earl Stevick's influence on
language teaching. Eds Arnold, Murphy, CUP

English UK South West

Annual Conference and AGM, 27th October 2018
Millfield School, Somerset

The Facilitation Thing

Adrian Underhill

**adrianpronchart.wordpress.com
demandhighelt.wordpress.com**