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**Winter - Spring 2011, Shaping Chile Networks
University of Oregon, American English Institute
Author: Victor Rubio**

Action Plan Project for “Shaping the Way We Teach English”

In this online course, we are focusing on new teaching techniques and resources. Choose one technique or classroom innovation that you would like to incorporate into your class, and develop an action plan (below) for accomplishing this. Please give as much detail as possible.

Date Created: May 25th 2011

Class: From 5th to 8th grades.

Name of Action Plan Creator: Victor Rubio

Number of Students: 120

**New teaching techniques or ideas I plan to use:
Incorporation of critical and creative thinking linked to the use of
technology.**

Language Level: Beginners – Low intermediates.

My Class Now

What this aspect of my course looks like *now*:

This year I started teaching young kids and I realized that they always seemed to be bored; they acted in a very unmotivated way, looking to the activities (even the ones that seem more 'fun') as if they were not even there. In relation with the theories of L2 acquisition, I'd say that my students lack the initiative needed to pick up the input they're given. Another important factor affecting the teaching-learning process is the presence of anxiety and other feelings described by J. Krashen in his 5-principle theory. The affective filters they have are constantly high because of their lack of understanding and the frustration it generates; subsequently this frustration becomes a lack of understanding; a vicious circle. To the mix we can add the fact that (in general terms) my students see evaluation just as a means of passing/failing a test or course, not as the only and best indicator of the progress they've shown in a course. On top of it all my students do not know (and they don't recognize) how useful technology can be to improve learning outcomes, and more importantly to help them become more acquainted with new tools that are there only to make their worlds a bit easier.

My Class in the Future (My Vision)

What this aspect of my class will look like in the future *after* I have made the change(s):

My students will have a different attitude towards the lesson and its activities. Their roles within the class will encourage and trigger their motivation so that they become engaged with the whole lesson. As they will be engaged and committed to the activities, they'll be creative when asked to perform or to do different tasks. The use of critical thinking will allow them to acknowledge the importance of English (or any other subject) to their personal development and they will also be more likely to recognize the teachers' goals (hopefully making them achieve them easily). Critical thinking will also help them to see technology as a meaningful and powerful tool to help them to do their tasks, as they will be more acquainted with (a bigger variety of) technologies and their uses to ease the education process.

Additional Explanation from Action Plan Creator

In “My Class in the Future (My Vision)” above, you described a change you would like to see happen in your class. Provide additional information for the following related items. Write as though you are informing a person who knows nothing about your educational setting.

1. **The benefits I predict from this change:** I think the students in 5th grade will benefit from these changes. They will have a longer (in time) period exposed to critical thinking methodologies and they will also be able to think critically from a younger age. Critical thinking benefits are (I think) more than clear and were discussed some weeks ago.
2. **Challenges I expect:** In this point I know I will have many. Students are used to doing things one way, changing (or attempting to change) their way of proceeding. I think at the beginning they will fight the changes but over a period of time (even a year using technology and critical and creative thinking) will make them embrace the change and realize its benefits.
3. **How I will address those challenges:** I will talk to my students, asking (planned and well directed) questions to ensure the use of higher levels of thinking, constantly asking the students to move forward into the pyramid (Bloom’s taxonomy). I would also let them be part of the class and its preparation by letting them be creative when choosing activities and encouraging the use of technologies that are not always related to education. (Such as the use of recording machines or video cameras to develop activities in which role-playing is required.)
4. **Steps and timeline (schedule) for completing the change:**

Explanation: 1 month (tops): Students have to know what they’re going to face.
Implementation: 2-4 months.
Consolidation: By the end of the 1st semester. Students don’t need to be asked, they’ve internalized the process.
Validation: By the end of the 1st year. Students are able to show their improvements and how they’ve advanced
5. **How I will assess the degree of success of the change:** This question is tricky, as the implementation of these changes is not only related to academic improvements, but also, and more importantly, to improvements in the quality of the learning. Time will be a key factor to actually assess the real implementation of the changes and its benefits. After a considerable amount of time the general outcomes and marks students get should be at least 10% higher and the Ss should be able to apply their learning into practical situations, showing they have not only critical thinking but also creative thinking to approach and solve different problems and (if needed) incorporate the use of technology.