



Enhancing learner autonomy and responsibility in an EAP class

Petra Trávníková

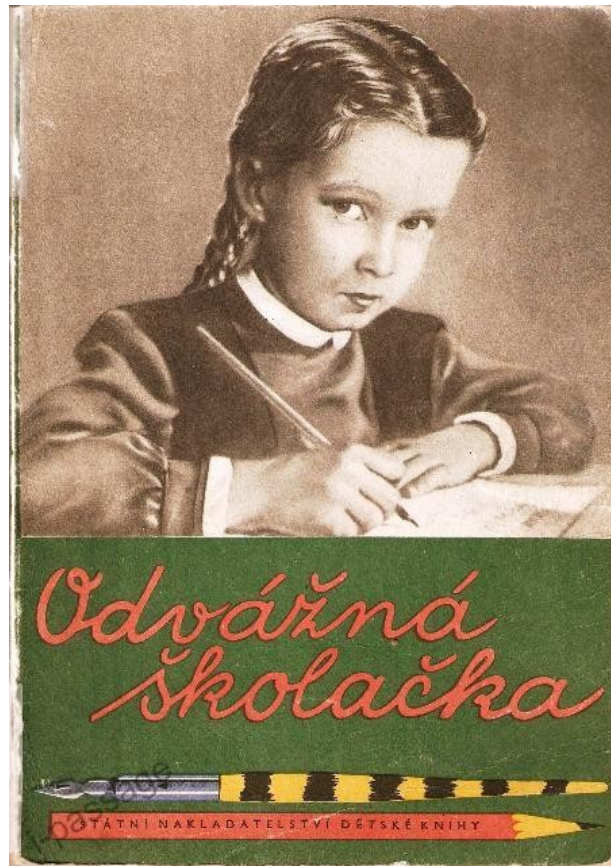
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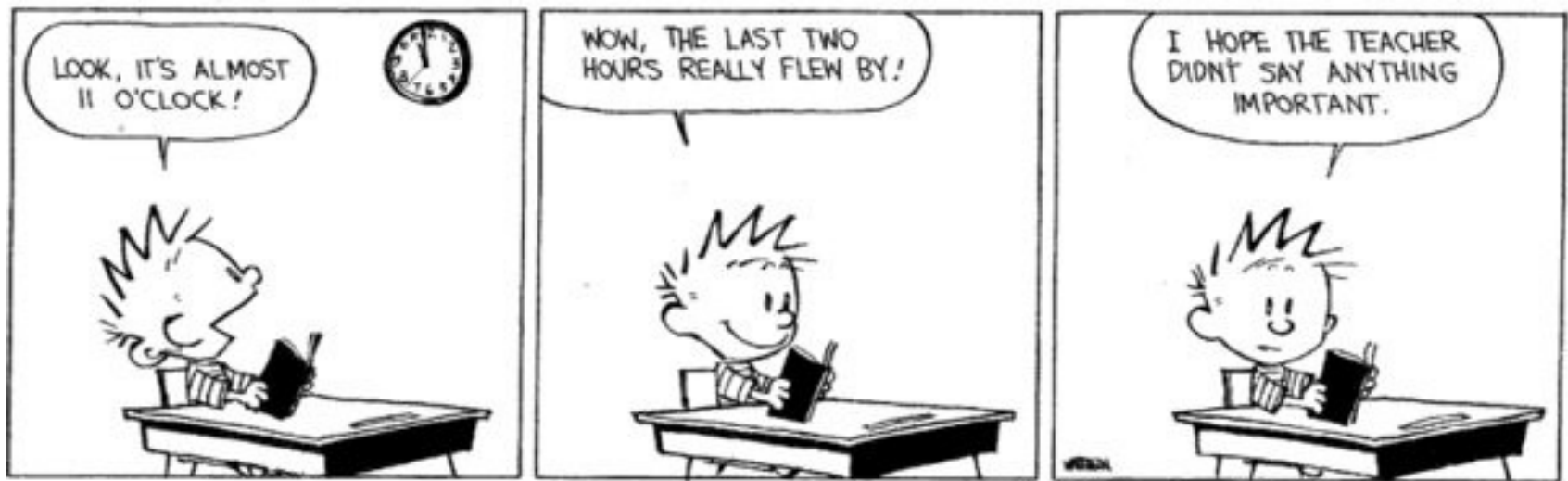


Outline

- My personal history
- English autonomously – counselling and portfolio
- Students' feedback

Looking back...





Learning to teach

- Teacher training - university



- MU Language Centre- English Autonomously-
Modules/showers Counselling sessions

English autonomously

- Counselling sessions
 1. Choosing one's own learning strategies
 2. Setting goals
 3. Claiming responsibility
 4. Building personal relationship with the student

- Portfolio

EAP with a Focus on Presentations

- master's study programme: language competence
- speaking as the main skill (writing: presentation abstract, position paper, reading: books on presentation skills, listening: TED talks)
- B2/C1 CEFR
- 1 (90 min.) seminar every week
- 15 students per seminar group
- Spring term 2016: new conception

Broader context: Faculty of Social Studies

- Students of humanities- political science, psychology, sociology, environmentalism, journalism, international relations, social work+ Erasmus Ss
- Autonomy- imported from politics and philosophy
Henri Holec (1981): learner's freedom= developing skills that will "enable him act more responsibly in running the affairs of the **society...**"
- "a capacity and willingness to act independently *and* in **cooperation** with others, as a **social**, responsible person" (Dam et al. 1990)

‘minicounsellings’

- Help learners identify their preferred styles and strategies (Nunan 2003)
 1. in class- 5-minute slots
 2. mid-term- in teacher’s office hours
 3. In the exam period- after completing all assignments- final evaluation

Portfolio assessment

- * in the 1990s
- Opportunity to **reflect** on Ss' growth, progress and academic goals over a period of time
- assesment: teacher, peers (encourage Ss to become teachers- Nunan 2003) and self-evaluation
- interrelated with the **content** of the course: performing-
learning by doing
- “successful task completion”
- authenticity of tasks: emphasis on skills: they can apply them “outside the immediate context of learning” (Little)



CJVA402 portfolio		points
in-class presentations	lead	5
	minipresentation I	5
	improvisation	2
	Bc thesis –quick fire presentation	8
in-class written assignments	summary of a TED talk	5
	reflection- questionnaire	5
exam period	position paper	18
	final abstract	12
	final presentation	25
	final presentation summary	15
TOTAL		100

From students' feedback

Experiential learning:

- *It was a hand-on experience- very useful...*
- *We had lots of opportunities to try everything ourselves.*
- *We were not told what is right or wrong but we found it out ourselves.*

Portfolio assessment:

- *It's not the collection of points but the verbal feedback that matters.*
- *The load is spread throughout the whole term.*
- *Much better than a normal exam- not that stressful.*
- *I liked the teacher's individual approach.*
- *It corresponds to the course and presentation skills.*

Some more Ss' feedback

Materials and learning strategies:

- *the materials were always up-to-date which I really liked*
- *We could choose our own activities, which helped us learn as much as we could.*

Overcoming fear of public speaking:

- *I got out of my comfort zone a lot- it was scary but now I am grateful for that.*
- *Friendly and relaxing atmosphere, which was a good “breeding ground” for learning*
- *I became much more confident when speaking English.*

Final conclusions

- Taking **responsibility** for their own learning (Ss in charge of the learning process)
- Setting the learning objectives, “giving learners a voice” (Nunan 2003): allowing Ss to set their own goals
- Targeted to Ss’ needs: individualization – adapted to Ss abilities, level of English, field of study, academic career x employability
- Constant interaction student-teacher and group interaction- soft skills

Final conclusions

- Raising students' awareness about the learning process itself
- Ss become more confident and get rid of fear of public speaking
- **Further research:** action research on motivation and portfolio assessment