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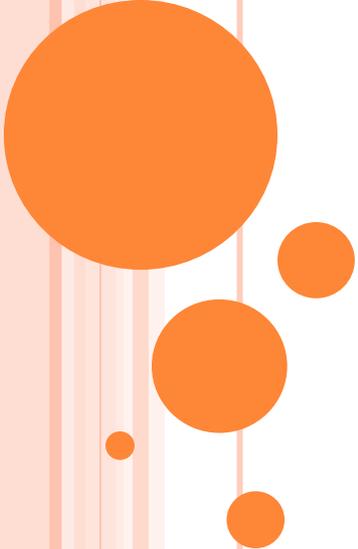
Be your own language coach

- self-mentoring to increase student motivation and achievement

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The inspiration

- Marsha Carr, Self-mentoring: The Invisible Leader
  - 4 step strategy aimed at increasing leadership ability
  - adaptable to language learning (and other subjects?)
- Nancy Kline, The Thinking Environment
  - the best thinking happens when you have the time and space to do it
- Brockbank and McGill, Facilitating Reflective Learning in Higher Education
  - developing students into reflective learners

Influences

- Need for support in transition from school (Brooman and Darwent, 2016)
- Need to let go of traditional learning environment (Sturridge, 1997)
- Enquiry Based Learning (Barrett and Moore, 2010)
- Group dynamics (Dornyei and Murphey, 2010)
- Motivation (Lamb and Reinders 2005)
- Assessment for Learning (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2012)
- Flipped classroom (Crouch and Mazur, 2001)
- Self-regulation (Zimmerman etc in Panadero 2017)
- Reflective learning (Kohonen, 2007)

Marsha Carr's 4 steps, adapted

- Self-awareness
  - What knowledge do you have that will be useful?
  - What skills do you have?
  - What information and resources are out there that you can use?

- Self-development
  - Forming a plan
  - What do you need to do?
  - Are there particular areas you need to concentrate on? (What you are not so good at?)

- Self-reflection
  - How is it going?
  - What is working or not working? What makes you think that?
  - What can you do about that?

- Self-monitoring
  - How have you done?
  - What skills have you developed?
  - What have you learnt about yourself – as a learner and in general?

The plan

- Start of module
  - encourage discussion around steps 1 & 2 (Self-awareness, Self-development)
  - introduce self-mentoring concept
- During module
  - encourage students to engage with self-mentoring process
  - use enquiry-based learning approach
- Mid-module evaluation
  - discussion around step 3 (Self-reflection)
- End of module
  - discussion around step 4 (Self-monitoring)

Enquiry-based approach

Practically, this will involve:

- Outside the class:
  - pair / group oral work on a variety of topics
  - independent study (grammar, vocabulary, listening etc)
  - resources on Moodle eg weblinks, reading materials, study guides
  - pair / group tutorials

- In class:
  - presentations to demonstrate pair/group oral work
  - peer feedback
  - reflection on progress / sharing resources etc

Support for independent work

- On Moodle:
  - Handouts, Powerpoints etc
  - Supported Open Learning weekly package
    - Exercises
    - Guidance on formative / summative assessment
    - Suggestions for reflection
  - Learning Guides eg Reading Strategies, Learning Styles
  - Weblinks eg BBC Languages, StudySpanish.com
  - Authentic reading / listening exercises
  - Assessment Criteria
  - Be your own language coach step-by-step guide

- Tutorials

- 'Language learning tip of the week' e-mail

- Formative feedback on video and written work

Feedback / Feedforward

- Peer feedback
- Feedback from me in class
- Tutorials
- Formative feedback (audio: Screencast-O-Matic)
  - Video submitted week 5
  - Writing submitted week 7

What actually happened

- Semester 1 – encouraged students to prepare work before class
  - Didn't really work
    - Small numbers
    - External students
  - Group work/collaboration outside the classroom – only patchy
  - Independent work – still not enough
- Semester 2 – major overhaul!
  - The need to stop *teaching* students (Sturridge 1997)
  - Encouraged more preparation of oral work
  - EBL approach
    - Gentle introduction (see next slides)
    - Explained approach to students
  - Worked on group dynamic
  - Peer feedback tended to become students reflecting on their own work
  - Used in-class version of 4-step process
    - Mid-module evaluation
  - 4-step process part of summative assessment for level 2 students

Enquiry-Based Assignments

The process

1 What do we need to be able to do?

2 What do we need to investigate in order to do this?
- What knowledge do we need?
- What skills do we need?

3 Any problems with this approach?

4 What practical steps do we take?

5 Demonstrating our findings

6 Evaluation of our findings
- Peer review
- Self-reflection

What did the students think?

- Level 2 students' reflective essays
  - Student A: "The skills I have developed throughout this module will help me throughout the rest of my time at university, this can be with time-management and organisation. These skills can also help me in the future."

  - Student B: [Writing about the Self-Monitoring stage] "I can monitor my communication and self-motivation skills throughout the rest of my time at University and also in my future Career position."

Questionnaire feedback

- Level 1 student: [talking about the 4-step process] "When you showed it in class it was useful but I felt it could have been made more aware how useful it was so that people could go back and remind themselves of it."

- Level 1 student: "Also the importance of having goals (self motivation) acted as a spur. This has carried over into my free-time now that the semester has finished."

What next?

- Remove more content from class
- Make 'end product' clear – assessment format and criteria
- Include more practice of skills and presentation of grammar
- Include more time for the 4-step process in class
  - Student feedback form questionnaire
  - Feedback from colleague (PSRLT)
- Students learn vocabulary / practise grammar before class
- Brief 'polishing up' time in class – dialogues /conversations presented without notes for peer feedback
- Try workshop approach?
  - Students bring lap-tops to class?
  - Lecturer as facilitator/coach

Introduction ◀ ▶

You already have the skills you need to be a good language-learner. They may need developing and polishing, but they are there within you. Are you willing to put in the time and effort to find and develop those skills? You know yourself best of anyone and you are always available to coach yourself. Think about why you chose this language course. Think about how much you want to succeed. How high a priority is it for you compared to other things going on in your life.

Still here?

Then come with me on a journey of self-discovery!

Follow the four-step process to becoming your own language coach!

"*You are a living, breathing organism that has unlimited and unparalleled potential because you can think. You have the*

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