Knowledge E
Engaging minds

Conference Paper

In Lieu of that: Multiple Stay – Stray Presentations for More Intensive Learning

Furaidah

Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

Abstract

In an attempt to move away from teacher-centered way of teaching, lecturers frequently ask students do presentations. In this situation, a group of students will usually become the presenters and the others the audience. Though this way has reduced the teacher-centeredness, the number of students taking part in the discussion and being engaged in the learning process is still limited to the presenters and the audience giving comments about the presented topic, and the learning engagement of the rest of the audience is mysterious. Considering the pivotal role of the learning engagement and participation for the achievement of the instructional objectives, lecturers can use Repetitive Stay-Stray presentation as a teaching strategy that involves meaningful repetition of presenting and listening activities, and multiple traffic of communication, and students' reflection. These activities make learning engagement and participation a logical consequence.

Keywords: learning engagement, instructional objectives, students' reflection, multiple stay-stray presentation
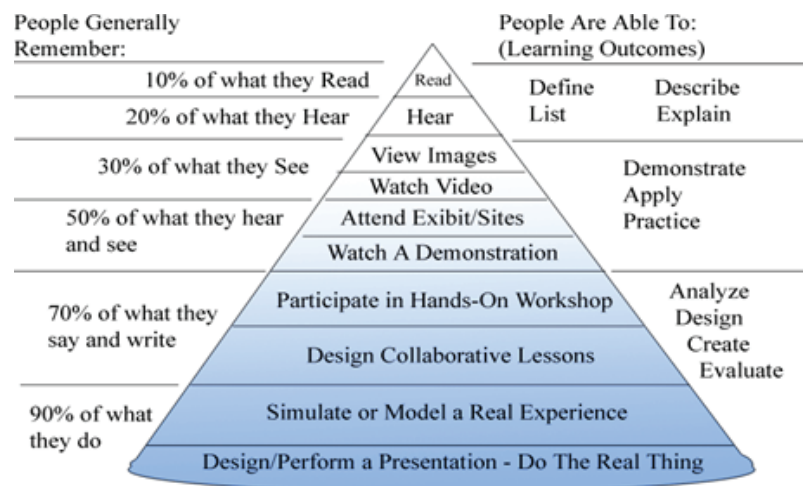
When teaching is viewed as transmission of information, it is usually characterized with one way traffic of communication dominated by instructors giving lengthy lectures. In such classes, it is common to see students committing off-task behaviors that indicate low learning engagement, such as day dreaming, scribbling and doodling, playing with gadgets, sleeping, frequent yawning, giggling, occasional listening, irrelevant chitchat, and so forth. We can have a long list of off-task behaviors that range from passive class-detached behaviors to the disruptive ones like prevalent noisy chitchats which can make the lecturer's voice inaudible. Thus, the class can be very noisy or very quiet because only few pay attention to what the lecturer is explaining. These all indicate low learning engagement and boredom. Impatient lecturers would quickly blame the students for the negative behaviors.

However, such behaviors should not be surprising because concentration span is not long. A study by [4], whose data were collected using 1353 questionnaires, reveals that concentration increases during the first 10 to 15 minutes of a lecture then declines for the rest of the hour.

How to cite this article: Furaidah, (2017) "In Lieu of that: Multiple Stay – Stray Presentations for More Intensive Learning," *The 4th International Conference on Language, Society and Culture in Asian Contexts*, KnE Social Sciences, 386–392. DOI 10.18502/kss.v1i3.760

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In a language class, a lecturer-centered class slows down the development of students' productive language skills, especially speaking. When a lecturer dominates, the greater part of the opportunity for refining the students speaking skills is taken, and if that happens on daily basis, the institution is actually unfair to the students in providing the learning opportunity.

The disadvantage of the teaching strategy for the students also comes in the students' low retention of information delivered. Dale (1960) theorized that students can retain information better when they are actively involved in learning activities. Dale's Cone of Experience charts the average retention rates for the teaching methods used. The retention of information from what the students read from a book or listen to lectures only is lower compared to when students actively do some actions in learning activities. The top of the cone describes the weakness of ineffective teaching methods that rely on verbal symbols and the bottom describes methods that can boost retention of information. When lecturers go down further the cone adopting teaching method that involves direct, purposeful learning is closer to reality, the rate of retention increases.

People Generally Remember:		People Are Able To: (Learning Outcomes)	
10% of what they Read	Read	Define	Describe
20% of what they Hear	Hear	List	Explain
30% of what they See	View Images		
	Watch Video	Demonstrate	
50% of what they hear and see	Attend Exibit/Sites	Apply	
	Watch A Demonstration	Practice	
70% of what they say and write	Participate in Hands-On Workshop	Analyze Design	
	Design Collaborative Lessons	Create Evaluate	
90% of what they do	Simulate or Model a Real Experience		
	Design/Perform a Presentation - Do The Real Thing		

Dale's Cone of Experience

The Cone suggests that if lecturers want to increase the retention of information, they should apply teaching methods or strategies that can engage students in active learning activities. Active learning instructional strategies include a wide range of activities that share the common element of —involving students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing [1]. Active learning instructional strategies can be created to engage students in thinking critically and creatively, communicate with their working partners / classmates, designing and doing presentation, giving and receiving feedback, and reflecting upon their learning.

In moving away from the lecturer-centered classes, the format commonly used is assigning students to do presentation. A student or a group of students are in charge

of explaining certain concepts or issues. Dale's Cone describes that when students explain (say or write) the rate of retention increases up to 70% and can go higher when they design or perform a presentation. When group work is used, interactions among the members of the groups increase learning as well. In [3] theorized that brains are more engaged during social interaction than when listening to a lecture or doing solo learning activities. Cooperative learning includes social interaction over content, and so literally the brains in cooperative learning classroom are more engaged. This greater engagement leads to greater retention.

However, a closer look at a class in which students do presentation will reveal that the good news is actually enjoyed mostly by the presenting students. The presenting students are active but not all the audience take part in question and answer session following the presentation. The number of students participating in the discussion is many times not satisfactory. If this is the case, then this teaching strategy may replicate the situation in lecturer-centered class, except that the speakers now are students.

This paper suggests a modification of one-way presentation into multiple ways of presentations which can be called as Multiple Stay – Stray Presentations. This strategy can increase students' participation and learning intensity because all students can possibly be involved in the learning interactions. The word *multiple* indicates repetition in the presentations; and repetitions – if well designed – are very effective in supporting learning [5].

In using Multiple Stay-Stray Presentations, first, divide the class into even number of groups. Each group should have even number of members (The ideal number is 4 students). Even number of groups and members of groups will ease the management of the traffic of student movements. Second, assign topics of discussion or chapters of a textbook to all groups. Each topic should be presented by two groups simultaneously. Therefore, each group should work to prepare a wall chart to explain the topics they are in charge of. LCD cannot be used here because in a classroom there is usually only one LCD.

In the presentation session, two groups separately and simultaneously present the topic; so there will be two rounds of presentations. Because there are two presenters, the rest of the students should also be divided into two groups of audience. Each group of audience take turns attending the presentation of each group. In that way they will listen to two presentations (in round one and round two) about the same topic and be involved in the discussions about the same topic twice.

Regarding the presenter groups, each presenter group consists of 4 students. In the presentation round 1, two students in each group stay and present their topic. The other two, go (stray) to the opposite group to listen to their presentation about the same topic. In round two, the 'straying' students return to their base and the presenting students get their turns to listen to the presentation of the other group's presentation.

All groups, in the end of the semester, will finally get their chance to be presenters and audience.

This strategy is also good to increase students' participation in a big class. When the class is big, hold 4 simultaneous presentations (or more) with double (or triple) presentations about the same topic (e.g., Group A & B present topic 1, group C & D present topic 2, and so forth). Arrange the traffic ensuring that each group of student comes to all presentation and that the movement in the class is not chaotic. Be careful, the management of the students' movement to each presentation with this many simultaneous presentations can be complicated. Start with a simpler one as described in the previous paragraph.

To help students make quality wall charts, the lecturer can provide a simple rubric based on which the students can evaluate their wall charts prior to the presentation. Audience can also be assigned to evaluate the communicativeness and the correctness of the information presented using the rubric. After the presentation, the lecturer can hold question and answer session to check the students' understanding, clarify misunderstanding, and impose students' learning accountability.

Now, what actually happens during the presentations and discussions? Students read and discuss the topic/chapter they are in charge of (compared to when they only listen to lectures). Students also build communication skill, such explaining, clarifying, negotiating, questioning, confirming, etc more intensively (in preparation and presentation phases). Students build the four language skills and use their grammar and vocabulary. They read the textbook, write wall charts, speak to present them, and listen to their classmates' presentation.

The repeated or multiple presentations allow students to listen to the presentation repeatedly and enable them to make comparison about the information delivered in presentation 1 and 2 (3, 4, and so forth). When two presentations present the same topic differently, both the presenters and audience are triggered to think which one is correct; when they are the same reinforcement of ideas take place. In this way, logically the retention of information can increase.

Multiple Stay-Stray Presentations divide the class into smaller groups. Each group, then, surround the presenters creating closer physical proximity compared to when the presentation is done in front of the class, distancing the presenters from the audience. The discussion in small groups and the closer proximity create friendly and informal atmosphere that reduces students' speaking anxiety. A study by [6] found that shyness, fear of being in public, fear of negative evaluation, and fear of speaking inaccurately can trigger the occurrence of speaking anxiety. This strategy puts students in small groups so that the anxiety can be reduced to minimum because students feel the comfort of being in small groups knowing that not many people will witness any errors or mistakes incurred during the discussions.

The proximity with the presenters also stimulates intensive interactions between the presenters and the audience. Some audience can even come forward and use the presenters' chart to explain and clarify their opinion.

In Multiple Stay-Stray Presentations, students also move from one presentation to another. It is the lecturer who signals the students' movement from one group to another in round one and two. This movement prevents the prevalent boredom commonly taking place in lecturer-centered class. This movement, in fact, can serve as a refreshing ice breaker.

The following are some comments from some students who have been involved in the implementation of the strategy:
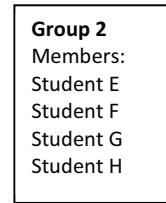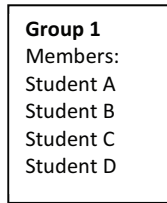
1. I really like the teaching technique because students can have their presentation and discussion more effectively in small groups. This technique is very interesting because we have chance to be the presenter and also the audience. It helps us understand the materials easily.

2. By using this technique we had to speak and therefore master our topic to be presented. As the presenter we can also improve our understanding toward one topic by knowing other group' presentation. We can take a lesson from our observation to make our presentation better.

3. This technique teaches the students to speak in front of people. So we can develop our confidence without being ashamed of giving our opinion, ask about some materials which haven't been understood yet, and explain our topic because we already discussed with our friends in small group.

4. This technique also helps develop our creativity in making the wall charts or flowchart to make good presentation so that all of the audience and also the presenters themselves can understand and they will always remember the material.

Considering the benefits, in lieu of the conventional presentation format, try to use this strategy and see what will happen in your class.
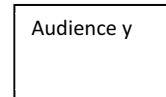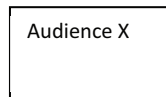
The following is the graphic representation of the learning activity flow of the Multiple Stay-Stray Presentations.

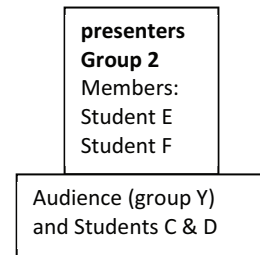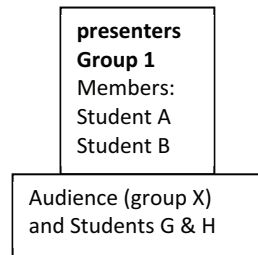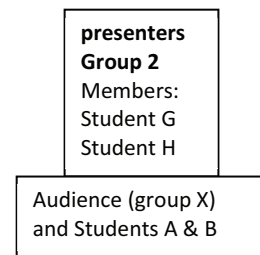1. The class is divided into presenter groups and audience group.

The presenters:

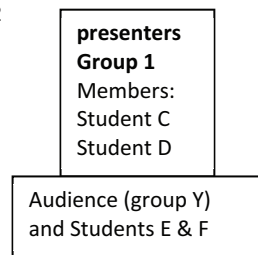| Group 1 |
| --- |
| Members: |
| Student A |
| Student B |
| Student C |
| Student D |

Group 2
Members:
Student E
Student F
Student G
Student H

The audience:

Audience X

Audience y

2. The flow of the activities

Round 1

presenters Group 1
Members:
Student A
Student B
Audience (group X) and Students G & H

presenters Group 2
Members:
Student E
Student F
Audience (group Y) and Students C & D

Round 2

presenters Group 1
Members:
Student C
Student D
Audience (group Y) and Students E & F

presenters Group 2
Members:
Student G
Student H
Audience (group X) and Students A & B

References

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