**Connecting Theory to Practice**

The Multiliteracies Project

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This teaching tool consists of an instructional video that can be used to introduce the concept of the French imperfect tense (l’imparfait) to grade 10 academic core French students. This video features a brief lesson outlining the main differences between the imperfect tense and the compound past tense (le passé composé), complete with sample sentences acted out in short skits. The instructional portion of the video is followed by an interactive quiz segment. The video ends with a music video accompanying a song with lyrics designed to help students recall the method for conjugating verbs in the imperfect tense. The main purpose of this tool is to combine several different teaching strategies to help students to create schemata (Vacca, Vacca, & Mraz, 2014, p. 22) that they can use to analyze and apply the imperfect tense in writing and speech.

This video is designed to accommodate multiple learning preferences. Firstly, the short performances help to provide visual demonstrations of the sample sentences. Secondly, the use of vocal narration completes the explanations of the concepts, and the use of a song can assist students with memorization. (The repetitive lyrics can help reinforce the material.) Finally, the addition of the embedded text in the video can facilitate comprehension for those who learn by reading. Additionally, it can help students follow along with the virtual lesson; seeing the written text and hearing the audio component simultaneously can make the material easier to understand. By applying differentiated instruction techniques (p. 11), an educator can create an inclusive learning space for his or her students by making the academic subject matter more accessible to all learners.

The style of the video itself is also useful for keeping students engaged in the material. The example sentences contribute to miniature storylines, which can give students a logical progression to follow. Associating the concepts with real-world examples helps to make the content more relatable, and the use of analogies allows students to connect the material to their prior knowledge (p. 202). Additionally, the aspect of humor can help to attract and hold the students’ attention, and the interactive quiz serves to keep students actively involved in the lesson. The students can use the quiz segment to test their own comprehension of the subject matter, and the teacher can use it as a diagnostic tool to assess the effectiveness and reception of the lesson. The video is designed for inclusion, collaborative learning, and maximum engagement.

This tool is most effective when used in conjunction with learning activities such as the worksheets that have been provided in the appendices; the graphic organizer activities are designed to reinforce and extend the knowledge of the vocabulary and concepts associated with the use of the imperfect tense (p. 259). The various learning strategies used in this video serve to connect the material to concepts that the students recognize and understand.

References

Vacca, L., Vacca, T., & Mraz, M. (2014). *Content area reading : literacy and learning across the curriculum* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.