



The New School - NYC, New York

Jeremy Harmer
The Practice of English Language Teaching
(July 11, 2012)

My Notes:

The Jeremy Harmer presentation at the New School last night was really down to earth and intriguing. Jeremy posed 6 questions for teachers at “crossroads” of teaching (and technology).

Harmer’s 6 questions:

1. Does a teacher need to be technologically competent? To what degree? He mentioned Marc Prensky as a particularly pro- tech teacher, and Sandra Turkle as anti-tech, or at least not believing Ts need to be tech savvy.
2. Error correction - do it/don't do it, when? where? how? He referred to Bloom's Taxonomy - guess he was alluding to learning styles. He mentioned Rod Belifer (Belifo? something like that) I have no idea who he is, when I tried to Google him all I could find was a chef named *Rob Bleifer* – must check spelling of name!
3. Testing - is it educational or anti- educational? Alan Maley was referred to- apparently quite famous British ESL teacher , author, editor
4. CLIL - Content & Language Integrated Learning (as opposed to TENOR - Teaching English for No Apparent Reason). As a Family Literacy teacher, it seems pretty clear that teaching something interesting is preferable to teaching a series of grammar points. Of course it has its shortcomings as well.
5. Rapport - what does it mean? How important is it? Are you being so accommodating that it gets in the way of your teaching?
6. "What is it that you do with language Ss? Or rather, what is it that languages Ss do with you?" He used choral repetition as an example- it was used for years, went out of style for a while, and now perhaps is creeping back in. Do you use it? Do you like it? Why/why not?

He asked for audience feedback and for those who agreed/disagreed. He doesn’t really push for one approach or technique over another, but he does say one should question oneself everyday to “keep fresh”. Great night! ☺