Encouraging motivation and active learning in Lectures

Dr Kate Exley
Overview

- Purposes - Why do we lecture in 2010?
- What are the important features of a lecture?
- Structuring content and giving clear explanations
- Variety and involving students?
- And the…..Practicalities?
- Final remarks
Why Lecture?

**History**

- European monasteries and traveling scholars seeking rare information
- In a *scriptorium* a monk at a *lectern* would read out a book
- Scholars would copy word for word
- Derived from the Latin - *Lectare*
  - “to read out loud”
Why Lecture today?

- Consistency
- Efficiency
- Community

?  

?  

?  

Please add 3 other reasons?
The Lecture (Noel Entwistle)

- Map v Coverage
- Illustration v Detailed information
- Attention span
- The Lecture as a communication
The Lecture as a communication

Lecturer

Giving out

Student

Receiving

Student

Acting upon
Structuring Content

1. Sequencing material

Develop your lecture moving from the:

- Simple to Complex
- Big picture to Detail
- General to Specific
- Concrete to Abstract
2. Common Lecture Structures

- Classical
- Problem centred
- Comparative
- Serialistic
- Progressive - story telling
Classical

- Introduction
- Section 1
- Section 2
- Section 3
- Conclusion
Problem centred

- Introduction - description of the problem
- Strategy / alternative 1
- Strategy / alternative 2
- Strategy / alternative 3
- Conclusion - “I am taking approach 3…”
Comparative

- Introduction - comparing A and B
- Comparison of feature 1
- Comparison of feature 2
- Comparison of feature 3
- Summary
Serialistic (sequential)

- Introduction
- A, then A goes to B
- B, then B goes to C
- C, then C goes to D
- Etc
- Final remarks
Progressive - narrative

- Personal connection
- Setting the scene
- Unfolding the narrative
- Concluding the story
- Emphasising learning points

(Care - can appear unstructured)
Holding attention in Lectures

- How long can students concentrate?
- It clearly depends on ......
- But using ‘20 minutes’ is helpful
- Latest research

"Extensive exposure to television and video games may promote development of brain systems that scan and shift attention at the expense of those that focus attention."

Peter Jenson
Arguments for ‘interaction’

- To keep attention
- To check understanding
- Try things out in practice
- To compare different views
- Feedback to the lecturer
- Accommodate diversity
- Give the lecturer a minute
- etc
But what can we do?

Please work with the 2 or 3 people near to you and write down any ideas you can think of to motivate and engage students in lectures.
Some suggestions

- Buzz groups
- Mini-quizzes
- Deciding, e.g. voting
- Individual tasks
- Demonstrations
- Video & other Visuals
- Interactive handouts
- Instant summaries
- etc
Handouts

- PowerPoint slides
- Skeleton notes
- Gapped handouts
- Interactive handouts
Quick tasks in handouts e.g.

- Answer a question
- Set a question
- Represent information differently (e.g. graph)
- Order, prioritise, sequence, ideas
- Estimate, predict, justify an outcome
- Draw and label diagrams
- Complete the table etc
- Find an example of..
Example 1.

With the person sitting next to you please decide what are the three most important aspects of the lecture so far and why?

1.
2.
3.
Example 2.

In threes please consider

1. What symptoms do you see in a cat with a kidney infection?
2. How might you test for this?
3. What treatment would you recommend?
The practicalities

- Know why you want students to ‘do’ it.
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- How will they work?
The practicalities

- Know **why** you want students to ‘do’ it.
- How will they work?
  - Alone or in pairs?
  - For how long?
  - When in the lecture will the interaction be?
  - Will everybody do the same thing?
  - Etc

What CLEAR instructions will you give to your students
The practicalities

- Know why you want students to ‘do’ it.
- How will they work?
  - Alone or in pairs?
  - For how long? & when in the lecture?
- What will the end point be?
The practicalities

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  - An answer? A decision? An example? etc
The practicalities

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  - Alone or in pairs?
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- Do you need to hear back from the students?
The practicalities

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  - No? (I will show them the answer.)
The practicalities

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- Do you need to hear back from the students?
  - No? (I will show them the answer.)
- **But if you do, how will you manage that?**
The practicalities

- Know **why** you want students to ‘do’ it.
- How will they work?
  - Alone or in pairs?
  - For how long? & when in the lecture?
- What will the end point be?
  - An answer? A decision? An example? etc
- Do you need to hear back from the students?
  - No? (I will show them the answer.)
- But if you do, how will you manage that?
  - Voting? Collected views? An OHT acetate?
Please design an interaction

- On the paper provided please present the instructions your students would see in a handout for an interactive task.
- Be prepared to explain the ‘practicalities’ or using your activity your table.
- Act as critical friends for each other.
Why might students be reluctant to answer?

- Please identify 5 reasons why students might be resistant to answering questions in lectures.

- For each one brainstorm possible strategies to overcome these difficulties.
Encouraging reluctant students to take an active part

- Give thinking time
- Give non-verbal cues to show this isn’t a rhetorical question!
- Write up the question
- Model an answer
- Start a list..
- Write before speaking
- Respond positively to answers
- Buzz groups
- Pyramids etc
Alternative approaches for getting student feedback

- Voting and reverse voting
- Nominated spokesperson
- True/False cards
- Acetate sheets to display written response
- Quick posters
- Hand sets
- etc
Using electronic handsets

- Distribute a handset to each student
- Receiver attached to pc
- Design ‘mcq’ style questions
- Students can respond anonymously
- The distribution of responses can be displayed visually to whole class

How could you use these in one of your lectures?
Taking things further:-
Some suggestions

- Group work
- Individual tasks
- Role plays and simulations
- Demonstrations
- Video & other Visuals
- Interactive handouts
- Instant summaries
- Etc
What are your barriers?

What factors inhibit your use of such ‘active learning’ approaches in your lectures?

What can you do to overcome these barriers?
Continuing the discussion

- Using discussion boards and other VLE facilities
- Set homework tasks or questions to think about
- Link to seminars & tutorials or labs & practical classes
- Suggest follow-up readings
Quick re-cap

- To be clear about
  - Why you Lecturing?
  - What you are trying to achieve?
- Consider how you can
  - Use questions and tasks to encourage active learning
- Plan any interaction / activity thoughtfully
- Use a range of approaches to maximise participation e.g. interactive handouts
- Have a go!
To find out more

“Giving a Lecture: from presenting to teaching” 2nd edition (2009)

Kate Exley & Reg Dennick

Key Guides for Effective Teaching in Higher Education
RoutledgeFalmer : London