Noticing Language: Promoting Autonomy among our Learners

Carole Anne Robinson, Senior Trainer, NILE
• My own language learning experience
• Missed opportunities
• Encouraging learner autonomy
“in consciousness research, it is commonly accepted that some level of attention is required to be able to notice something and that noticing is crucial in obtaining new information or uptake.”

de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2005, p.8
Focus of the Talk

• Noticing authentic language in English-speaking and other countries
• Noticing useful language from the coursebook
• Classroom activities
• Developing learner autonomy through raising awareness
Developing Learner Interest
Please don’t flush
Nappies, sanitary towels, down this toilet
Please don’t flush
Nappies, sanitary towels, paper towels, gum, old phones, unpaid bills, junk mail, your ex’s sweater, hopes, dreams or goldfish down this toilet.
Unwire your life.
Noticing Activities
outside of the classroom
Noticeing Activities

**English-speaking countries**

- How many times do you see the word ...X?
- Language Trail
- Notice the mistake
- Stand and listen

**Non-English speaking countries**

- How many examples do you see?
- Collect anything you see in a specific type of place (e.g. shop)
You have from 2.45 to 4.00pm to do the trail. Try to answer the questions on the trail to discuss back at NILE Tuesday morning. Also, make a note of any interesting or useful language you see or hear!

1. How is the word ‘agree’ used in an interesting context on the NTC sign?
2. What is the street name here and what do you think it means?
3. Keep your eyes up for Press to Play. Can you see any grammar problems?
How is the word ‘agree’ used in an interesting context on the NTC sign?
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Noticing Activities

English-speaking countries

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www.nile-elt.com
• Prague Transport System Card
• Italian advertising
Spanish Bank advertisement
• Spotted around Oran in Algeria

Activities for developing and sharing ‘noticed’ language

• Guess the context
• Guess the missing word
• Why I chose it
• Peer teaching
• Poster Activities
Things we heard...
ephemeral (kiss)
mellifluous
chick flick
Things you heard...
- to be discombobulated (-confused)
- taking the piss
- Serves you right!
- Beggars can't be choosers
- Get off my back!
• Noticing language from classroom materials
• Noticing language from classroom materials

• Underline any phrases which you particularly like, which you want to remember or which interest you.
• Phrases which I’d like to use myself

• Phrases which I think I should know (but can’t remember)

• Phrases which have a grammar or collocation focus
1. To 'use it or lose it
2. Lots of things
3.
fish with lots of oil
• if you are interested in something, you will probably remember more about it.
• make notes
• make a picture in your mind.
- Keep your mind fit.
- Exercise increases your heart.
- Sadly, this doesn't seem to work with rock music.
Encouraging Ongoing Noticing and Learner Autonomy

- Noticing sheets
- Blog posts
- Class collections
- Postbox
- Learner notebooks
Using a Noticing Sheet

- Setting it up
- Systematic checking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Example</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serves you right!</td>
<td>two friends talking about how one had lost a £10 bet on a football team losing</td>
<td>Intonation was really extreme! I like this phrase 😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Encouraging Ongoing Noticing and Learner Autonomy

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Linguistic Landscapes

- https://www.nile-elt.com/blog/linguistic/page/1
Encouraging Ongoing Noticing and Learner Autonomy

• Noticing sheets
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• Postbox
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Useful phrases for my context

Grammar focus

Repetition

Topic areas

Teenspeak
• How does this lead to learner autonomy?
  • Tools to help students
    • What?
    • Where?
    • How?
    • Why?
  • Making it their own
• English is everywhere, wherever you are in the world

• Make noticing a habit so that it becomes second nature

• Develop learners’ interest and autonomy

www.nile-elt.com
For more theory about Noticing, see:

- de Bot, K., Lowie, W., & Verspoor, M. 2005 *Second Language Acquisition* New York: Routledge


Please email me for slides. The presentation will be available on the NILE website in the next week.

Please take an activity card as you leave!

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