

MODULE 2 - TOPIC 2.8: INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS ONLINE

Through this session we aim:

- Highlight the importance and advantages of interactive tools.
- Help learners find the proper interactive tool according to the learning topic.
- Share ideas on the utilization of interactive tools in TBLT.
- Familiarize learners with online interactive tools.

Nothing is more frustrating to a teacher than a lack of attention from students. You have spent several weeks or even months working on some project that you thought would be a breakthrough, but still, you did not manage to get the attention of your students. Situations like this are quite common in modern learning because the lack of interest to engage in teamwork is widespread.

When we talk about online collaborative tools, we refer to web-based tools that can enable teachers but most important students to perform a wide range of tasks that will keep students attentive. Such tools can be interactive discussions, online collaboration activities, online quizzes, sharing and accessing electronic learning resources, and many others.

If you want to enliven your class atmosphere, quiz applications like Quizlet or Quizizz can work well independently of the classroom's average age. While quizzes might not be the most inventive way to learn, they are still useful for memorizing and recalling facts, quickly assessing knowledge, or getting info at the end of a lecture. Quizzes on TBLT can help learners grow curiosity on different topics and explore new perspectives. Yet apart from learning, the quiz methodology can work as an approach to testing the progress of a learner avoiding traditional classroom ways.

To monitor your learner's progress and allow them to express their thoughts and feelings on the learning process, applications such as Miro, Jamboard, Google Forms, Ideazboard can be used. Easy to use, eye-catching, and giving enough space for everyone to express themselves, these applications can upgrade educational progress.

Additionally, as an instructor, you can always take a step forward in the course by asking students to create their own content. Videos, recordings, even podcasts can be entertaining ways of interaction both between teachers and students but also between students as well. Ardour, Audacity, Camtasia, iMove are only a few tools to record and adjust videos and audios.

An easy and quick example of content creation based on the TBLT learning approach is the production of the video presenting the country of origin of a learner. Teachers can ask learners to create a 1-minute video presenting interesting facts about the country of origin of learners. In that way, the class also gets an intercultural perspective while at the same time learners interact with each other, learn new vocabulary, and spot differences and similarities between different cultures.

Last but not least, creating beautiful infographics or visuals will always be prominent. Infographics have become easier to do day by day, even for those with no previous graphic experience. Some of the best graphics tools are, Canva, Google Charts, Piktochart, Gliggy.

Achieving interaction by giving students options on how they want to “consume” content is important for the success of the courses. Offer content in different formats and give learners breaks to check their already gained knowledge. Monitor the process in a different way than just asking them to reply to specific questions which may actually “scare” them instead of inspiring them. Create challenging tasks that require students to interact with the content and explore the topics in greater detail. Simulations, web searches, scenarios, case studies all demand students to interact with the content and learn more about the specific topic either on their own but along with or even through other learners.

