

Sue Cave
Action Research Project
November 2015

Study the influence of using kinaesthetic actions to teach grammatical concepts in L2 on Year 6 children's performance in L1 Spelling Pronunciation and Grammar Test

Choice of Subject for Research Project

I had been using, for some time, actions (inspired from those described in the 'Catherine Cheater French Scheme of Work') to explain and help recall the concepts of a variety of word classes whilst teaching French in Key Stage 2 lessons. My observations and personal evaluation seemed to indicate that these were effective. I hoped that this project would provide some conclusive evidence for this.

Method

In 2015/15 I taught grammatical concepts using actions (Doc1) to both classes in Year 6 in the same school. In addition, one of the Year 6 classes received additional practice and reinforcement of these actions in English lessons with their class teacher. The other class didn't. The children had already met these actions in French lessons in Years 3 to 5

School, Children and Teachers

The school is a two-form entry mixed primary school in a residential area in the outskirts of Reading, Berkshire. *The percentage from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the number of pupils who have English as an additional language. Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for the 'pupil premium'. The overall effectiveness is judged as good. Ofsted report 2012.*

The class teachers are both very experienced in teaching Year 6 classes.

Class 1 – results from 26 mixed ability children (selected randomly)

Class 2 – results from 26 mixed ability children (selected randomly)

Data

Spelling, Grammar and Pronunciation Test

10 questions from the 'Spelling, Grammar and Pronunciation' 2013 test were selected. (Doc2) All these questions related to understanding of word class concepts. The children had completed the complete test at the end of Year 5 (June 2014) and the number of correct responses for the selected 10 questions for each child was recorded. The children were asked to answer the same 10 questions again in June 2015 and the results were recorded. (DOC4)

Word Class Test

To provide additional evidence, a test was designed to check systematically the understanding of each word class concept taught. The children had to identify the type of word class of some words in a short paragraph. (Doc 3)

The children completed the test in October 2014 and then again in June in 2015. The number of correct responses for 10 questions was recorded. (Doc4)

Questionnaires

Both classes were asked to select a word to describe their perception of their grasp of these word class concepts at the start and end of the year. In addition, the children in Class 1 were asked at the end of the year to select a word to describe the impact of using the actions. (Doc3)

The two class teachers were asked to comment on what had had an impact on the improvement of the understanding of the children. (Doc3)

Findings

Test Results

Class 1 – received additional practice of the actions in English lessons

Spelling, Grammar and Pronunciation Test Questions (10)

Class 1 – difference in results June 2014(188/260)-June 2015(225/260) - **+37 marks** (5 children full marks in both tests)

Class 2 - difference in results June 2014(182/260)-June 2015(227/260) - **+45 marks** (2 children full marks in both tests)

Word Class Test Questions (10)

Class 1 – difference in results October 2014(195/260)-June 2015(215/260) - **+ 20 marks** (7 children full marks in both tests)

Class 2 - difference in results October 2014(173/260)-June 2015(182/260) - **+ 9 marks** (3 children full marks in both tests)

Questionnaires - Children

Class 1 – Perceptions of grasp of word class concepts

	October 2015	June 2015
Definitely	11	13
Mainly	9	8
Partly	5	4
Not at all	1	1

Class 2 – Perceptions of grasp of word class concepts

	October 2015	June 2015
Definitely	5	5
Mainly	11	7
Partly	8	12
Not at all	2	2

Class 1 – Impact of actions on learning

	June 2015
Definitely	2
Mainly	9
Partly	13
Not at all	2

Questionnaires – Teachers

Class 1 – *Practice in English lessons – Reinforcement in French lessons – Use of kinaesthetic actions* were all circled as contributing to the improvement of the children's grasp of the concepts.

Comment: "I have seen some children doing the action before reaching an answer to support their thinking."

Class 2 – *Practice in English lessons – Reinforcement in French lessons* – both were circled.

Analysis

- It was heartening that almost all children in both classes maintained or improved on their scores from the beginning of the year for whatever reason
- The improvement in Class 2's scores was better than Class 1 in the 'SPAG Test' questions. It had been hoped that the opposite would be the case. However, it should be noted that there was a greater number of children in Class 1 who were unable to improve as they had full marks at the start of the year and therefore the potential for a higher score in this class was diminished.
- The devised 'Word Class Test' was more systematic and simplistic in testing understanding of the word class concepts than the 'SPAG Test'. The 'SPAG Test' questions required more analysis and decoding.
- The improvement in the scores in the 'Word Class Test' in Class 1 was much better than in Class 2. There were also more children with full marks at the start of the year in Class 1 than Class 2 thereby diminishing the potential to increase the overall score. In Class 2 there were more children who had worse results at the end of the year. The results from this test indicate more conclusive evidence.
- The perception of the children in Class 1 about their grasp of the concepts was maintained throughout the year with a slight increase in those who answered 'definitely/mainly'. There were less children in Class 2 who answered 'definitely/mainly' and this number decreased by the end of the year.
- There were only 2 children who thought that the actions had not had any impact on their grasp of the concepts. This is to be expected as the same learning style does not work for all. However, it appears that the majority found that this method had had some impact on their learning.
- The class teachers were positive about the use and effectiveness of the actions from their own observations. The teacher in Class 1 had observed children using these actions independently to support their learning.

Conclusion

The results do not provide conclusive evidence about the positive influence of using actions to improve understanding of word class concepts. This may be because the experience of the two classes compared was not very different. It would be interesting to revisit this research using a class which had never had any exposure to the actions and one that had to analyse the results. I continue to teach the word class actions in L2 lessons and observe that many children find this support useful to support their learning and understanding.

Doc1 - Word Class Actions

	
<p>NOUN</p> <p>Put hand above eyes and scan the room. This is because everything you can see is a noun – check by putting ‘a’ or ‘the’ in front of it. The exception is an abstract noun so the additional wording might be ‘everything you can see and feel’.</p>	<p>PRONOUN</p> <p>With your hand in the position for a noun, remove it and point to the top of your head instead. A pronoun replaces a noun.</p>
	
<p>ADJECTIVE</p> <p>With your hand in the position for a noun, put your other hand next to your head and wiggle it thereby making the noun more interesting.</p>	<p>VERB</p> <p>Move your arms to perform an action as if walking.</p>
	
<p>ADVERB</p> <p>Move your arms and legs wildly, frantically, madly, crazily.</p>	<p>CONJUNCTION</p> <p>Link the first finger of one hand with the first finger of the other hand. Your hands represent the two parts of the sentence to be joined by the conjunction which is your fingers.</p>



PREPOSITION

Hold up your arms crossed in front of your body and point the first finger of each hand so that they are pointing in different directions. This indicates the position of a noun.

**Doc2 - Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test
2013**

14. Which sentence contains two verbs?

- The lambs played happily.
- The cows sleep in the field.
- The puppies growl and bark.
- The horses eat grass and hay.

16. Complete the sentence below with an adverb that makes sense.

The sun shone brightly in the sky.

17. Circle the connective in the sentence below.

The children played football until it was time for bed.

24. Circle all the adverbs in the sentence below.

Close the windows firmly and securely lock the door.

25. Circle the connective in the sentence below.

We had to hurry because the bus was about to leave.

36. Tick the two sentences where the subject and verb agree.

- Many of my friends loves eating pizza.
- Everyone is going to the library.
- Children under 16 are not allowed to see this film.
- The man live near the station.
- Boys is sitting in the chair.

37. Circle the two nouns in the sentence below.

The boy reached carefully into his bag.

40. Circle the connective in the sentence below.

When Adam tripped over a stone, he hurt his foot.

41. Put one letter in each box to show the word class.

A. Noun B. Adverb C. Adjective D. Verb

The lazy lion snored noisily.

--- ---- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

44. Circle the verb that shows the past tense in each sentence below.

- On holiday, we were very happy on the beach.
- The journey was rather too long for me.
- The weather in Spain is usually hot and sunny, though one day it rained a lot.

Doc3 - Word Class Test Questions

NAME.....CLASS DATE.....

Name the words in the sentence – noun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, preposition, pronoun

He	continued	to	climb	slowly	and	steadily	the
steep	path	despite	the	treacherous	conditions	in	the
mountains.							

Questionnaires

Classes 1 and 2 – Start of the Year

NAME.....CLASS

I have a good understanding of the meaning of nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, connectives (conjunctions), prepositions and pronouns.

Definitely Mainly Partly Not at all

Class 1 – End of year

NAME.....CLASS DATE.....

- I have a better understanding, than I did at the start of the year, of the word classes - nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, connectives (conjunctions), prepositions and pronouns

Definitely - Mainly - Partly - Not at all

- The use of actions for each word class was useful to help me remember the meaning.
 - Definitely - Mainly - Partly - Not at all

Class 2 – End of year

NAME.....CLASS DATE.....

- I have a better understanding, than I did at the start of the year, of the word classes - nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, connectives (conjunctions), prepositions and pronouns

Definitely - Mainly - Partly - Not at all

Teachers – End of year

Class 1

NAME.....CLASS

If there has been an improvement of their grasp of these concepts, please circle which of the following has contributed to this.

Practice in English lessons - Reinforcement in French lessons - Use of kinaesthetic actions

Other (please explain) _____

If you circled 'use of kinaesthetic actions', please say why.

Class 2

NAME.....CLASS

If there has been an improvement of their grasp of these concepts, please circle which of the following has contributed to this.

Practice in English lessons - Reinforcement in French lessons

Other (please explain) _____

Doc4 - Action Research Project

Test Results

2014-15

CLASS 1

Test /10

CHILD		SEPTEMBER 2014	JUNE 2014	SELF-ASS. RESPONSE SEPTEMBER	SELF-ASS. RESPONSE JUNE	QUESTION ABOUT ACTIONS
1	Word class test	9	8	Mainly	Partly	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	5	8			
2	Word class test	7	5	Mainly	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	5	8			
3	Word class test	4	7	Partly	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	4	9			
4	Word class test	10	10	Mainly	Definitely	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	10	10			
5	Word class test	8	9	Definitely	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	9			
6	Word class test	7	10	Definitely	Definitely	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	6	9			
7	Word class test	6	8	Definitely	Definitely	Not at all
	SPAG 2013	7	8			
8	Word class test	4	6	Partly	Partly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	6	5			
9	Word class test	9	10	Definitely	Definitely	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	6	9			
10	Word class test	9	10	Definitely	Definitely	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	10	10			
11	Word class test	5	9	Partly	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	5	8			
12	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	9	10			
13	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Definitely	Not at all
	SPAG 2013	10	10			

14	Word class test	7	7	Partly	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	9			
15	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	10	10			
16	Word class test	9	10	Mainly	Definitely	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	8	9			
17	Word class test	8	9	Definitely	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	9			
18	Word class test	0	0	Not at all	Not at all	Partly
	SPAG 2013	2	2			
19	Word class test	10	10	Mainly	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	9			
20	Word class test	9	10	Mainly	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	9	9			
21	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	10	10			
22	Word class test	5	4	Partly	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	6			
23	Word class test	6	10	Mainly	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	7	9			
24	Word class test	5	4	Definitely	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	7	10			
25	Word class test	10	10	Mainly	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	10			
26	Word class test	8	9	Mainly	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	10			

CLASS 2**Test /10**

CHILD		SEPTEMBER 2014	JUNE 2014	SELF-ASS. RESPONSE SEPTEMBER	SELF-ASS. RESPONSE JUNE
1	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	10	10		
2	Word class test	8	10	Mainly	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	8	10		
3	Word class test	6	5	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	7		
4	Word class test	5	9	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	4	10		
5	Word class test	2	6	Partly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	9	9		
6	Word class test	8	6	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	8	9		
7	Word class test	6	8	Not at all	Partly
	SPAG 2013	7	10		
8	Word class test	10	9	Definitely	Not at all
	SPAG 2013	9	10		
9	Word class test	4	6	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	7	8		
10	Word class test	7	9	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	7	7		
11	Word class test	8	10	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	7	8		
12	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	9	10		
13	Word class test	8	9	Mainly	Mainly

	SPAG 2013	9	10		
14	Word class test	2	3	Mainly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	10		
15	Word class test	4	7	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	5	8		
16	Word class test	7	7	Definitely	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	8		
17	Word class test	8	3	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	6	8		
18	Word class test	10	8	Mainly	Not at all
	SPAG 2013	8	9		
19	Word class test	3	0	Not at all	Partly
	SPAG 2013	3	6		
20	Word class test	7	5	Mainly	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	4	9		
21	Word class test	9	10	Mainly	Definitely
	SPAG 2013	8	10		
22	Word class test	4	4	Partly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	7	9		
23	Word class test	9	10	Mainly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	9	9		
24	Word class test	4	2	Partly	Partly
	SPAG 2013	6	6		
25	Word class test	10	10	Definitely	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	10	10		
26	Word class test	4	6	Partly	Mainly
	SPAG 2013	4	7		