

ILT Independent Study  
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## Summary of Teacher Observations

My independent study project gave me the opportunity to demonstrate clickers to my staff as a larger group, then to individually train teachers and observe their uses of the systems in their classrooms. The following is a summary of what I saw while I oversaw their classrooms.

### Teacher #1

This teacher is one of the older members of our department and not as tech savvy as some of the other teachers, but she was the first person to come to see me about being trained. She is an excellent teacher and loves the clickers for two main reasons: 1) they engage the entire class and 2) she can immediately assess what her students know.

Since this teacher is a French teacher and I do not speak French, it was very interesting for me to observe her French 3 class since I had to figure out what was going on by what I saw and not what I could understand. She needed a little bit of help setting up the system, but after this initial observation, she was able to set them up by herself without much trouble.

It was so amazing to watch her students when she first handed out their clickers. They were very excited and kept talking about how “cool” they were. Teacher #1 walked them through how to take attendance with the clickers. Next, she taught her lesson on some sort of verb conjugation while they took notes and went through some practice exercises on the board. After about 20 minutes, she had the students do a teacher managed assessment where they matched up the pronouns with the correct verb form. (I had to ask her to explain this after class since I wasn’t 100% sure this is what her intention was because of my lack of French language skills). She used the clicker responses to re-teach things that the students were struggling and moved quickly through the examples they did well on. This took about 30 minutes or so with the re-teaching that happened as well.

The great thing about having the clickers there is the students did not get bored or off-task since the clicker questions were engaging them every few minutes. Next, teacher #1 moved onto some work with vocabulary flash cards for about 30 minutes and then finished class with another clicker activity where the students matched the word in French to its definition in French. (Great idea! It made them think more than just finding the word in English).

I observed teacher #1 a second time and she again used the clicker for similar purposes. She and I met after my second observation and I talked to her about how to use the clickers with higher order thinking skills questions. I look forward to working more with her in the future to see what great ideas she comes up with!

## Teacher #2

This teacher and I work in close proximity and both teach the same language, so I was able to talk with her more about specific Spanish strategies I use with the clickers. I also taught her teacher #1's trick with vocabulary matching and using definitions in Spanish instead of matching the word in English. I also helped her set-up, although this was more of an observation since teacher #2 is very technology oriented-she's a graduate of the UCD ILT program! She then took attendance using the clickers with her students. Next, she used them to keep the kids engaged while watching a cultural video on Argentina. This was a great way to have the kids process what they were seeing, and it also kept them from sleeping, writing notes or working on other stuff since they were being held accountable for what they were watching. After the video was over, teacher #2 introduced new vocabulary students using overhead pictures. The kids were making lists while she was writing and saying the words on the overhead next to the pictures. After they had their completed lists, she engaged another clicker lesson that practiced the vocabulary in another new way from teacher #1! The students were working on house and chore vocabulary, and she was having them match the chore to the room. Since I teach the same level, I actually borrowed this CPS lesson from her to use the next day in my class.

## Teacher #3

Teacher #3 also teaches French at ThunderRidge. She and I both teach using TPRS, which is a foreign language teaching method that involves telling stories in the target language while using “actors” to help the kids understand what is happening in the story. It’s a great method because it allows the teacher to speak almost entirely in the target language but is comprehensible to the students. Teacher #3 had asked me about how she could use clickers with this sort of methodology, and I suggested using them to check for understanding after she told the story.

I helped her set up the systems in her classroom and then took a seat to observe her French 2 class. She started them out by conversing with them (again, I was pretty lost since I don’t speak French) for about 15 minutes. She later told me that they are working on the past tense and were discussing what they had done last night. She then had them do a sort reading in French that they read in partners. She then passed out the clickers and did a quick understanding check (7 clicker questions) to see what the kids had learned. There were a few questions that many of them didn’t do well on-but she did not correct them at that time. When I asked her later why she had waited, she said that based on the questions they struggled with; she knew what grammar concept she needed to review to help them. She was going to review that in class the next day and re-assess them to see if they had improved. Next, she told her TPRS story. This was a lot of fun for me to watch since I don’t speak much French, but I was able to understand what was happening and actually learned a little myself! Once the kids were done, she had them respond to clicker questions to see if they had understood the details in the story. She had told the kids before starting that they would be answering these questions at the end, and said that it helped to engage the students who she normally had trouble reaching.

After the lesson was over, she had expressed some dissatisfaction with the inability to create questions as she went along. I demonstrated to her how to use the verbal question

feature, and she seemed to be very excited to use the systems again with the verbal option.

## Final Thoughts

Working with these other teachers individually in their classrooms was extremely rewarding for me. I not only taught them how to use the systems, but actually learned a few things from them as well! I would like to lead further trainings in the future that address more complex uses of CPS, such as integrating power point, using the verbal question features and how to ask higher order thinking questions in a multiple choice format. It was so wonderful to see other teachers use them effectively to re-teach and assess their students. Clickers are such a valuable piece of technology, and I am very happy that other members of my department have seen their potential as well.