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[Eduardo Freitas]

Thank you very much for being here with me today. I would like to thank again macmillan for the invitation to be speaking at such an important event. I've attended other global teacher festivals before, but being here today, talking to you, talking to teachers from different backgrounds and different parts of the world is just fascinating. So I'm from Brazil. I'm a teacher, teacher educator and materials writer based in Santos, which is by the coast, very close to Sao Paulo, one of the biggest cities in the country.

And I see lots of people here saying hello, hello, hello. So in times where some people are afraid of showing their nationalities and showing where they come from, let's fight against this prejudice and saying hello in our own language here in the chat box. So if you're from Brazil, hoy, Hola. If you're from a Spanish speaking country, hola. Buenos tardes.

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Buenas noches. So let's be proud of who we are and share our own language here. As I said, I work with, teach mostly teacher education and writing course books nowadays. And I hope to share a few of my thoughts and a bit of my research with you and hopefully you'll be able to test some of the suggestions I'm going to bring here today. So, first disclaimer.

This session is 100% Instagrammable. I love Instagram. So this is my Instagram handler. This is Macmillan, Brazil's Instagram handler. Notice that Brazil with as here.

So if you want to take pictures and post your stories or on LinkedIn, feel free to do that, but please tag me. I would love to see what you thought of the session, the, you know, the insights you had. Okay, so it's going to be a pleasure to, to connect with you. Here's our agenda for today. Although we have, I have only 30 minutes, it's gonna be.

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I'm gonna try to do my best to share everything I brought today. So first we're going to start by discussing who the villain in teens classrooms really is. Then we're moving on to understanding what autonomy really means for teenage learners. Then we will revisit the role of devices and technology in our classrooms. Moving on to exploring three possibilities you can implement on your lessons right away.

So I'm going to give you three very practical ide. And then finally, we're going to wrap up by reflecting upon how collaboration, connection and technology walk hand in hand in this teenage world of nowadays. So first, let me ask you, what is your number one classroom autonomy killer? What is it that happens in your classroom when you teach teenagers that heals autonomy? Can you can you tell me here in the chat box, please?

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Time. Silence. Okay, Let me see. Noise. See, Some people struggle with.

Some teachers struggle with silence. Other teachers struggle with noise. Rapport. Students. Interest.

Course books. Okay. Demotivation.

Contra. What is that? Contrived leadership. Shyness. Anxiety.

So let's see, let's see. If I brought here four options. Let's see how they connect with what you said. The first one is foam. Distraction.

Oh, my God. This is definitely number one on my list.

And we're going to discuss this more because I'm going to share a little bit more about our context here in Brazil. But foams definitely are like a problem in the classroom nowadays. Fear of making mistakes. As I said at the beginning with Emily, sometimes we forget what it feels like to be a teenager. But if there's something that teenagers do 24 hours, seven days a week is judging each other.

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They judge each other by the way they dress, by the way they talk, by what they look, by what they have, by what they don't have. They are always judging each other. And that may raise students awareness in terms of communicating because they might fear making mistakes and, you know, being judged and all that. Then language one. Overuse.

So if you, like me, teach in monolingual contexts where your learners share the same first language, they might be very reluctant to using English. Instead, they would rather obviously communicate in their mother tongue, like in Portuguese, which is my case here. And last but not least, lack of motivation. How many times have you stepped into a teenage classroom and learners have this face that, you know, you get, you get that they want to die, they'd rather be anywhere else. But in your lesson, have you ever gone through this?

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So I'm sure if you teach teenagers, you can 100 relate with what I'm saying, because, I mean, it doesn't matter whether you are in Brazil or in India or in China or in Saudi Arabia, teenagers will be teenagers everywhere, right? So in order to try and fight all these villains, we have to reflect and to question ourselves what autonomy really is and what it is not. Because when we think about autonomy, we're always. We're directly thinking about working on their own, right? Being able to do things on their own.

That's what autonomy. That's where autonomy strikes when you first see the word. But when. When you think about teenagers, things are a little bit different, right? For a teenager, this sense of independence, in the same way that they seek independence from teachers and from family and from parents, this might feel like isolation.

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And what teenagers need socially and biologically Speaking is connection. So we are looking, instead of promoting independence through autonomy, we're looking at providing

interdependence where they have to interact and depend on each other to achieve a bigger goal. Does that make sense? Can you relate to what I'm saying here? Is this part of your reality or am I too distant from teenagers in your country?

When we think about this concept of independence and interdependence, we're definitely looking at making adaptations in the way we plan our lessons and the way activities come to us in course books.

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And by, by that, I mean we have to look those activities and to those suggested tasks from course books very critically and ask ourselves how we can include or adapt that activity to promote social interaction, to give students the opportunity to. Of being interdependent among themselves. And last but not least, as a final objective, give them autonomy to use the language and to become not necessarily better speakers of the language, but to become autonomous and better learners of English. Because a lot of learning, as we know, happens on our own when we watch things, when we scroll our social media apps. And sometimes students miss learning opportunities because they are not aware or because they don't have the autonomy to do so.

So when we think, when, when we try and look at our course books more critically and try to adapt our. The tasks, the suggested tasks, including these three pillars, great things can happen. And now I'm going to bring a little bit of my context here in Brazil, last year, phones were banned from schools like, just like that. Students were not allowed to take or to even some of them, not at all. Some.

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Some schools even prohibited students from taking their phones to school because of the law. But I don't know, is that the same in your country? Our phones banned from schools in your country? Let me see here in the chat box.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Lots of yeses, a couple of no's.

But what happens in the law, at least here in Brazil, I don't know if the same happens to you in your country, but people who write the law, I, I get the feeling that they write things for people in order to make it difficult for people to understand what they're trying to say. And when we think about the law regarding cell phones in schools here in Brazil, it says the following, that the use of cell phones at school is prohibited unless there is a clear pedagogical purpose and guidance from a supervisor, be the supervisor, a teacher or the school, any other school employee, so on and so forth. But what happened here in Brazil because teachers saw phones as the Enemy. They simply prohibited and blame it on, blamed it on the president. Like, okay, it's phones are banned.

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If you don't like it, talk to the president. It's not my fault because it's, this is just easier, right? And I get it. I get how, I get how and why teachers see phones as a problem. I do.

I'm totally, I'm not advocating the contrary. I see where they come from. But what I would like to suggest here today is that we should use phones as a social digital bridge. And instead of

looking at it as a villain, as a distraction, we should include phones in our lessons in a way where students can capture a concept or reflect upon their learning or share ideas and collaborate with peers. And this is where I'm going from now on.

I'm going to be suggesting three, three changes you can make when you think of course books. First one is, I'm using, by the way, I'm using this book collection by macmillan called Find your Voice. This is volume one of this collection. If you haven't seen this collection, you should because it's absolutely fantastic. And I'm going to be using this as our background scenario from now on.

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So the Buddy 2.0 system is. The Buddy system 2.0, I'm sorry, is the idea is a concept that I'm bringing to you for you to change the activities from your course books where you just see work in pairs and then ask and answer these questions here and so on and so forth. So what I'm trying, what I'm suggesting here is that instead of saying just work in pairs, try assigning functional roles to students. So instead of working in pairs, put them in trios. And these roles, each student in this trio is going to have a different role that simulates a real world collaborative scenario in order to promote autonomy.

Let's see how that is going to work in adapting an activity. So this is from Find your voice one, unit four, lesson one, exercise nine says the following working pairs. Think of a person in your class, take it in turns to ask and answer questions, in bears to find out their name. And here we have. What color is his or her hair?

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What type of hair is it? Describe his or her face. So this lesson is about physical description. And when you look at this exercise, to me it looks a bit too neutral, not, not a clear context. But I mean, being a course book writer, can you imagine how difficult it is to write a course book that needs to fit different needs in different countries?

Because this book, beautifully written and produced by macmillan, has to work in Brazil, has to work in Saudi Arabia, has to work in the Philippines, has to work in Italy and Spain and in China. So it is. There is only so much writers can do, right? So if we keep it too specific, it won't be suitable for different scenarios. So this is why what I'm suggesting here is that you look at the book and you adapt these activities in order to make them more meaningful to your learners.

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Because at the end of the day, you know who your learners are, you know what they need, you know the adaptations and the changes it needs to make in each activity to make it work. And this is what I would do if I were teaching this lesson. So instead of having them just simply working pairs and asking, answering these, and asking, answering these questions without a lot of context, I would tell them, look, now we're going to build a social media profile for a group of learners at my school social media app. This is an app that I created here. So as working trios, these trio would be responsible to observe another trio and fill in the social media profile for another trio.

And that's how they would do it. Student A would be the observer. So student A would be responsible for observing, taking notes of physical traits of the other group members. Student B would be the interviewer. So this interviewer, student would be responsible for creating and asking questions about name, height, weight, hair color and whatever else is relevant to a social media profile.

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Likes, preferences, dislikes, locations and interview the other trio. Student C would be the editor. So this student would be responsible for collecting information from A and from B in order to build the social media profile. And then, and then we could be doing this on Padlet or on Google Forms and then you know, any, any other, any other tech tool that you have, you might have access to. So see how this three roles they cause they somehow promote this in the concept of interdependence, where each student depends on the other in order to produce the final product.

And different from, for example, if you had only one role playing of the interviewee and the interviewer. So this does not necessarily promote this collaboration and interdependence. Whereas here we are all working towards the same go. Yeah. How do you feel about this change here, this adaptation from this activity?

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Let me see here in the chat box.

Marina said she likes it. Alexandra said an excellent idea, loved it. Good, good. So let me give you another example. Going from a different still from the same course book, but a different scenario here.

This is still from find your voice one, but now unit six and lesson one Right. The task is the following. In pairs, talk about your favorite sports and hobbies. Use the words in the box to help you. Cool, difficult, easy, interesting is for me again, to me, this exercise also lacks a context and less lacks real life scenario.

And what I would suggest is the following. You are organizing a hobby show and tell for your whole classroom. This is what students would be working with. So student A, he would be the scout. So he.

He would be using this prompt in the book to interview the members of the group. They take notes on a why. On why a hobby is cool or not for me. So he would be interviewing people considering different hobbies. Student B is the multimedia producer.

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So why is student A is interviewing people? Student B is researching videos and. Or photos or taking photos that represent the hobbies that they are discussing here. Student C is going to be the curator. So they're going to be responsible for combining A's notes, B's pictures and videos into a single exhibition post for a class hobbies gallery.

Then we could be using an online app like Canva, for example, to create this poster. Yeah. So again, students connected towards and working towards the same. The same goal. Right.

Speaker: A

There's just one observation that I didn't. I didn't mention this time, but both for. For both this. For both this activity and the other one I suggested before, there is always a role where we are going to depend a little less on speaking. Right?

Because teenagers, some. Some students might feel shy or just quiet. And that does not mean that they are not learning or that they are not developing. That means that they prefer to be quiet. Right?

And we tend to label them as weak learners just because they are quiet. But that's not true. So weird. What I'm suggesting here is that we give them roles according to their personalities in order to make them feel safe and comfortable within the same environment. It doesn't make sense.

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Can you. Can you see where. Where I'm going with this?

Then moving on.

12 activities here for us to adapt collaboratively. But we're. Unfortunately, we're not gonna have time to do both. So let's just focus on the first one. So it says the following in pairs.

Talk about the food you eat at the weekend. Again, too general. Right? So how. How would we adapt this activity, Activity eight here, into.

Into something where we can add roles in a. As a. As a. As a. In a more contextualized communicative objective.

What are your ideas? What are your suggestions? Tell me here in the chat box, please. Let me see.

Acting out roles in a. Restaurant. Daniela said writing a menu. Okay.

Julia gave a very nice idea. A chef giving a recipe and building an Instagram blog. Nice. What I would do, for example, is having three students writing a review on the school canteen, for example. So student A is responsible for going to the canteen and taking notes what it is that they offer in there.

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Student B is going to interview other students in the classroom or around school school to ask them how they feel about the food in the canteen. And student three is going to collect both data from both the interviewer and the analyst. Let's call it this way. And build and write a review or writing a small report for changes in the school counseling menu. You see where I'm going?

So I'm not necessarily creating a role play here because sometimes teenagers might have a difficulty with role playing, you know, getting in the role playing scene. So when this happens, give them real tasks, things that they have to do in their real life with things that surround them. Going to the school canteen, talking about hobbies that they have, not a hypothetical scenario or a distant scenario like going to the doctor or, you know, going to a fancy restaurant. Because chances are they may never go to a fancy restaurant and they're missing out the opportunity of using this cool canteen that is right there next to you, much closer to the reality, much more meaningful to them. So moving on from my next two tips, because I'm kind of running out of time here, I'm suggesting students keep a voice memo diary.

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So at the end of the lesson, you ask them to grab their phones and record a voice memo or in a messaging app to themselves or it's for them, it's not to share with you. And in this voice memo, they have to say three things. They have to go through these three topics first, they have to say three things they learned today in the lesson. They have to say two things they did to help appear during the lesson and one goal that they have for their digital English habits during the week. So in this lesson about food, for example, one goal for their digital habit would be to follow a blogger on TikTok that talks about restaurants, for example.

Right. So this is a way of promoting self assessment and tracking their progress throughout the lessons because they are recording voice messages about themselves about what they learned, about how they helped appear, about what they are, what they want to have as the goal for their work outside the classroom. Right. It's about giving them the ownership of their own learning, which, you know, which, in other words, is building autonomy. Right.

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Then my other suggestion is using their apps Their notes app have them create what. What I call the aha log. What. What is the aha log? It's a journal where learners are going to keep interesting information or this aha moments that when they realize or they learn something or, you know, when the coin drops and it's like, aha, now I get it.

And they. They have this space to take notes of these aha moments and build a learning journal. And what can they do? What could they do in this. In this aha log?

They can write notes based on things they realized in class. They can add pictures of things they see not only inside the classroom, but outside the classroom. So in this lesson where we talked about food, for example, let's suppose they go to a restaurant on the weekend with their parents and they see a menu in English. That's a moment. That's the aha moment to say, oh, I studied this in my English lesson, so let me take a picture and let this to my aha journal, right?

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They can add voice notes, they can add screenshots of posts on social media. Let's imagine they see something interesting on social media that connects to what they learned in the lesson. They take a screenshot, add it to their journal. Links to videos, links to pieces of news, links to songs and playlists. You know, options are endless, right?

Podcasts, right, Fatima? Fatima just suggested podcasts. Most definitely. Podcasts are must as well.

So all in all, what I wanted to share with you is that autonomy becomes more sustainable when we combine social routines and digital habits by reinforcing each other and not necessarily seeing the phone or AI or technology as your enemy inside the classroom. And you know that autonomy and digital routines are working when you have peer pairs creating shared digital notes. For example, this aha log could be done in pairs. You have them working in pairs for the school year, you know, and they built this together, right? You have small groups building learning playlists on Spotify or apple Music or YouTube.

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Right? When you have students recording short group performances throughout the year to track progress, to see how much they've developed from the beginning to the end of the term, or when you have quick collaborative learning moments inside or outside the classroom. And this all can be done with technology, things that were not possible when I was a student and probably when you were a student a while ago, but now we can. Now we can do that. And at the end of the day, guys, my final message here, reflection is, at the end of the day, it's all about picking the battles you want to fight.

And this by the Way this picture of me was AI generated. And what do I mean by picking your battles? Fighting a battle against AI, against cell phones, against technology, is not a battle that we can win. We're not going to win this war because, I mean, we're looking at the wrong enemy here. Right?

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We're looking. Technology is not the enemy. The cell phone is not the real enemy. So what's our job here? To understand who the real enemy is.

The real enemy is not the phone. It's not AI, is how these learners are using AI, if they are using it ethically, if they are using it appropriately, if they're using it at the right time. Right? So instead of just fighting and prohibiting, why don't we teach them how and when and why to use these tools? Because tools come and go, apps come and go.

Right now, nowadays we have ChatGPT. We have many different ideas of tools that we have available, but ethics, sense of appropriacy, politeness, these things stick. It doesn't matter where or what pops up in terms of technology, in terms of, you know, everything. Right? And just like Moulud said here, the real enemies, the way they are using the phones and AI, not phones and AI.

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Right. So that was my final reflection here. Thank you very much for being here with me. I hope you enjoyed my session. I hope the ideas I gave you were interesting and sparked and have sparked some changes and some triggers for more change inside your classroom.

This is my Instagram account, so if you're on Instagram, just follow me there. I'm going to love to connect with you. This is my LinkedIn profile also. Just let's connect over there. And in case you want to share something with me or if you have any questions or ideas, just send me an email.

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It's going to be a pleasure to connect with you. I really, I'm really fascinated by understanding what teaching looks like in different parts of the world. Right. Because here we have people from all the corners of the globe. So please, let's, let's connect, let's reach out.

Because together we're stronger and we can, you know, we all work towards the same goal, which is changing the world through education and becoming better teachers and as a consequence, having better learners and turning the world into a better place for us to live in. So thank you very, very much once again for being here with me.

00:33:07

[Hemylle Oliveira]

How inspiring. Eduardo, thank you so much. That words, so many gems in your session.

Lots of food for thought on social interaction, interdependence, autonomy, and equipping students so that they become better language learners. I loved, I took lots of notes and I love these strategies that you provided related to giving students specific roles, adapting course books to cater to students realities. The exit tickets and aha Moments were superb self assessment tools and it was so inspiring overall through and through. Thank you so much. We've got some questions.

We'll have plenty of time for all of them. But we've got here a question connected to what strategies do you normally resort to when students are not as willing to collaborate or to participate in specific tasks? What are some strategies? Some of your. Go to strategies.

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[Eduardo Freitas]

Okay, so I don't know if I'm going to answer whoever asked this question. I don't know if I'm going to be able to answer specifically because I don't think that there is really a secret formula to answer these questions. It's not like, oh, students are not engaged, do this, this and that and then magic happens. I think that the first step for us to do is to reflect upon what we are doing and try to reflect, try to understand what is it that we are doing that is not engaging students into the topic. So perhaps the practices that we are bringing to our lessons are not really engaging or not really relevant to them.

Or the context we're bringing is far from the reality. Because something I said earlier today in the first session that I presented at the Global Festival was that I delivered. I recorded a webinar for Macmillan Brazil last month. And in this webinar there was a quote from whom I can remember, but it says the following that English is, is. Is the mean to achieve something.

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Then when you think about teenagers, English is the mean they use to say who they are and to find their place in society. And sometimes what we are doing inside the classroom does not give them the chance to say who they are or to find their place within that social context. And when students don't see that, they don't feel engaged. They say, why am I doing this? It doesn't sound like me.

And that's my problem with role playing, role play. You're going to a fancy dog, you're going to a doctor, you're going to a fancy restaurant. The student might not need to go to the doctor at that moment in life. Talk to the doctor, you know, because their parents will do that for them. So it's distant from what they're real, from what they need at that moment, you know.

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[Hemylle Oliveira]

Yeah, I couldn't agree more. Speaking of which, what are some of your strategies to get to know your students, especially in the Beginning of a term. Because as you said, it is imperative to understand what they, or why they need that language, what they use it for. So what are you doing on it to better know them?

[Eduardo Freitas]

I normally have some needs analysis at the beginning of the semester and with teenagers because here in Brazil, this idea of scrapbooking, drawing and building mind maps is really, really transient now. I don't know. Yeah, yeah. So what I, what I do, I, I did this a while ago this year. I'm not teaching teenagers, unfortunately, but I did this a while ago.

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I, I, I brought questions regarding their learning preferences and their learning goals and things they like, like music and series and movies and all that. And I, I was asking these questions to them throughout the first day of class and they had to draw and build a scrapbooking mind map style based on the questions that they wanted to. Based on the answers I was asking them. Sorry. Based on the questions I was asking them.

They had to create this visual representation of who they were and what they liked in order for me to get to know them a little bit more.

[Hemylle Oliveira]

So that's wonderful because then you can resource to it throughout the year. Yeah, it's fun indeed.

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[Eduardo Freitas]

And I'm a very visual person, so that worked really well for me too.

[Hemylle Oliveira]

How incredible. Edward, thank you so much. We could go on and on with you and Rodrigo chatting about your practices. It was incredible to have you here today and well, we learned a lot from you in this moment. Thank you so much. And