



Rapport

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Success in language learning depends to a large extent on what goes on 'inside and between the people in the classroom' – (Stevick, 1980)

...”the affective component contributes at least as much and often more to language learning than the cognitive skills” (Stern, 1983)

“No significant learning takes place without a significant relationship”. (Comer, 1995)

“There is ample evidence that students participate more actively and learn better when they see that their teacher is truly concerned...” (Noels, 2001)

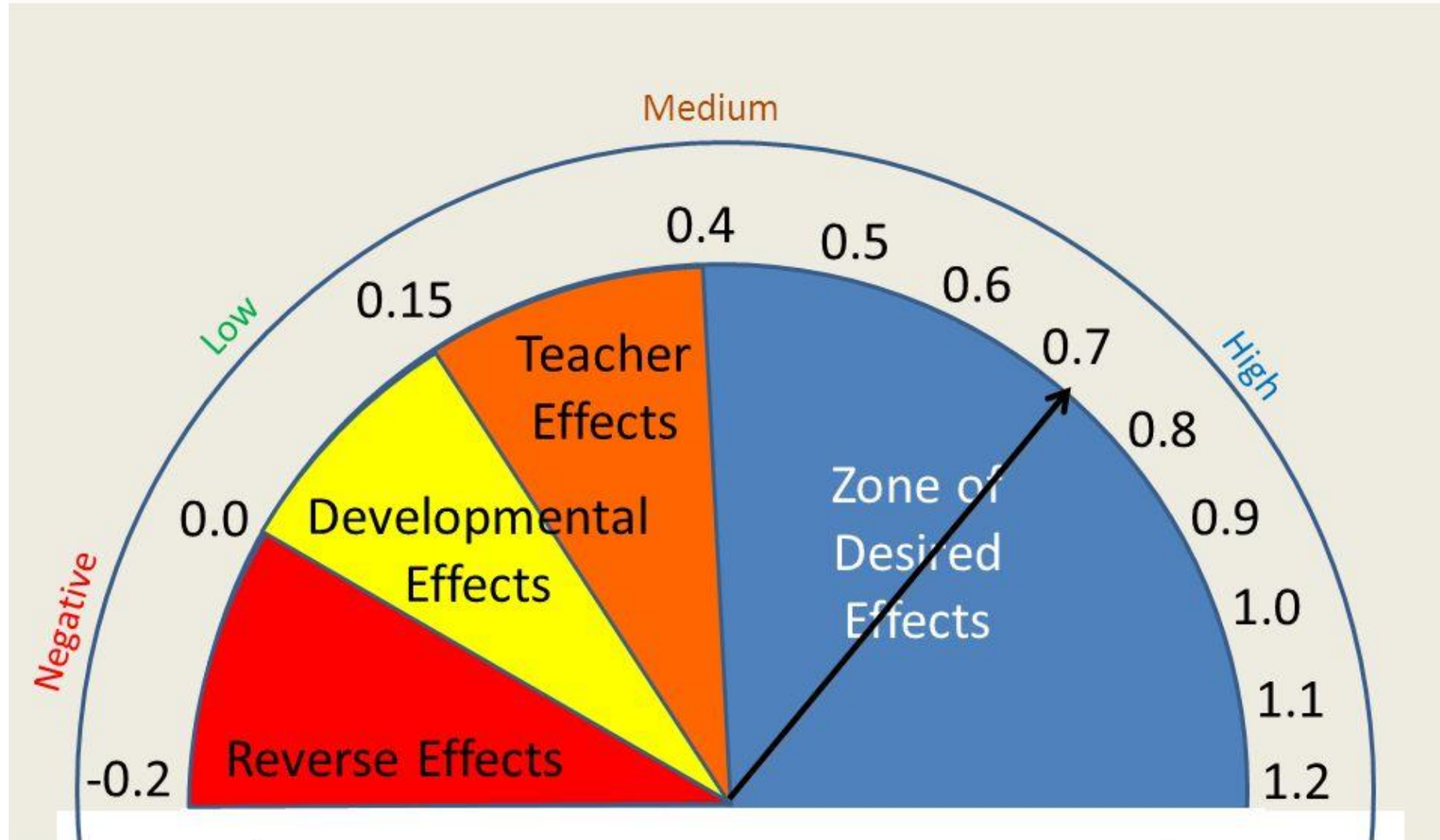
"There's no direct link between subject knowledge and great teaching. (Hattie, 2003, 2012)

“Teacher wellbeing is symbiotic with student wellbeing”. (Roffey, 2011)

“If at the front of the classroom you are not conveying enthusiasm for your material with at least a reasonable level of energy, how can you expect a class full of sleep deprived, distracted students to eagerly tackle whatever you have planned?” (Cavanagh, 2016)

“Education is inherently relational.” (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020)

Hattie's "Barometer of Influence"



Teacher-student relationships $d=0.72$

Good rapport means ...

- Success in teaching and learning
- Job satisfaction and professional well-being
- Fewer disciplinary issues

Rapport in language learning refers to the _____ between the teacher and the learners. Teachers try to _____ good rapport with the learners in order to produce an _____ that will help _____.

build

learning

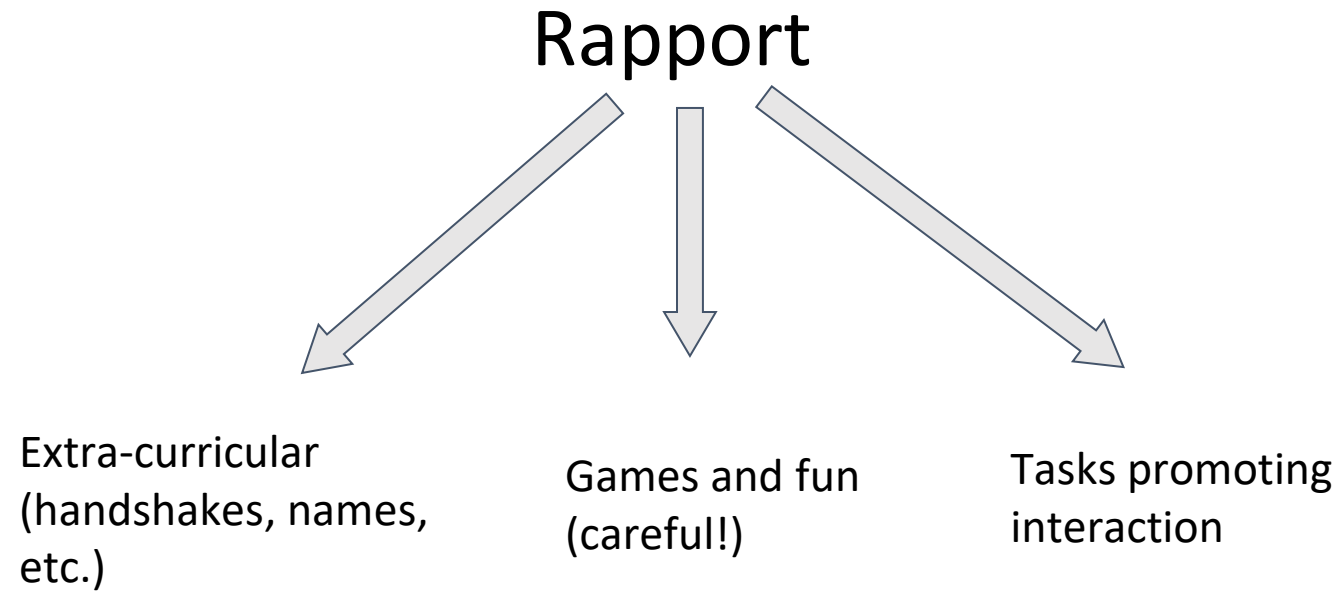
environment

relationship

Strategies for rapport 1

| Verbal strategies | Nonverbal strategies |
|--|---|
| Personalization (learning names, personal interests) | Eye contact |
| Appropriate self-disclosure | Gesturing |
| Use of learners first language | Varied vocal features (pitch, volume, pauses) |
| Humour | Relaxed, open body position |
| Having conversations outside of class | Smiling |

Strategies for rapport 2



People bingo

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

Dogs



Image: pixabay.com

Traits of “Dog”
personalities: Forgiving of errors, value attention, responsive to praise, social, playful, expressive facial expressions.

Strategies for Dog Personalities

- Provide opportunities for dogs to model, demonstrate, or share whole-group whenever possible.
- Think quality of positive interactions over quantity, such as a longer, positive conversation one-on-one.
- Ask them questions to give them a chance to share about their world, their interests, their expertise.
- If behavior needs to be managed, opt for one-on-one pre-briefing or after class conversations.

Cats



Image: pixabay.com

Traits of "Cat"

personalities: Sceptical, observant, warm up to others on own terms, loyal when trust is established, neutral facial expressions when around groups, not as responsive to praise or overt positivity.

Strategies for Cat Personalities

- Give quick, low-key compliments but don't linger for a response.
- Ask him/her for thoughts in one-on-one situations.
- Use written or after-class praise instead of public praise.
- Think quantity of positive interactions over quality but space out interactions over time.
- Be particularly attentive and curious when a cat does approach you or opens up.

Struggling with rapport?

- Perception of teacher role.
- Lack of attention: Too many other things to think about, i.e. technology, student behaviour
- Devotion to the plan / wedded to the coursebook
- Personality?
- Lack of awareness of its importance
- Time
- ...

Questions?

Can creating rapport be taught?

Building relationships might be impeded by the constant testing and the selection process in schools. Are there any ways to minimise these effects?

Is rapport an essential component of good teaching, or is there a danger that it substitutes for good teaching? (Question by Scott Thornbury)

How to create rapport: Quick review

- Greeting and eye contact
- Smile
- Showing an interest in students
- Using humour appropriately
- Being approachable and open to feedback
- Using reinforcement and praise
- Be respectful
- Repeat the four themes of the framework

Literature

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