

Reflective Practitioner

Reflection on my practice includes collecting feedback from students and peers as well as documenting my process. The following artifacts were chosen to provide a sampling of how this exists and how it has evolved.

The handwritten document is part of a self awareness questionnaire. Rather than think about it, I documented my thoughts at the time.

CESL student feedback dates to 2004. This was an early attempt at gathering feedback and identifying revisions for the next round.

The newsletter was created in response to my Masters of Education research which put me i in my students' shoes. I became an international student, lived in homestays and grappled with a language and culture that was new to me. As both a student and teacher in that context, I came to realize the differences in methodology could be profound in various cultures. Thus, I created the newsletter not only to simplify the course outline, but also to provide practical support to students right from the beginning of class. This is the first page. It is normally followed with an essential vocabulary list (Bloom's Taxonomy) and a midterm check in for students to reflect on their learning process.

APARs capture lists but I have always included an additional document that captures my process for the year. I chose to include this one specifically as it was a profound year of learning that led to such things as developing new teaching materials (like the newsletter)and informal classroom research. It also includes goals for the next year.

Feedback from the 045 and 058 classes demonstrates an inclusion of the student experience beyond their academic learning. This speaks to how I value their process as a learner and person.

TESL 3030 is Intercultural Communication Studies which is a required course in the teacher training program in the ESL Department. This feedback was elicited after one cohort in the program identified that the program was too intense. In this document I was trying to find out if my revisions to the course had had any impact.

SELF ASSESSMENT Pg. Cultural Learning: The 5 Dues

1. People in some countries emphasize tactile contact; others do not. A teacher in a culturally heterogeneous classroom should touch the touchers and leave the others alone.

1st instructor should discuss the expectations of teacher/student relationship and also consider the culture of the school she is in. I can't wouldn't unless kids are very small and approach me due to ethics and touching taboos.

2. We are in the business of teaching a language; therefore we should emphasize basic linguistic training and leave the culture learning to our students.

Disagree. We should choose topics to use in context with the skills as well as ask students to ask questions about culture whenever they want.

3. Confrontation may be an effective and appropriate strategy in intercultural communication.

Yes. It is a natural state. There can be debriefing after, or some guidance to explore the nature of the confrontation. - e.g. The Movie 'Crash' scene with the door repair guy and shop owner.

CESL Student Comments:

I am pretty enjoy Emma's class. One reason of it is the stuff she used it really useful. I can focus my point into the class easier because of it.

I like her course because it's interesting, and she teaches very clearly. I feel my Reading skills improve fast.

She uses a lot of extra material to help us and understand better.

I like Emma's instructional material because it really funny and good for studying.

She is a very tough teacher it makes me want to pass this course.

Student Suggestions:

She always give us handout to work but we never use a textbooks.

I think she can answer some questions When we are in exam.

Sometimes she should give us more Time to do the practice.

She should be more helpful.

Action Taken:

Use textbook more, incorporate text into homework

Demonstrate questions the day before so students have a chance to clarify.

Plan less activities for class but have other exercises for fast finishers to do .

Ask individuals to stay at break or make individual appointments for more one on one time.



ESAL 045 Winter 2007

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What are we going to do in this class??

Level four speaking and listening is the last oral/aural class in the ESAL program. The aim of this course is for all students to be exposed to and practice both rehearsed and unrehearsed interactions. It is meant to mimic both real life conversations and more formal presentations in academic classes and other settings such as a business meeting. (Some of the topics will be planned by Emma, but it is critical that you bring topics that will aid you *in your academic and social* cultural interactions.) For example, I may give you a topic to research and present, as a group, to this class which fulfills 2 goals:

The first goal is to have you expand your vocabulary so that you are using vocabulary that is relevant to the topic. You would need to fully understand the part of speech, related words and meaning in order to prepare your presentation *and* teach your peers the vocabulary so

that they understand fully your topic. The second goal is to have you take on a variety of roles in the class, such as leader, partner, problem solver etc. The reason why this is important is because in academic classes you will likely be given group work tasks as well as individual assignments to do. Practicing these in 045 should help you to gain confidence when you enter academic classes where you are expected to be fluent and to understand how to behave in a group situation.

Returning to the first point— that the aim is practice both rehearsed and unrehearsed interactions— these will be organized to provide a variety of tasks that meet this objective. Of course you will be assessed on your listening comprehension, pronunciation and grammar during unrehearsed conversations with me. My suggestion for success and **growth** in this class? Speak English as often as you can and



listen to radio, tv talk shows and internet talk shows so that you get a broad idea of what is currently in the news— we will use this in class!

Inside this issue:

What are we going to do? |

How do I improve? class? |

Special Points of Interest |

Agree or disagree? :

Culture hides much

more than it reveals...
E. ward T. Hall



Points of Interest:

- Culture plays a critical part in how well you do in Canadian academic settings.
- Become aware of the similarities and differences of your learning at home, and in Canada.
- Every instructor is different and we do not have to use the same texts or same style of teaching.
- Expect to be challenged!

How do I improve in this class?

1. Speak English to a variety of people every day.
2. Set a goal to use new vocabulary every day.
3. Recognize that in 12 weeks, it is near to impossible to become fluent in a classroom situation only.
4. Use your dictionary and thesaurus to check word meaning before you use it— context is critical!
5. Set reasonable goals—learning 100 new words a day is ridiculous! Try 2 or 3 in statement and question forms.
6. When speaking or listening, try not to translate in your head.
7. Make your English listening and speaking **relevant** to what you need, especially in your academic classes. This is a place to try out new language. Use the time wisely!
8. Be gentle on yourself. Mistakes are *normal and expected*.
9. Ask for help— I am not psychic!

Thompson Rivers University
Self Evaluation
by Emma Bourassa
September 26, 2006

My time has been divided by educational, teaching and administration duties.

I have completed my Masters of Education in Curriculum Studies. The project that was to create curriculum for a course that would support English as Another Language students in their academic classes. I have tested the curriculum in O45 and have begun to reflect on how it could be adapted for a Canadian/international class population. The work that I've done over the last year, both teaching and studying, has led me to new goals through the year. Looking back at the goals of last year, I am happy with the outcomes, and am able to focus now on new things, although my goals continue to involve myself as a learner and as a reflective practitioner. The completion of the M.Ed project as well as the opportunity to use it has revealed new avenues for me to pursue. First, I have established that my focus has shifted from a narrower ESL language teaching experience to one of intercultural education that is explored through a common language (English). This acknowledgement leads me to consider my role as a teacher in the class and a faculty member in the institution. My involvement beyond the classroom is reflected in the workshops I've presented and the nature of professional development undertaken. As I look back on past goals and toward the future, I see myself bringing a different attitude to my students and analysing some of the CESL program in context with my perception of the changing of student needs/wants.

In terms of administration, it has been a continuous learning experience in terms of communication, policy, systems and interpersonal relationships where there seems to be an imposed hierarchy (from me or others). The challenges have been enormous, but the value has been to obtain a broader understanding of the university as a whole, have an opportunity to improve my communication skills (both oral and written) and to consider our program beyond the 'semester to semester' way I had previously done. I have a greater appreciation of the time commitment from this position as well as the emotional demands. I feel successful with what I have created in terms of an information package with a possible system for the next person to take over. I believe that after 2 years of coordinating, I will be ready to pursue other goals. The goals that I am focusing on then are directed toward teaching, which are listed later.

Last year's goals were:

1. Be involved in creating an opportunity for TRU staff to participate in a panel where a variety of instructors and others share ideas about the international/intercultural experience at TRU.

Action Taken: Coordinated and Directed the Internationalizing the Curriculum Panel in October 2006.

Result: I was exposed to the lack of instructors who attended, and have liased with Vera Wojna to discuss ways to offer support. One instructor present though, approached me later for

consultation on lesson planning and evaluation, which I did. He noted that my advice was a positive experience for him.

2. Design and do another self-directed study that involves studying intercultural communication and reflecting on my place in it. Using this experience to guide my teaching as well as my project work for the M.Ed.

Action: Completed the self-directed study which involved a weekend workshop in Oregon. The focus was using and understanding an instrument developed to measure intercultural sensitivity. The reflective paper that came from this was submitted for my M.Ed.

Result: The assumptions I had about my need to explore cultural norms I was unfamiliar with was not fulfilled; however, attitudinal aspects and strategies to become more sensitive to my assumptions and my students was. I made a shift in how I approach classroom tasks and have included students in the curriculum development and intercultural dialogue more than before. I am much more content with this and feel an increased trust from students.

3. Complete my M.Ed by August 2006.

Action taken: August 31 it was done.

Result: I have more questions, but am happy about the project I created and how the whole experience has affected me not only intellectually but socially, emotionally and spiritually as well. It has also piqued my interest to explore more intercultural concepts.

As I reflect on what I have taken on and accomplished over the last year, I realize that continued growth and connection not only to the curriculum and program, but also to the intercultural communication and awareness are driving forces for my continued learning. I am happy that I chose to study curriculum because it has opened my eyes to a very cutting edge discipline and has led me to believe that what we have been doing for 500 years in curriculum, may not be the best for the students who live in the post modern world. In light of new philosophies and theories on education, I am setting these goals for myself for 2006/2007:

1. To gain expertise in intercultural sensitivity practice.
2. To offer the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) instrument on campus.
3. To become involved with the Teaching and Learning Center in order to help develop workshops for all in the institution.

0580 End of semester feedback

At the end of each semester, I always ask students to reflect on their learning experiences. I value your honesty, as it will help me to help the next round of students in 0580. Please take time to consider the following questions and respond honestly and completely. Please bring this with you to the final meeting on Friday, ~~Dec 4~~. I will be in my office from 8:30-12:30. You can come by any time.

Please do two things: First, indicate how important by choosing

A = extremely important/critical

B = very important/useful

C = useful as a reminder but I already was able or knowledgeable

D = I didn't need this at all

1. How important was the use of the visuals (1 2 3 etc) for communication styles?

A B C D

Please explain your answer

Using of the visuals helped me to understand what you talked about.
I understood what you wanted to tell us as soon as you wrote these symbols on the board.

2. How important was the use of visuals for paragraph/essay structure?

A B C D

Please explain your answer

I understood my problems of writing.
Visualizing was easier to understand than just listening.

3. How important was dictionary/thesaurus practice?

A B C D

Please explain your answer

Knowledge of how to use dictionary and thesaurus is important
but two dictionary were so heavy to bring each class.

4. Comment on the inclusion of the concepts of levels of thinking (memorizing → evaluation) and communication styles (the pictures in number 1.). Why were they or why were they not helpful?

They were helpful because they made what I was learning clearer.

5. What is the most important thing you learned?

How to make outlines.

My process of writing was changed and improved.

I learned how important making clear and well organized outlines.

6. What is the most important thing the teacher did to help you learn?

Giving clear examples and advice to write paragraphs/essays.

I had enough time to ask questions in class.

7. What could be done for the next 058 class that would help them learn better?

Please keep this quality.

I thought your class was really well organized.

There were no useless time.

8. Write any other ideas you want to share with me. Thanks for helping me help students.

I thought you were strict teacher, but I understood what you wanted to teach us because I felt your passion.

I learned a lot from this class. Thank you so much.

Also, if you are interested in helping me to understand how the skills from this class has prepared you (or not!) for academic classes, please let me know. I'll save your email address and contact you in about 6 months to see how you are doing. Thanks again! 😊

0450 Winter 2011

At the end of each semester, I ask that students consider their class experience. It is very important for me to know how the classes and tasks were for you. Your honest answers to the following questions are the most significant way for me to understand your experience and to reflect on my teaching, my planning for future classes. Please take your time to answer the questions fully and completely. It will be more clear if you write using complete sentences and provide details. Every question relates to this class only as I can only try to adapt things in this class. I respect your judgement and I value your comments so please be honest. Consider what you as an individual needed to succeed in this class as well as what others will need.
Thank you in advance.

1. At the end of this course, I can solve most communication challenges on my own.

- ~ Minimal- I'm still very nervous except in ESL classes
- ~ Enough to be comfortable in some classes
- Enough to be comfortable in all classes
- ~ Enough to be comfortable at school, in the community and other settings with Canadians

2. What do you do when you have a communication problem?

When I have a communication problem, I will try to describe the thing I want to explain. Sometimes, I will use my body language.

3. At the end of this course, I understand the classroom culture, culture of Canadians and culture of some international peers and friends.

- ~ Minimal- I'm still very confused and am not sure how to behave
- ~ I have questions, but am pretty comfortable
- I feel comfortable with my knowledge and know what to expect in all classes
- ~ I'm comfortable in class, with international friends and in the community

4. What have you been doing to help to understand the classroom culture (routines, criteria, instructions etc.)

I asked for older students and searched some useful information on the website.

5. What have you been doing to practice and improve your skills in this class?

- ① try to memorize more words
- ② watching English movies
- ③ reading English newspapers

6. In this class, do you feel you had enough chances to speak English and receive feedback from the teacher?

Yes, I have many chances.

17. Explain your answer to number 15. Culturally, it is fine to be honest with me, even if you think it is negative. Remember, this helps me prepare for the next class.

Analysing skills are widely used in academic classes and it also plays a key role in business. It's helpful to our future working career.

18 What did the teacher do to help you learn the concepts and skills in the class?

She gave us a lot of reading material and explain them to us very clear.

19. Finally, what could the teacher have done to help you learn the concepts and skills better?

Asking us more questions in class and let us share our information.

Thank you for taking time to identify important aspects of the class.

Please bring this to my office on Friday, April 15 between 8:00 and 11:30.

At that time I will give you your final grade sheet. If you think I may have missed a mark, please bring your duotang with *all* the marked assignments so that I can make sure your mark reflects the work you have done. I will only look at it on this day as I am away for 2 weeks after the end of the semester.

Also, if you are interested in giving me some feedback about how or whether the class has prepared you for academic classes, please let me know at our meeting so that I can save your email information. I will contact you in about 6 months to see how you are doing!

Thanks!

emma

TESL 3030

End of term feedback- please bring to emma's on Monday April 11.

Consider the following tasks and concepts that we have covered in class, as well as the guests and any other interactions/experiences you have had out of class:

Class tasks:

Find someone who...

Guessing cultural norms from Craig Storti's short dialogues

IDI

Group article presentations

Cultural Map

Reading reports individually presented via Moodle

Interviewing an ESL student

Guests: Ziping Feng, Warveni Jap, students, Kyra Garson, Sultan Almajid

Culturally Diverse Learners

Writing Across Borders

The Startrek Case

Building 'Culture' with items from home

The Matrix (1 interviews 2 etc.)

In class project

Topics/Concepts

Your values

Communication models (Proulx- unpublished)

What is Canadian culture?

Dialectics

Hoefstede's cultural dimensions

Hall's cultural orientations

Culture shock

Reflections for in and out of class experiences

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner

Considering these things, please provide some feedback for the next class:

1. Would you prefer more or less theory? Why?

No. Good balance of everything.

1. The same amount of theory.

2. What concepts might be the most challenging for other students? Why?

3. What is the most significant thing you take from the class (materials, knowledge, experience or something else?)

The most significant thing I will take is the knowledge I gained about the way I

view other cultures. The IDI, reading reports & dialectics helped w/

4. Is there enough or too much content and time for this course? Explain.

For the purpose of this program, I think the content is enough to get people thinking & to pique their curiosity.

5. Comment on tasks and materials in terms of usefulness for your learning.

The way in which we learned the content was meaningful.

What I mean is, the teaching strategies could be transferred to an ESL classroom. Such as the fishbowl, matrix, etc.

6. How did the teacher support your learning?

- varied lesson activities

- authentic tasks

- integrated, meaningful strategies

- individual & group work

- student-centered

7. What could the teacher do better to support your learning?

8. If you could change anything about the course what would it be?

9. I welcome any other comments. Thanks for your honesty!

I was particularly impressed w/ your "stepping in" strategy. I thought it was a way to keep students on task while still being respectful.

2. What concepts might be the most challenging for other students?

Why? All concepts could be challenging.
The course structure made it all digestable.

3. What is the most significant thing you take from the class
(materials, knowledge, experience or something else?)

Guest Speakers. Cultural interviews.

4. Is there enough or too much content and time for this course?

Explain.

No!

5. Comment on tasks and materials in terms of usefulness for your learning.

Handouts handy for reference

Everything was meaningful

6. How did the teacher support your learning?

Guest speakers. Star Trek
Cultural interviews.

7. What could the teacher do better to support your learning?

N/A. Fantastic class.

8. If you could change anything about the course what would it be?

More guest speakers

but other than that... great course

9. I welcome any other comments. Thanks for your honesty!

Thanks for an awesome class.

This course was crucial for the program.

I looked forward to it every week!!