

Principles & Practices of the TESOL Classroom

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Course Description:

Whenever someone acts as a teacher, they are making their beliefs about teaching and learning real. This class is intended to raise teachers' awareness of what their beliefs are through the exploration of the classroom as a learning environment and their teaching practices. Through readings, discussion, exploration, and reflection, we will examine the act of teaching, focusing on the four main jobs of the teacher as proposed by Paul Nation (planning, assessing, training, and teaching). The aim of this course is for teachers to become more aware of their own practices and to be able to articulate the beliefs that support these practices in a way that helps them promote greater learning in the classroom and develop professionally as teachers. There is a strong focus on techniques and purposes of reflection in this course, with teachers being asked to explore multiple approaches to reflection throughout the course in order to decide which ones work best for them.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, students will:

- understand Nation's '4 strands' approach to teaching language and be able to use this concept in reflecting on their own practice;
- be familiar with a variety of effective techniques for teaching English language skill use, understand how these techniques relate to learning, and be able to select techniques to best serve their teaching purposes;
- be familiar with multiple approaches to reflective practice as teachers;
- cultivate the habit of reflective practice as part of their professional development as teachers, choosing those approaches that they feel are best for them;
- be able to state and justify their beliefs about teaching and learning, and explain how they act on those beliefs in their practice as teachers;
- gain greater awareness of how academic texts are organized so as to be better able to read them effectively and to produce their own academic writing.

Course Structure:

We will meet only five times over the term, but these meetings are spread out over a much greater number of weeks. I am organizing the class schedule so that you are

encouraged to do smaller amounts of work each week instead of doing a lot of work just before we have a class meeting. There is a lot of reading and writing to be done outside of class to support what we will do together in our class meetings. I will provide reading guides to help you process the more difficult readings and we will spend time in class on how to write the papers you need to do.

I have assigned one class meeting to each of 'jobs' that Nation has identified as central for teachers. The initial meeting will be an overall introduction to the course, followed by meetings focusing on planning, assessing, training, and teaching in that order. Around each of the job meetings, I have designed modules with selected readings and tasks, including a final production task for the module.

Course Textbooks:

Farrell, T. S. C. (2007). *Reflective language teaching: From theory to practice*. London, UK: Continuum.

Nation, P. (2013). *What should every EFL teacher know?*. n.c.: Compass Publishing.

Course Requirements:

Tree of Life Reflection (10%): Based on Farrell, ch. 2, this assignment asks you to first provide an outline of your teaching life in the form of a tree-of-life (a model is shown in Farrell's book) and then to write 500 to 700 word essay highlighting two or three points in your life that have had a significant impact on who you are as a teacher and why these moments are important. This should be prepared before the first class meeting.

Reflective Journal (10%): This is a weekly journal that you will keep in a Google Doc to be shared with your instructor and selected other students. In it you can record critical incidents from your teaching practice (see Farrell, ch. 4 regarding critical incidents) or reflect on your practice in other ways. A guide to topics/issues you might consider writing about will be provided. We will also discuss strategies for making journal use effective in the first class.

Participation in online discussion (15%): This is a weekly whole class activity that will be located in a shared Google Group. A guide to effective discussion will be provided so that everyone shares an understanding of how to participate. The discussions will focus on the connections between Nation's four jobs and your own work. Students will be expected to participate at least twice a week, either posing original material or responding to other students.

Position Paper (15%): This paper is an expression of your beliefs about teaching and learning, and how these influence your practice. It will be 850 - 1000 words long. We will begin working on it in the first class meeting and refer to its development throughout the course, including peer review of initial drafts. A detailed description of expectations will be provided at the first class meeting. Model papers will be provided for students to consider in writing their own papers.

'Ask Your Students' Paper (25%): This paper is a small-scale classroom research project to be carried out over the course of the term, with the goal of writing a publishable paper of no more than 3000 words. A detailed description of expectations will be provided on the first day of class. Some work on this paper will be carried out in every class session as part of making the project as a whole manageable. A separate goal of this project is to help you understand how academic writing is organized so that you can use this knowledge to make reading academic articles more accessible.

Book Review (10%): This paper will be a 500-word review of a small book from Tom Farrell's Teacher Professional Development series published by TESOL. A model review will be provided. The goal here is really to have students read a short book and share their understanding of it for other readers.

Paper Presentations (15%): Each student will be asked to make a 5-minute presentation in class in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th class meetings. The presentation will be modeled in the second class meeting. The first presentation will summarize an article from a limited set of books available in the reserve library. The second presentation will summarize an article from ELT Journal, available either in the library or Remote X (Kanda's online library resource). The third presentation will summarize an article of the student's choice downloaded via Remote X. The student will be asked to provide a history of their search for the article with this presentation.

Classroom Format:

Every class session will consist of interactive lectures, student presentations, discussions, and other group activities.

Course Calendar

April 2nd: Introduction

Readings:

Nation, chs. 1, 15; Farrell, chs 1 - 3

Underhill

Assignments Due:

Tree of Life Essay

+May 14th: Planning

Readings:

Nation, chs. 13 - 14; Farrell, chs. 4, 6, 9

Lang (2 articles)

Assignment Due:

Data Collection for Ask Your Students Project

June 18th: Assessment

Readings:

Nation, ch. 12; Farrell, chs. 7, 10-12

Hooper & Snyder

Assignments Due:

Book Review

Bring Questions for Ask Your Students Project

July 2nd: Training

Readings:

Farrell, chs. 8, 13

Woods; Asakawa et al

Assignments Due:

Position Paper (1st draft)

(NB: Peer Responses due back to authors on July 16th)

Bring Data for Ask Your Students Project

August 6th: Teaching

Readings:

Nation, chs. 2 - 11; Farrell, ch. 14

Allwright; Sato, Dusting

Assignments Due:

Position Paper (Final)

Ask Your Students Paper (Draft)

September 3rd:

Assignments Due:

'Ask Your Students' Paper (Final)