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Ann's English
ENGLISH MADE FUN

TESL Practicum at UBC ELI

Reflection 1-1

Chapter 1~3

Ann Chang | Jan 13, 2020

Being a goal-driven young adult, I have always valued the importance of setting goals in life. To me, living life without a clear goal is like a lost lamb trying to find its shelter. However, the idea of having both proximal and distal goals is intriguing to me because I have never thought of how integrating short-term goals and long-term goals could create such synergy effect towards each other. I have always been focusing on my distal goal of "starting my own language institute" but never really spent much time to list down the proximal steps. The first chapter of this book really got me thinking about my explicit plans for my career development. As for the expectations for this practicum, we are expected to develop our own teaching style, develop and corporate our own teaching philosophies into the classroom, and try our best to apply what we have learned in the workshops to the classroom to see what works for us and what not. For me personally, since my past teaching experience are mostly 1-on-1, I would like to focus on my classroom management skills during the practicum. Teaching one person and one class is very different. I would like to know how to make sure how to take every single student into account and make sure everyone is on the same page.

An educator needs his/her teaching philosophy like a company needs its mission. The mission of a company tells its purpose of existence, just like the teaching philosophy tells the educator his/her purpose of being in the classroom and doing what he/she does. Developing a well-rounded teaching philosophy might take a long time and lots of experience, but it will surly help the educator finds its way in this field and guide the students further than they think. And in order for us to build up our teaching philosophy, we have to constantly reflect on our teaching. Reflective teaching is a technique that educators review and reflect on their performance during each class. Among all the techniques discussed in the classroom, I think being observed and getting feedback from an experienced instructor would work best for me, as I don't get nervous easily being observed and the feedback one gets from direct observation and feedback will best reflect on my teaching methods. Other than this, collaborative reflection might also be helpful for me because you get to listen to what other aspiring educators' experience, learn from their stories, and think about how you would react to their situations. It is an efficient way of learning as you do not have that much time (or luck) to experience all of the situations in a classroom.

WRITER COMMENTS ON READING REFLECTIONS

Date: _Jan. 14, 2020_

Name: _Ann Chang (HO-TING)_

Reflection Topic/Chapter: _1. ch. 1~3_

Please share the following information with your peer:

1. My central purpose in this writing is...

   To draw attention on two topics that are mentioned in chapter 1~3. First, I shed light on the idea and the importance of setting proximal and distal goals, then I discussed what teaching philosophy means to an educator. I also reflected on my own expectations to this practicum.

2. The audience I have in mind is...

   my fellow classmates.

3. I organized my writing...

   My writing is organized into two paragraphs, with the first one discussing my ~~goals~~ career goals and the second one focusing on what it means to develop your own teaching philosophy.

4. The parts I would particularly like feedback on are...

   How can reflective teaching benefit us educators and what are some good ways to enforce that.

5. Some questions I have for you are...

PEER FEEDBACK ON CHAPTER REFLECTION

Date: _____Jan. 14 , 2020_____

Reflection author: _____Antony Jose Ma Junior_____

Peer respondent: _____Ann Chang (HO. TING)_____

Writing your responses to the questions in complete sentence or list form.

1. I consider the main idea(s) in your reflection to be...

    Setting goals, ~~and~~ improving teaching skills, building up
    teaching philosophy and being reflective.

2. I like... the part talking about observing and being
   observed. Being observed by someone with more experiences
   and getting comments from them are indeed helpful.

3. I wonder... what short-term goals and long-term goals
   you will make for yourself.

4. In your next your next reflection, I would like to read... how you are
   going to improve your classroom management skill ♡

5. Additional comments:

   It's very well-put and I enjoyed reading
   you reflections.

WRITER COMMENTS ON READING REFLECTIONS

Date: _____Jan. 14 2020._____

Name: _____Ann_____

Reflection Topic/Chapter:_____2._____chapter 1~3._____

Please share the following information with your peer:

1. My central purpose in this writing is...

what my expectation of this course is and how I would like to
~~develop~~ develop my teaching philosophy.

2. The audience I have in mind is...

fellow classmates.
I hope to teach elementry students or adults.

3. I organized my writing...

I gave my own ^experience and built ~~for~~ on that to explain why I would
teaching
like to work on certain topics during this practicum.

4. The parts I would particularly like feedback on are...

My expectations of this course.
I'd like to know what others' expectations of this course are.

5. Some questions I have for you are...

~~what~~ what are your expectations of this course?
what kind of reflective teaching would you prefer?

PEER FEEDBACK ON CHAPTER REFLECTION

Date: _____Jan. 14, 2020_____

Reflection author: _____Ann._____

Peer respondent: _____Antony José Mont promast_____

Writing your responses to the questions in complete sentence or list form.

1. I consider the main idea(s) in your reflection to be... helpful in terms of taking a step back to reflect on why I want to teach in the first place.

2. I like... where you talk about your desire to take every student into account.

3. I wonder... what to do if everyone is not on the same page, while having to manage a class full of unique perspectives.

4. In your next your next reflection, I would like to read... your refinement(s)/ modifications to your thoughts as you go along this course.

5. Additional comments:

My expectations ① in this course is to gain some learning with teaching adults since I completed another practicum on teaching high school learners. I think I preference don't have a at thi...

ESL   ESL to

Jan. 21st, 2020

Ann Chang Jan. 21st, 2020 Although I understand the importance of designing a well-rounded lesson plan or unit plan, I personally think that improvising teaching would work better for me. According to Borko and Livingston (1989), an improvisational actor enters the stage with a definition of the general situation and a set of guidelines for performing his or her role, rather than working from a detailed written script. Notice how they stated that even when you are improvising, you still need to be familiar with the general situation and a detailed understanding of the guidelines for the performance. To me, improvising is easy and handy. My experience with 1-on-1 tutoring has not given me much time to design lesson plans for each student, as they are at different levels and are looking at different goals. Improvising then come in handy because as long as I am familiar with the materials I am using and my student's goal, I can elaborate on the topics that they are not fully understanding and give extra examples. For instance, a few days when I was teaching a beginner student about Chinese New Year, we came across this passage that introduces the history of hot pot. I then started to chat about hot pot with her, giving her insight on what kind of hot pots are there, and how to address different kinds of meat. It went on for 15 minutes, and she was happy that she got to learn more about this classic Chinese cuisine in English. This is how my beginner classes would mostly turn out. As for higher-intermediate level classes, improvising might be more challenging as your students already know most of the knowledge that comes at the top of your head. I would say lesson planning and material designing is more important for higher intermediate classes, and curriculum planning is more important for beginner classes, because it is your priority to help them see their improvements and that should be done in a systematic way.

WRITER COMMENTS ON READING REFLECTIONS

Date: _2020, Jan 1st_

Name: _Ann Chang (Ho-Ting)_

Reflection Topic/Chapter: _ch. 4-6_

Please share the following information with your peer:

1. My central purpose in this writing is...

   whether Improvisational teaching works better for me or a detailed-lesso-plan-~~lead~~ led class.

2. The audience I have in mind is...

   my peers.

3. I organized my writing...

   I first sited what Borko and Livingston (1989) said about improvising teaching and analyzed its meaning. I then introduced my own experience explaining why improvising teaching works better for me.

4. The parts I would particularly like feedback on are...

   ~~the~~ whether you think improvising is less professional than conducting a class with a detailed lesson plan.

5. Some questions I have for you are...

   Do you ~~po~~ prefer improvising or following lesson plans?

PEER FEEDBACK ON CHAPTER REFLECTION

Date: _____01/21/2020_____

Reflection author: _____ANN CHANG_____

Peer respondent: _____NIKKO MENDOZA_____

Writing your responses to the questions in complete sentence or list form.

1. I consider the main idea(s) in your reflection to be...

    - IT ASKS THE QUESTION " IS IMPROVISATION EFFECTIVE OR INEFFECTIVE TEACHING?"

2. I like...

    - APPLYING IMPROVISING TO 1-ON-1 TUTORING SESSIONS (I CAN RELATE ☺)
      → IT PROVIDED ME A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE!

3. I wonder...

    - IF YOU'VE EVER THOUGHT THAT IMPROVISING COULD BE TRANSLATED
      AS "I'M NOT PREPARED TO TEACH STUDENTS ON A PARTICULAR TOPIC".
      → IE. IN A CLASS FULL OF 30 STUDENTS

4. In your next your next reflection, I would like to read...

    - WHETHER YOUR VIEWS ON IMPROVISING HAS CHANGED AFTER THIS COMMENT
      ABOVE.

5. Additional comments:

    - FOR MY REFLECTION PAPER, I'VE TALKED ABOUT THE VALUE OF IMPROVISING
      AND HOW IT SHOULD BE USED AS A BACK UP PLAN OR IF THE SITUATION
      CALLS FOR IT.

Jan. 21st, 2020

Among the techniques that are mentioned in chapter 4, I feel that I need to work on my teacher talk to kids the most. After being hired by TutorABC, I had to watch their onboarding training videos. Although I feel like I am already doing those slow-paced clearly-articulated teacher talk, I am not doing it naturally. I find it challenging teaching young kids because it takes a lot of energy out of me and I have to be very dramatic while "teacher talking", especially doing online teaching. When you are teaching online, you do not have access to make much use of your space and eye contact (well, you can stare into your camera but doing that for long is very creepy), so all you have got is your voice, facial expression, and hand gesture. Without the help of physical performance, online teachers have to be even more dramatic when teaching to grab the young students' attention. I have to say I do not enjoy tutoring kindergarten kids online because I find it less effective. They would get distracted by the technology so easily and might even run away from their screens during class. To be honest, it is clearly not the best way for them to learn English.

Nevertheless, I am glad to find out that I am already using most of these techniques before knowing them. Framing is very helpful for my teaching because it reminds me of what I should talk about in class at the beginning and it gives great review of and sum up of what the students have learned. I am good with pacing when teaching online because I am familiar with each student's level, thus I would design suitable materials to finish in one class. Sometimes I would design materials long enough for 2~3 classes, and put in extra practice or links for their reference. This is a good method to buffer the time and the students will be happy to get extra materials. It's a win-win.

WRITER COMMENTS ON READING REFLECTIONS

Date: ___Jan 21, 2020___

Name: ___Ann___

Reflection Topic/Chapter: ___ch. 4-6___

Please share the following information with your peer:

1. My central purpose in this writing is...

   The need for me to improve my "teacher talk" in a good way and how I have already been using these techniques ^even before I read about these.

2. The audience I have in mind is...

   my peers in class.

3. I organized my writing...

   into 2 passages, the first one talking about my preference of "teacher talking" and the second ~~one~~ passage discussing my experience of framing and pacing.

4. The parts I would particularly like feedback on are...

   What's your tip to maintain your pace?

5. Some questions I have for you are...

   As a student, do you like teacher talk?

PEER FEEDBACK ON CHAPTER REFLECTION

Date: Jan 21 2020

Reflection author: Ann Chang

Peer respondent: Juliana Tu

Writing your responses to the questions in complete sentence or list form.

1. I consider the main idea(s) in your reflection to be...
   - "teacher talk"
   - teaching techniques

2. I like...
   - the flow of the reflection
   - the personal reflection + addition of personal experiences with each technique

3. I wonder...
   - could have added more info from the chapter?

4. In your next your next reflection, I would like to read...
   - more personal experiences as it is insightful information to learn from (especially beginner teachers or those who have limited experience)

5. Additional comments:
   I have limited teaching experience so I do not have any tips for maintaining pace.

Ann Chang

I deeply believe that "motivation" and "classroom management" is closely related to each other. If all the students are motivated enough to learn, they will also be focused and engaged. The question is, how to keep them motivated and engaged? The author mentioned some basic elements like interest, classroom activities and testing etc., I personally feel like these are essential at the point where you assume that the students might not be as engaged as you want them to be, thus spending a lot of time designing "fun" lessons to "lure" them to learn. However, learning should not be because of these materialistic incentives only. A teacher should convey the idea of the importance and usefulness of learning English to students, and "help" them like English as a language, but not just certain classroom activities or topics.

As for classroom management skills, based on my experience teaching kindergarten kids, I find "conditioning" a very crucial part of "controlling" the kids. In short, "if you are bad in class, you get punishment; if you are good in class, you get rewards." This sounds very easy to conduct and it is used in most kindergartens. It lets students know what is ok and what is not ok. In turn, they will try to move to the good side to get rewards as little as stickers and they will avoid punishments as minor as "no cartoon watching today". However, the hardest part is for teachers to mean what they say. Instructors must ask themselves these questions before using this rewarding/punishing method, "what does it mean to do well in class?", "how bad is bad?", "how noisy is noisy?" and set very clear rules in the first class to make sure that every student is on the same page as you are. It is important to let them know your expectation and to set rules that they are OK with. Therefore, the very first class when you meet the children is the very most important class in the whole semester. A skilled teacher would keep his/her word and catch every single violation of rules made in class. This is a crucial part of this conditioning method because it is the teacher's responsibility to keep the fairness in the classroom. It might sound stressful, but it is very helpful in my own experience.

Ho-Ting Chang

Mar 17, 2020

Among the three conceptual frameworks, I find Spolsky's model corresponds with my teaching philosophy the most. It doesn't emphasize the structural or administrational part of schools much, instead, it focuses on the aspects that a teacher should take into account when designing curriculums, lessons, and when teaching. Its goal is to help students get the most out of each lesson. Having 4 years of tutoring experience and one year of classroom teaching experience, I analyzed that there are both pros and cons for each teaching job. For tutoring, teachers can design a set of materials and curriculum that completely suit a student's needs. This method will not waste any bit of time for the student but would put the teacher at stress when the tutor takes in a lot of students and each of them has different needs. On the other hand, when teaching in a classroom setting, no matter how well designed the curriculum is, there will always be few students who can't keep up or find it not intriguing to keep ongoing. Though this method saves teachers time and energy, it might still be challenging to keep every pupil in class engaged and to make sure that they have learned quite the same amount from the same teaching style and materials.

One more thing that I'd like to point out from Chapter 7 (from page 115, question #4) is that although it is important to help the students immerge in an English environment, whether or not to only speak English in class still depends on the students' learning styles, levels, and needs. For beginners who are expected to build a sound foundation of English ability in the long run, especially for kids, an instructor should definitely only speak English in class, with the provision of proper explanations of harder utterances by using easier words. However, if a student is only trying to learn English to pass a certain exam, or that he or she already has too much input of their native language because of their age, and it's too hard for them to take on the challenge, then the instructor should consider putting aside his or her "noble" teaching philosophy and try to help the student to get what he/she needs first. Speaking from my own experience, I used to stress that all my English courses will be taught in only English. Later I found that when teaching older adults (in their 40s or 50s) who have not much English input other than my classes, teaching English in English is just putting more burden on them and that they learn significantly slower if everything is presented in English. Because at this point, no matter how the English knowledge is conducted, their brain will automatically translate everything into Mandarin before digesting it, and it takes too long for them to start building that foundation of English language ability. So under this circumstance, I would choose to teach English in Chinese, even though that is against my teaching philosophy.

⋮

I consider the main ideas in your reflection to be...

Reflecting on your teaching philosophy through personal experiences and direct teaching practices. Using Spolsky's model as a focus on teaching philosophies that work for you depending on the context, classroom and needs of the students.

I like...

I like the flow of the written reflection as you not only pulled examples from the textbook but related it to your own personal experiences. You took the time to reflect on the pros and cons of your experiences with this framework and when it would be appropriate to go against your teaching philosophy. This insight and reflection process is extremely helpful in understanding and building your own teaching philosophy. eg. when your teaching philosophy would work and when you have to go against it. The examples you provided made it a well rounded reflection of your teaching philosophy.

I wonder...

If you could have added solutions to the struggles that are experienced in the classroom instruction and curriculum. eg. what can you do for the students that are struggling to keep up or falling behind?

Additional comments

Overall, i really enjoyed reading your reflection on one of your teaching philosophies. I thought your thought process and organization of the reflection was well done as you not only reflected on the readings but connected them to your feelings and personal experiences teaching. Taking into account the pros and cons of your own teaching philosophy and when you would have to go against made it an engaging reflection.

Edited by Juliana Tu on Mar 17 at 7:32pm

Ho-Ting Chang
Tuesday

⋮

Ideally, when teaching, I see myself as a friend of my students', who is trying to assist with their language learning by providing instructions to learn and opportunities to practice. It is important for me to build a rapport teacher-student relationship because that correlates with my teaching philosophy. I believe that it is only when a student truly likes the language and its culture will they succeed in learning and using the language well. Hence, English classes should not be any kind of a burden for them, but a useful tool that can guide them through the maze faster. If the students do not enjoy the teacher's presence, they would not be learning as efficiently and effectively. However, the friendliness should not go too far either. If the students start to see you mainly as their friends or peers, especially when teaching adults, you would find it harder to "control" them, and they might let loose of their self-motivation, leading to a slower pace of improvement. I find it useful to make use of my teacher voice when I sense that the students are having too much fun, or that they are gradually losing focus of their central tasks. The transition of a cheery tone to a firm but still friendly tone can usually grab their attention well.

These reflections give me opportunities to think about my teaching techniques and performances on a deeper level. I often think of so much more when writing about a single thought. One of my new goals was to start my own Youtube channel teaching authentic communicative English. By recording real conversations I have with native speakers in Vancouver, I can show them what it really is like to apply what they've learned to real life. Unfortunately, since I am back in Taiwan due to the coronavirus, this plan is halted for the time being. I guess for now, I will just keep doing my online tutoring courses and see if I can develop it into a more organized and professional platform with set curriculums and programs for people to choose from.

Dorothy Lai

Tuesday

Hi Ann!

I consider the main ideas in your reflection to be...

The importance of establishing positive student-teacher relationships, and how this can be very beneficial for the students and their motivation in learning the language. It is also equally important to remember your position as a teacher, and to make sure classroom management is not affected by this.

I like...

How you elaborated on the concepts with your own ideas and experiences. I also liked how you talked about your future goals as a language teacher (and I really liked the ideas for your Youtube channel :D)

I wonder...

In regards to students viewing us as their friend and less as a teacher - is this problem more relevant because we're (relatively) young and may seem more approachable? Or do you think this is an issue across all types of teachers?

Thank you for sharing your reflection with me, I really enjoyed reading it

↩ Reply 👍

Ho-Ting Chang

Tuesday

Regarding your question, I feel that it is definitely a lot more relevant because we are (relatively) young. However, I don't think this should be an issue because even if you are (relatively) older, I personally think you should not take the friendliness away from you and should still try to maintain an approachable "guidance" image in front of your students. This will encourage them to come to you whenever they have questions, which will help with their learning a lot.