

Combining Case Study Research And Critical Reflection in Foreign/Second Language Methodology

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Abstract

To date very little has been written about how foreign and second language teachers experience their pre-service teaching internships and the implications of these experiences on the quality of foreign and second language instruction in the US in K-12 settings. This article presents the case study of one student teacher intern involved in his 15-week experience in a linguistically and culturally diverse secondary school setting and how his case was used in a foreign/second language methodology course. It examines the extent and nature of the student's critical reflections in determining the basis of sound methodological and pedagogical approaches to second language instruction. Furthermore, it demonstrates the design and development of this case and the benefits of its use in one particular teacher education program. Additionally, this article will highlight, within the case study, the utilization of reflection and the creation of the professional development portfolio. Results indicated that students studying this case in the teacher education program discovered that they were able to link theory to practice and could understand and use educational theories and principles in becoming effective educators.

Introduction

In a 1998 Special Topics issue of TESOL Quarterly, Freeman and Johnson argued for a reconceptualization of the knowledge-base of ESL teacher education. "Essential to this reconceptualization is the premise that the institutional forms and processes of teacher education frame how the profession responds to the basic sociocultural process of learning to teach." Furthermore, Freeman and Johnson contend that the core of the new knowledge-base must focus on the activity of teaching itself; it should center on the teacher who does it, the contexts in which it is done, and the pedagogy by which it is done (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). In this same vein, this writer supports the notion of a need to examine our teacher education practices, which ultimately constitute our professional self-definition. This article represents one university methods professor's use of case study research and critical reflection to examine the sociocultural process of learning to teach.

The pedagogical practice that employs case studies in and for teacher education is known as *case method* or *case-based instruction*. For the purposes of this article, the focus will be on case-based instruction as it was used in an advanced foreign/second language methodology course in a graduate school of education teacher training program. Case-based instruction is considered

valuable in teacher education as it allows the student to make connections between theory and practice while examining his/her own beliefs about teaching and learning. Historically students are introduced to methods, strategies, and activities that provide instruction in specific content areas, while simultaneously studying theories of second language learning. Even though this is necessary, this type of content-specific instruction is not sufficient for teachers to integrate instructional strategies with theory and pedagogy. Often times there is a void between theory and practice. Therefore, case-based instruction can be used as a way to fill this gap.

In an effort to fill such a gap, major improvements are needed in our pre-service teacher education programs, and the increased use of a case-based, discussion-oriented methodology as a primary, but not exclusive, pedagogical approach offers promise for substantial improvement over current efforts. Case methodologies afford learners, teachers, and students the opportunity to deal with first-hand knowledge -- the written case as well as the emergent discourse -- by creating modules of thinking that enable them to apply what they have learned to specific problems in a particular context. Similarly, it can be argued that student teacher portfolios are a viable, effective, and appropriate tool in documenting teacher growth and development and in promoting reflective, thoughtful practice.

The following are benefits of using portfolios:

1. Portfolios allow teachers to select and document activities and behaviors in their classrooms (Tierney et al., 1991). According to Wolf (1991), "portfolios provide a connection to the contexts and personal histories of real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning over time" (p.129).
2. Portfolios demonstrate those changes that take place over time in the teaching experience.
3. Teacher portfolios are a tool for developing decision-making skills (Tierney et al., 1991).
4. Teachers modify and refine instruction based on the contents of their portfolios.
5. When teacher portfolios are used as part of a foreign language teacher education program, they provide an alternative form of assessment (Ryan & Kuhs, 1993).

The case study approach enables study of an entity in its context, or in other words, in its natural environment (Johnson, 1992). The student teacher portfolio used in this case was not created solely for the purpose of research, but rather was constructed by the student teacher out of naturally occurring classroom events.

Case

The case study used was based on the experiences of one student teacher intern from the previous academic year. Excerpts were taken from the student's Progress Report (See Appendix B) and weekly reflection journal (See Appendix C), which was written to the university professor who supervised the student teaching internship. The student was encouraged to use journal writing as a reflective tool in which he would examine his current experiences with expectations, successes, failures, attempts at applying theory to practice, and his overall impressions of the realities of classroom teaching. This writing was free and open. There were no ground rules, requirements, or mandated questions to be answered. The professor recommended that the reflections be written and e-mailed to her at the end of each week. This proved to be

somewhat therapeutic in that it provided a release valve for the full week's range of sometimes quite stressful interactions between the intern and the cooperating teacher. Additionally, it served as an introspective tool for the student to assess his own progress and performance.

A match to specific theory, foreign/second language methodology, or second language acquisition research was suggested for this case. The following specifies/points out these matches:

1. Theory: Howard Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory posits that intelligence is not a single construct: Individuals have at least eight distinct intelligences that can be developed over a lifetime. MI theory offers foreign/second language teachers a way to examine their best teaching techniques and strategies in light of human differences. This is especially important given the realm of diverse foreign/second language learners in today's classrooms.

2. Foreign/Second Language Methodology: The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), created by Ana Chamot and J. Michael O'Malley (1987) is based on research suggesting that effective instruction for English language learners integrates language and content (Genesse, 1987; Mohan, 1986) and includes explicit instruction in learning strategies to accomplish academic tasks (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987, 1994, 1996; Oxford, 1990). Originally designed to help English language learners make a successful transition to monolingual-English classrooms, CALLA has been adapted to different instructional settings including bilingual education classrooms (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

3. Second Language Acquisition Research: Some educators argue that students in bilingual programs do not learn English well and that they never do well enough in academic subjects to join the mainstream. Yet research has found that children who participate in properly designed bilingual programs reach satisfactory levels of competence in all academic areas (Krashen & Biber, 1988). The use of the native language to develop the academic skills of students acquiring English appears beneficial for helping students avoid cognitive confusion and achievement lags in their school performance (Hakuta & Diaz, 1984; Krashen & Biber, 1988; Thomas & Collier, 1995). Additionally, postponing the teaching of academic subjects until students develop the proficiency in English they need to learn subject content does not appear educationally worthwhile. It takes students longer to acquire English when there is less native language support (Thomas & Collier, 1995).

Context: A Foreign/Second Language Education Program

The foreign/second language education program in which this study was conducted is a post-baccalaureate, professional licensing program with coursework available for an optional Master's degree in education. In such a program, students work toward state certification by taking courses in human growth and development, bilingualism and language acquisition research, methods and advanced methods of teaching foreign/second languages in PK-12 schools, introduction to technology, and teaching reading/writing in multicultural settings. All course work must be completed prior to the student teaching internship. Additionally, students participate in school-based observation practica and a 15-week clinical student teaching experience.

The data from this study were gathered during the fall semester of 1999 and used as a case study in the advanced methods course the following academic year.

Applying Knowledge to Practice: Using Cases in an Advanced Foreign/Second Language Methods Course

The methods course was organized so that the theories/methodologies related to the weekly topic were discussed first, followed by a case discussion in which the theory was applied. The discussion of the theory often took one of three formats. One format was a whole-class discussion based on a discussion-question outline. The questions required students to think about particular inquiries, not always to look for "right answers." Sometimes, the discussion began as a brief writing activity. Students were asked to jot down some thoughts about the first question the professor was going to ask. A list of topics was posted each week on the class listserv. The ideas jotted down then provided the point of departure for the initial class discussion.

The second format was small group activities. The class was divided into groups of three or four students who were to solve a problem or discuss an inquiry. The groups would report their solutions or findings to the entire class. Groups were randomly selected by the professor and changed a minimum of three times during the 15-week semester.

The third format was utilization of an electronic listserv, FLTEACH, a foreign language teaching forum. FLTEACH was founded in 1994 and is hosted at SUNY/Cortland. The foci for FLTEACH include foreign/second language teaching methods, school/college articulation, training of student teachers, classroom activities, curriculum, and syllabus design. Students would post a weekly inquiry, or reflection and receive responses from an international audience.

Learning with cases promotes personal and professional autonomy. This particular case required students to develop their own ideas, to evaluate situations as they saw them, to make decisions based on how they saw the issues being resolved. The in- and out-of-class group discussions provided a forum in which students critically analyzed one another's ideas in a climate of trust that was professionally productive. As students studied the case, they became more confident about expressing their ideas and more secure in what they wanted to say.

The use of case study in the advanced methods course allowed students to make meaning of the world of the classroom. In an education program that consists of courses in which dissemination of vast amounts of information is the primary emphasis, students graduate "thinking about subjects as lengthy lists of facts with little or no consideration given to relationships among principles and concepts learned" (Gross, 1992: p. 67). The National Center for Research on Teacher Learning found that courses that do make a difference in the preparation of future teachers are those that require "students to reason about the subject, to argue about alternative explanations for what they encounter, and to test their ideas and those of others. Such academic interaction tends to improve students' understanding of important concepts in the subject matter and, along with that, their ability to explain concepts (Gross, 1992: p. 12).

The students chose the case selected for the advanced methods course. Three cases were provided and the students were asked to read through each one, discuss their views in class, and then to select one by majority vote. Floyd Oper's case was selected. His profile is described in

detail later in the article. Once the case had been decided upon, it was clear that the established content of the advanced methods course could not be abandoned because that presented the what and the how of the teaching-learning process. Two textbooks were chosen that presented the what (what aspects of second language learning are important for teaching) and the how (how to do it) of the teaching-learning process in a clear and thoughtful way *Language and Cognitive Development in Second Language Learning*, edited by Virginia Gonzalez (1999) and *Bilingual and ESL Classrooms Teaching in Multicultural Contexts* by Carlos Ovando and Virginia Collier (1998). An attempt was made to match the topics of the texts to the case.

Such topics included:

1. Issues in the Study of Cognitive and Language(s) Development in Bilinguals (Gonzalez)
2. Models for the Relationship Among Language, Relative Degree of Bilingualism, Phonological Strategies, and Reading Readiness in Bilingual Spanish/English Children (Gonzalez)
3. Active, Inquiry-based Learning (Ovando & Collier)
4. Critical Pedagogy (Ovando & Collier)

As the case was taught and as the discussions evolved, the case and topics were rearranged. It was discovered that a case could generate discussion on more than one topic and that the professor could revisit aspects of the case as the course developed and students gained familiarity with a variety of methodologies/pedagogies. A syllabus was developed that identified the weekly topics, reading assignments from the text and ancillary sources, and the case. Questions related to the readings and questions about the case were included.

The case was the conduit through which the teaching/learning methodologies and theories were carried, providing the contextual particulars that allowed students to see the application of the how and what in real classrooms and in actual practice. The chosen methodology used exclusively by the professor was discussion-question. This was a very different approach to teaching this course since in the past it had been taught via mini-lectures and group demonstrations.

Changing the methodology for the methods course meant rethinking the way student learning would be measured. Students were asked to prepare an analysis of the case to be discussed each week. The analyses were handed in or sent electronically and graded by the professor. The graded assignment included a post-discussion paper. After each case discussion, time was left for students to write a response. Students were allowed to select what to focus on in this free writing exercise/follow-up.

The final exam was based on having students analyze a new case by applying theories and methodologies studied throughout the semester. The final was a take-home exam and students were permitted to work in pairs or groups of three.

Finally, students were graded on their class participation, which counted for 25% of the course grade. This participation grade was used both as a way to encourage students to become actively engaged in discussion and to confirm that the professor would not do all the talking in class.

Current Setting

Participants

Students. Fifteen students were enrolled in the spring advanced methods course, Advanced Methods of Teaching Foreign/Second Languages in Secondary Schools. Students were both pre- and in-service teachers who represented both cultural and linguistic diversities [or something like that]. The course was taught on the campus of a public university in northern Virginia. Of the fifteen, seven were native speakers of North American English. The other eight students spoke Spanish, Dutch, German or Italian as their first language. There were thirteen females and two males. The median age was 31 years old.

Instructor . The course instructor, the author, is also the researcher. She is a former Spanish, French, and ESL teacher of fourteen years and is in her eleventh year as a university faculty member. Although she had used some teaching cases in her classes, this course was her first attempt at incorporating only one specific case into the advanced methods courses. The instructor is also the author of the case study.

Student Teacher Portfolio

The portfolio discussed and analyzed in this project is that of the student teacher intern. Such portfolios are sometimes known as process portfolios and are intended to demonstrate growth and future need and are helpful when acquiring a skill (Cole, 1992). In this particular instance, the portfolio was used in the methods class as demonstrable evidence of the student teacher intern's planning practices, reflections, and student assessments. Items included were those that represented a progressive growth pattern in the intern's progress. In that vein, the primary function of the portfolio was a tool for self-reflection on professional development.

The portfolio should be used as a tool for professional change as well as an instrument for the construction of the self as teacher. A key component associated with the concept of self is the development of reflective skills (Von Wright, 1992). Developing the student teachers' reflective ability contributes to professional growth (Nettles & Pettrick, 1995), a common goal in teacher education programs.

At the end of the student teaching internship, the portfolio described in this project was used as a showcase portfolio, which allowed its author "to select work that most flatteringly illustrates his or her knowledge and accomplishments" (Wolf, 1991, p. 36).

In the advanced methods class the portfolio was used to (a) document the student teaching from the student teacher's perspective as well as the case study; (b) document involvement in the classroom and school; (c) chart the growth of a developing foreign/second language teacher; and (d) encourage students both the student teacher as well as the students in the methods course - to articulate and interpret their actions and beliefs about foreign/second language teaching.

The portfolio contained nine sections (See Appendix A): Title page and Table of Contents; Philosophy of Education Statement; Professional Documentation; Classroom Environment; Planning, Preparation, and Instruction; Family and Community Involvement; Technology in the

Classroom; Classroom Management Strategies; and Assessment Strategies. Additionally, students were given a Portfolio Evaluation rubric.

Case Study Summary

This is a true story, with names of teacher, student and school disguised to protect individual privacy. The stories introduced problems the student teacher intern encountered. These stories were used with the students in the methods class in the following ways:

as a tool for analysis and critical thinking skills;
to enhance their knowledge of foreign/second language methodology, educational theory and research;
to identify and analyze problems;
and to evaluate possible solutions.

Floyd is a 39 year-old Dutch-born male who holds a BA in International Relations. Floyd's response to the question, "Why do you want to become a teacher?" on his student-teacher application was "Teaching has always been an exciting challenge for me. I come from a large family, and both of my parents were professors or teachers (of law and practical nursing, respectively) at one time, so teaching is in my blood!"

Floyd was placed in Liberty, an urban high school in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. This high school (grades 9-12) is in a school district noted for its respect for foreign/second language, bilingual and multicultural education and for its innovative teaching approaches. His assignment included four classes: one ESL A language arts/literacy special needs class (17 students who spoke 11 languages other than English); one ESL A social studies low literacy class (22 students); one ESL B (pre-transitional) grammar-reading-writing class (13 students); and one bilingual class(Spanish/English) language arts class (16 students).

The language arts and special needs literacy level classes were comprised of an extremely transient student population. Students would attend school for a few weeks and then be absent for several weeks. Upon returning to school, Floyd discovered that those students from Central American countries had traveled back home to help with the flood devastation. Other students informed him that they were needed at home to help with a younger sibling or ailing elder family member. Still other students shared with him that their part-time job at a fast-food restaurant was the only income and they had to work for the survival of the family. Planning lessons was very difficult under these circumstances. Floyd often found newly-arrived students with no formal schooling in their L1 sitting in his classes on Monday mornings.

The pre-transitional bilingual (Spanish/English) education class (ESL B) was somewhat less demanding and a bit more stable. Floyd would have the students for one half day in which instruction would be in Spanish and the second half of the day would be in English. The areas of instruction included math, science, and social studies. These groups were the most energetic and Floyd was able to apply his CALLA training. He especially liked being able to do projects that involved technology.

Floyd's cooperating teacher, Mr. Martinez, was a 28-year veteran of teaching Spanish, ESL, and bilingual education in the same school district. Although he was born in Cuba, he was raised (from the age of 2) and schooled in the United States. As described by Floyd, Mr. Martinez was a traditional grammar-translationist. He was not in favor of using technology and did not have high expectations for his students. Floyd was dismayed when he arrived to discover that the students were often engaged in simple coloring pictures tasks. To say that there were ideological and philosophical differences between the two is an understatement. However, what made this case so particularly interesting was the manner in which the two were able to maintain a mutually respectful relationship. Even though Mr. Martinez was adamantly opposed to the vast majority of new, innovative, and exciting ideas Floyd had, he would often grumble quietly and then go off and leave Floyd to do as he wanted.

Analyses and Findings

Compatible with a case study approach, the data from Floyd's case were analyzed by having students in the advanced methods course look for meaningful themes (Johnson, 1992) in the written texts of the case and the portfolio. There were three emergent themes: Theory to Practice, Difference in Philosophical/Ideological Approach to Teaching, and Classroom Management. Students found that the student teacher intern wrestled with the application of theory to practice. Similarly, Floyd had divergent philosophical/ideological approaches to teaching from those of his cooperating teacher. Finally, the students in the methods course concluded that in Floyd's situation, the cooperating teacher was somewhat harsh with students.

Theory to Practice: Throughout Floyd's weekly journals as well as in entries in his portfolio, there was very clear evidence of how he reflected on his ability to connect theory to practice.

Week 2: My general impression is that more of my time will be devoted to classroom management and administrative duties rather than to the theoretical ideals of CALLA teaching, a thorough exploration of my students' multiple intelligences, or a consistent test of assessment principles in the public schools. While this is a major challenge, I realize I am here to learn and benefit from real world experience.

Week 10: Recently I have seen myself as a true whole language teacher hauling bags of "show and tell" manipulatives, photos, toys, prizes, food, music, videos, and lit samples. On a smaller scale, I've always taught like this, but I wonder if I can sustain this pace over the course of a year. It's exhausting, but I want to make an impression not so much on observers and administrators, but on the kids themselves so that the pattern for learning is firmly ingrained in their heads.

Difference in Philosophical/Ideological Approach: It became very clear during Floyd's first week that he and the cooperating teacher had different philosophies and ideologies regarding pedagogical approaches to teaching non-native speakers of English. This became particularly clear in Floyd's weekly journal.

Week 4: Mr. Martinez was very explicit today about his skepticism about the merits of using technology in the classroom, particularly the internet and computer keyboards. Other teachers

tried to allay his concerns, and I want to plow ahead. There is also some divergence of opinion about which materials to include, the relative importance of grammar-based activities, and various means of assessing our students.

Week 7: It has been a good week. I am not sure if I can sustain this level of energy next week, especially considering spring fever and the students' restlessness before spring break. My CT [Mr. Martinez Cooperating Teacher] feels that I do way too much for my students in the way of providing lots of varieties of activities. There is obvious tension but I feel he is happy to have non-teaching time and so he pretty much leaves me alone.

Classroom Management: Throughout his 15-week internship, Floyd maintained that classroom management never became an issue for him. This, according to him, was mostly, if not entirely, attributed to his careful and effective planning. He also noted how he paid particular attention to regarding every student as an individual learner. At the beginning of the portfolio there is a section in which student interns write about their own philosophy of teaching. Floyd wrote, "I truly believe that I can make a difference in the lives of youngsters. I regard teaching as a calling, not just a profession. My profound respect and empathy for peoples of the world will no doubt have a great impact on the way my classroom is managed."

The Portfolio

The portfolio clearly portrayed Floyd's unique qualities and characteristics: Floyd focused on his students as being his *raison d'être*. He decided that he would raise the level of expectation for his students and that they *would and could* reach those goals. He was neither swayed nor discouraged by his cooperating teacher. In a closer examination of his portfolio, the students in the advanced methods course discovered that Floyd had a very difficult relationship with his cooperating teacher. However, even under those adverse circumstances, he maintained a highly positive and professional attitude. As a class, we decided to look at the theme of the cooperating teacher more closely, as revealed through the portfolio. Floyd revealed that his cooperating teacher's methodology was outdated and that he felt genuine concern for the welfare of the students once his internship ended.

Finally, students in the advanced methods course completed both a mid-semester and end-of-course evaluation, as well as a mandatory university instructor and course appraisal (See Appendix D). The mid-semester evaluation revealed that fourteen of the 15 students were quite pleased with the course. One student revealed that the idea of having to talk and write so much every week was tiring. However, students commented that they liked a methodology that was different from their other coursework and that they were able to tie class discussions into their own reflective thinking/practice. One student commented, "This course forced me to question my own beliefs, goals, and aspirations and whether or not I can truly make a difference in the classroom. Thank you!"

Implications and Conclusion

Those of us involved in teacher education programs may want to reevaluate our current methodologies. The present project evidenced two clear implications: (1) Teacher education

programs are well-served by using case methods because they stimulate the kind of independent and critical thinking that teacher educators should encourage in their students. (2) Using case methods is an exciting way to learn. It is a powerful way of preparing teacher education students for the classrooms of the twenty-first century.

Spiro, Coulson, Feltovich, and Anderson (1988) argue that approaches to education that decontextualize knowledge under-represent the interconnections among knowledge components. According to Carter (1993), teaching in schools is experienced as complex social events. She contends that the acquisition of expertise in teaching is the acquisition of event-structured knowledge, which teachers obtain through their actions as teachers in the classroom.

While the results of this study are limited to one particular case study taught in one advanced methods course in a particular teacher education program, the differences in what prospective teacher participants learned from different approaches to discussion of the particular cases are not trivial. We need a great deal of further research examining relationships between instructional process and student outcomes if we are to provide useful advice and support for teacher educators attempting to improve their instruction through case-based teaching.

From this project we have learned that the use of case methods and reflective practice entail a great deal more than merely thinking about teaching. Rather, the use of case methods and reflective practice can be tantamount to constructing the self as an educator. Additionally, the writer learned that case-based instruction used in a methods course required careful and thoughtful preparation which, by design, were different from the way she had previously taught the course.

Furthermore, students who are active participants in their own learning are more likely to use that learning in their own practice. Consistently, research in learning theory has demonstrated that active learning has more long-term meaning than passive learning (Brophy & Good, 1986). Likewise, current research in cognitive development suggests that the social context in which learning occurs has a significant impact on the meaningfulness of the learning (Rogoff, 1991). Therefore, the creation of classrooms where discussion is the primary mode of learning would help to develop educators who are active participants in a supportive learning environment.

Students in the foreign/second language methods courses are required to read a significant amount of theory, methodology, and research as part of their coursework. For some students, it is often difficult to see how the theory and research could be applied in real-world classrooms. Case studies enabled students to interact with classroom incidents that are well-developed, contextualized, and relevant to most, if not all, students. By reflecting on their own experiences and tying in the relevant theory and research, students were able to realize how to handle situations they will face by applying relevant educational theory and research. Two changes the writer would consider making: First, use more than one case study in order to examine a broader array of scenarios and topics. Second, invite the student about whom the case was written to come at the end of the course and meet with students in the methods class.

If teacher education programs are truly seeking tools for filling the gaps and improving teacher education training, this project indicates that case-based instruction and student teacher portfolios

are highly appropriate. Using case-based instruction as the primary methodology for the advanced methods course, allowed students to match specific theory, foreign/second language methodology, and second language acquisition research. The reflective component of the portfolio provided an opportunity for the students to think about and ultimately influence their own professional development.

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Appendix A

Graduate School of Education
George Mason University
Profile for Evaluation of
STUDENT TEACHERS/INTERNS

Student Teacher/Intern _____ School _____
Subject(s)/Level(s) _____

Evaluator _____ Univ. Sup. _____ or Clin. Fac./Coop Tchr. _____ or Intern _____

Recommended Mid-semester/Interim Grade _____ or End-of-Semester Grade _____

Use this list of standards and rating scale for self-assessment of the student's performance by the clinical faculty/cooperating teacher and university supervisor at the beginning and end of independent teaching. Write the number of the appropriate rating in the space provided. The intern should demonstrate growth throughout the experience. At the interim evaluation, performance should be assessed according to expectations for a student teacher/intern and for the final evaluation, according to expectations for a beginning teacher.

The evaluator's judgements about the student's performance should be made in relation to the following criteria. Comments must be provided for ratings of 2 or 1, which indicate marginal or unsatisfactory performance.

Performance Rating Scale

5=Meets the standard consistently, exceeding expectations.

4=Meets the standard frequently, usually meeting expectations.

3=Meets the standard occasionally, is progressing in meeting expectations.

2=Meets the standard inconsistently, seldom meeting expectations.

1=Meets the standard rarely, never meeting expectations.

NR= Not rated during this evaluation.

The interim or final grade is based on this profile, but may not be numerically correlated.

Graduate Grading Scale: S=Satisfactory; NC=No Credit; IP=In Progress

Undergraduate Grading Scale: A=Excellent; B=Good; C=Satisfactory; D=Marginal;

F=Unsatisfactory; IP=In Progress

PLANNING AND PREPARATION Rating

1. Using curriculum guidelines develops unit and lesson plans to meet the developmental and academic needs of diverse learners. _____

2. Describes instructional objectives in terms of learning outcomes. _____

3. Plans a sequence of activities which are focused on achievement of the instructional objectives. _____

4. Selects learning experiences and materials to accommodate different styles and levels of learning. _____

5. Relates activities to students' interests, knowledge, and experiences. _____

6. Integrates materials and activities which promote equity (including gender equity) and infuse multicultural elements in lesson. _____

7. Gathers, creates, and organizes materials and equipment in advance. _____

8. Plans for using various methods to assess students' learning. _____

9. Collaborates with other teachers and specialists in planning. _____

INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT Rating

1. Uses a variety of teaching methods, techniques, and strategies. _____

2. Presents content accurately and instructions clearly. _____

3. Provides opportunities for learners to participate actively and successfully at different levels.

4. Provides opportunities for learners to work independently and in cooperative groups. _____
5. Encourages critical thinking and problem-solving through prompts, questioning, and applications. _____
6. Uses a variety of media and materials appropriately to achieve instructional objectives. _____
7. Demonstrates competence in using computers to achieve instructional objectives. _____
8. Adapts pacing, methods, and materials utilizing feedback from students. _____
9. Assesses for understanding and mastery through observation of students' performance and evaluation of their work. _____
10. Keeps records of students' progress and problems. _____

11. Involves family and community members in learning activities. _____

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR Rating

1. Motivates students through interesting and challenging activities. _____
2. Communicates high expectations while respecting individual differences and cultural diversity. _____
3. an orderly and supportive environment by establishing routines. _____
4. Demonstrates courtesy and caring in relationships with students. _____
5. Manages time, space, and materials to keep students productively involved in learning. _____
6. Demonstrates ability to manage two or more classroom activities simultaneously, with evidence of attention to each. _____
7. Guides student behavior and moral development through an emphasis on personal responsibility for the common good. _____

8. Handles disruptive or destructive behavior firmly and fairly. _____

9. Communicates regularly with parents and involves them in problem-solving. _____

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT Rating

1. Possesses the basic skills and knowledge needed to guide students' learning. _____

2. Demonstrates effort to continue learning both content and pedagogy. _____

3. Reflects on his/her professional practice, including personal teaching and learning style. _____
4. Welcomes assistance for improvement and problem solving. _____
5. Can develop and explain professional judgements using research-based theory and experience. _____
6. Engages in productive relationships with professional colleagues and support staff. _____
7. Demonstrates stamina, flexibility, and a positive attitude. _____
8. Is responsible, dependable, and observant of school policies and procedures. _____
9. Projects a professional image in terms of demeanor and appearance. _____
10. Demonstrates effective oral communication skills. _____
11. Demonstrates effective written communication skills. _____

Provide additional comments or explanations on the reverse side of this form or an attachment. Ratings and comments should be discussed by all parties and the final evaluation profile reviewed by the principal or designee.

Clinical Faculty/Cooperating Teacher Date

University Supervisor Date

(The signatures below indicate review of this evaluation profile rather than agreement.)

Student Teacher/Intern Date

Principal (or designee) Date

Appendix B

George Mason University
Office of Teacher Education

Progress Report
(To be completed biweekly)

Student/Teacher/Intern _____

Reporting Period _____ to _____

Cooperating Teacher/Clinical Faculty _____

—

The student completes #1, the teacher completes #2 and #3; a copy is provided for the university supervisor.

1. Briefly describe your teaching activities for this period, with emphasis on major successes and difficulties
2. Briefly describe strengths of the student's performance for this period and areas needing improvement.
3. What recommendations or instructions do you have for the next two weeks?

Teacher's Signature Date

Student Teacher's/Intern Signature Date

Appendix C

Case Description

The following were taken from the weekly reflection journals written to the university supervisor who supervised the student teaching internship.

Week 2

I have finally gotten some solid experience in my classroom at Liberty. While I am still sensitive about the loss of my father, I have found that throwing myself into student teaching has been a constructive form of therapy and an aid to grieving. I have a very good rapport with my cooperating teacher, Mr. Martinez, and have also met most of the other ESL teachers over lunch the last few days.

My general impression is that more of my time will be devoted to classroom management and administrative duties rather than to the theoretical ideals of CALLA teaching, a thorough exploration of my students' multiple intelligences, or a consistent test of assessment principles in the public schools. While this is a major challenge, I realize I am here to learn and to benefit from real world experience. Previous observations and cooperative teaching in public high schools had dispelled any naivete I might have had about the "perfect classroom."

The demographic mix of my students is interesting. While the vast majority are Spanish speakers from El Salvador, other Central American countries, and Bolivia, I also have a few Sudanese, Ethiopian, Indian, Bengali, Filipino, Portuguese, and Vietnamese students. In general, I would describe them as "hormonally-challenged," especially given teaching materials and school-wide discussions about the upcoming Valentine's Day holiday. Some of the students have participated in the ESL program since middle school, while others are very recent arrivals (one arrived from El Salvador this past weekend!) with widely divergent degrees of L1 literacy and innate motivation.

With respect to my daily schedule, my time is spent among three classes, two of which are comprised of most of the same students. The first class (first period) is an ESL social studies class consisting of 22 students at the low literacy level. The focus this week has been on the geography of Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

The second period is a planning/pre period. The third and fourth periods are devoted to a block of ESL B (pre-transitional) grammar-reading-writing classes involving 13 multicultural students. They seem much more vocal, cynical, and "Americanized" (for better or worse) than their ESL A counterparts, but their language output (both oral and written) is at times very impressive.

WL started its new semester the day I arrived. Today I also got my "baptism by fire" when Mr. Martinez Arrived and told me that he would have to go home because of illness. He left some skeletal lesson plans and suggested various activities which I adapted throughout the day. While there was some concern about "leaving me alone," I was happy to be cut loose a bit so I could teach relatively unencumbered. In one activity, I gathered some excellent autobiographical writing samples to better familiarize myself with my students. Also, since I had already planned a staged CALLA lesson for writing simple poetry for one class today, I simply adapted it for both the low-literacy and more advanced classes. With the help of music and read-aloud examples, both lessons went pretty well. If I were to change the lessons, I would have had the hand-outs in time for the first class I intended to use them with, and I would have had more chances for self-evaluation after the activity. But time was limited.

I also had teaching assistants and two substitute teachers on loan at various times during the day. With all the administrative and classroom management matters to contend with, I was exhausted but ultimately vindicated as the day wore on. What a wild experience! Plus it provided a nice diversion from my bereavement. I called Mr. Martinez After school and it sounds likely that I might have to cover for him again tomorrow. As long as I have another full-time substitute there tomorrow, I don't see any violation of my understanding about what my internship experience should be like. I would rather be teaching than simply observing. Besides, I will get a chance to see the other ESL teachers in action all day on Monday and other days in the future.

While reading this message, I realize it sounds hopelessly optimistic and unrealistic. But I would rather start out with some positive momentum before the inevitable disappointments knock the winds out of my sails. I will get through this. Thanks for calling to reassure me.

Week 13

The ESL A language arts/special needs literacy block is still evolving. We are currently in a state of transition into more English-English (rather than bilingual) reading with fewer or diminished scaffolds. The problem has been the three or so new students who speak virtually no English. There is a disturbing divergence of prior knowledge and literacy base in the class. My plan is to introduce a school district-published story book on "My School," "My Town," or "Boys and Girls" using graphic organizer (comparisons with home country equivalents on Venn diagrams and the like). But this is challenging since we did similar comparisons of George Washington and Abe Lincoln using bilingual texts, and a "U.S.A./My Country" compare/contrast exercise with limited success. I have tried "spoon feeding" and direct dictations on the overhead projector,

among other approaches, but their attention span or tolerance for detail seems limited. I'm determined to find a way to motivate them. One particularly effective and affective activity - somewhat wasted on the Friday before break - was to have the students look at photos of themselves making the quilt (described in other entries) or of me and my travels, and describe what he/she/I was/were doing. We're working with the present progressive. It was somewhat effective, but I plan to revisit the activity after returning from break.

What a revealing experience this has been for me! I am now ready to go into my own classroom and commit myself to making this my life work. I know I can be effective and I realize more than ever what a truly honorable profession teaching is for me.

Appendix D

EDCI 674 - ADVANCED METHODS OF TEACHING FOREIGN/SECOND LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Course and Self Evaluation
Spring 1999

Name: _____

1. In this course I like.....

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. One thing I'd like to see changed or done differently is.....

3. My performance in this course thus far has been.....

4. As a student I need to do better at.....

5. Rate according to 5 = Excellent 1 = Poor

Course methodology

Pace

Text

Atmosphere