REFLECTIVE TEACHING

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Reflective Teaching

• Remembering, thinking about, and evaluating a teaching experience.

• Why? To make decisions about future plans and actions
The Reflective Teacher:

• Understands the things that influence the way he (or she) teaches. Things such as:
  1. Practical theories about teaching
  2. the teaching context
     (class size, student language levels, access to technology, textbooks, curriculum. . .)
  3. knowledge, attitudes, values
What does a Reflective Teacher do?

• Solves problems in the classroom
• Is aware of the assumptions he or she brings to teaching
• Understands the institutional and cultural context of his or her teaching
• Participates in curriculum development and school change
• Seeks professional development opportunities
Assumptions of Reflective Teaching

Theory
• Reflective teachers are knowledgeable about pedagogy (methods and theories of teaching)
• We can learn a lot about teaching from self-inquiry
• Much of what happens during teaching is unknown to the teacher
• Experience is not enough to grow as a teacher
• Reflection can give us a deeper understanding of the teaching process
Results of becoming Reflective Teachers

• Teachers develop a deeper, better “schemata” of teaching.
• Teachers have better pedagogical reasoning skills.
• Teachers are better at improvisation in the classroom.
• Teachers become better decision makers in the classroom because they know what can influence learning outcomes.
Paradigm

• Beliefs about (God, the universe, people, society, students, learning) that can influence how you understand the world or your politics or your approach to teaching. . .
Example of a teaching paradigm

• Students should be silent in the classroom—unless asked a direct question by the teacher
• Grammar is the most important skill for students to learn
• The job of the teacher is to prepare students to pass the national examination
• Some students cannot learn languages
All of us have paradigms about teaching

• But by gathering information about our own teaching. . .

• We can discover things we don’t like—and beliefs we don’t like

• And we can CHANGE those beliefs!!!

• And make ourselves better teachers
Teacher as Self-Monitor

Benefits:
1. Provides feedback that leads to growth
2. Gives an opportunity for self-reflection
3. Narrows gap between the teacher’s imagined view of himself and reality
4. Shifts responsibility from an outsider to the teacher himself
What can be learned through self-monitoring?

A. Move from open self (what you and others already know about your teaching) to
B. Secret self (what you know but others do not)
C. Blind Self (unknown to you but not to others)
D. Hidden Self (unknown to you and to others)
The Process of Reflective Teaching

I. Recollect (remember) or “map” a teaching event.

1. What do I do when I teach?
2. What do I believe about teaching?

We map a teaching event by observing and collecting evidence.
How to observe and collect evidence

• Peer observation
• Same lesson, four ways
• Video recording
• Keeping a journal
• Student surveys
• Student notebooks and tests
A Sample Journal Entry

I could not finish my lesson today. My examples took too long to explain to the students. I asked students to write exercises on the blackboard. It was tedious and boring! I must find a better way that is quicker. . .
Guiding Questions for Journals

• What did you intend to teach? Did you succeed?
• How effective were your teaching materials? Technologies?
• What group arrangements were used?
• Did you depart from your lesson plan?
• Was your philosophy of teaching reflected in your lesson?
• Did you teach all of the students today?
• Did students respond actively to the lesson?
Types of Student Surveys

• Surveys about the class activities, your teaching
  1. Do you like the stories we are reading?
  2. Would you like to spend more class time on (speaking, listening, reading, writing, or practicing vocabulary)?
  3. What do you like best about this class?
  4. What do you like least about this class?
Types of Student Surveys

• Surveys about how students learn

1. In class, I like to learn by reading 1 2 3 4 5
2. In class, I like to learn by games 1 2 3 4 5
10. I like the teacher to explain everything 1 2 3 4 5
11. I like the teacher to let me find my mistakes 1 2 3 4
18. I like to study by myself 1 2 3 4 5
19. I like to study in groups 1 2 3 4 5
25. I often think of better ways to learn 1 2 3 4 5
26. I try to use English outside of class 1 2 3 4 5
The Process of Reflective Teaching

I. Recollect or map the event (collect evidence)

II. Inform, question, and evaluate

A. What does my evidence show me?
B. What inconsistencies are there between my beliefs about good teaching and what I actually do in the classroom?
C. How might I teach differently?

Analyze the mapping, the collected evidence
The Process of Reflective Teaching

I. Recollect or map the event (collect evidence)
II. Inform, question, and evaluate
III. Act
   A. Don’t just think about your teaching, do something to make it better
   B. But do not act before reflecting
   C. Let your action be informed by reflection
Action Research

• After reflecting (observing/gathering evidence) and analyzing the evidence, identify one problem or area of teaching you want to “act” on

For example:

1. Students have problems doing oral presentations
2. Students don’t seem to revise their essays after I correct them.
3. Students only speak Chinese (rather than English) when I ask them to work in groups.
Action Research

I. Identify problem
II. Make the problem more concrete, something that can be changed, improved

For example:
From: Students have problems doing oral presentations
To: What skills can I give my students to make them more effective presenters?

From: Students don’t revise their essays after I correct them.
To: Are there teaching techniques that would promote revision strategies in writing?
Action Research

I. Identify problem

II. Make the problem more concrete, something that can be changed, improved

III. Research the problem
   A. Talk to colleagues
   B. Attend conferences
   C. Read articles or books
   D. Review your mapping again
Action Research

I. Identify problem
II. Make the problem more concrete, something that can be changed, improved
III. Research the problem
IV. Prepare an Action Plan
   A. Draw conclusions from your research
   B. Brainstorm solutions
   C. How will you implement your solution?
Action Research

I. Identify problem

II. Make the problem more concrete, something that can be changed, improved

III. Research the problem

IV. Prepare an Action Plan

V. Action—carry out your plan

VI. Record and observe implementation of plan

VII. Reflect critically on your Action What improvements would you make?
For Your Journal Entry

• I want you to (1) identify a problem and (2) make it concrete
• First, how might you gather evidence?
• How might you analyze evidence?
• How might you research the problem?
• What might constitute an Action Plan?
How do you reflect when you are 18,000 kilometers from your students???

• Recall your teaching through journaling
  a. student participation, interest levels
  b. student language production
  c. student performance on assessments
• Observe ELI teachers
• Talk to colleagues
• Talk to ELI colleagues
• Gather ideas from your TESL courses