

COMMUNICATION AND THE EDUCATION PROCESS (CMYR 2400)

In-class lesson plan assignment
(11 November 2014)

Group collaborators:

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1. Provide a brief overview of a communication problem/challenge you have considered this semester and a response (identify at least one research summary relevant to your response).

The challenge/problem addressed was "how to resolve the issue of a text being too easy?" This problem focused on the use of a text in the classroom and the assessment of difficulty for students. The importance of choosing the most appropriate text determines the confidence and learning capabilities of the students.

Three monographs were used in the discussion of the use of texts in the classroom: Murphy (2013), Cornford (2012) and Klein (2008). Briefly, Murphy (2013) states that teachers can find it difficult to select a suitable text for their students despite the guidelines the publishers suggest as an aid for the teacher. Cornford (2012) states that multi-level texts are more useful than using a leveled text. Finally, Klein (2008) states that students can learn from the combination of reading and doing rather than just reading the text.

My response to this problem is that the choice of text lies with the teacher and the competency of their students in their class. Murphy (2013) states that the teacher should choose the text and Cornford (2012) states that a multi-text should be used. I agree with both. If a student is interested in a text, they will be motivated to learn about the material and excitement about understanding the text. In addition to the students' interest in the text, a multi-level text is the answer when a teacher is dealing with a classroom with a diverse spectrum of student reading levels. Using an easy text in the classroom will help students with lower than average reading abilities but will hold back those students that are at a higher reading level and vice versa. However I also agree with Klein (2008) that students should have the text that is suitable for them as well as have an activity that will accompany the text and help facilitate the learning and understanding process.

2. Using the attached template, complete a lesson plan that highlights how the problem/challenge can be addressed through your teaching.

You can address this problem/challenge directly or indirectly:

directly i.e., the lesson *is about* the challenge/problem

e.g., in this lesson on media literacy, students will look at the portrayal of gender in newspapers.

indirectly i.e., the lesson *is informed by* concerns around the challenge/problem

e.g., in this lesson on media literacy, students will look at how newspapers report the local news, paying attention to whether men and women reporters tell stories differently

1. **Description:** Describe, in general terms, what the lesson is about and whether it addresses your chosen problem/challenge directly or indirectly.

In this lesson plan about text choice in the classroom, students will explore which texts are better suited for them and if using an activity versus not using an activity in association with the text. Students will assess various difficulty levels of texts and using an activity.

This lesson plan would address the problem directly because the students would perform an inquiry investigation as to which texts they prefer and if they can learn and understand more effectively using an activity in conjunction with the text.

2. **Expectations:** Outline the general expectations being targeted in this lesson.

I expect to...

1. Determine if students prefer easy level texts regardless of their reading competency
2. Determine if students prefer hard level texts regardless of their reading competency
3. Determine if students prefer using a multi-level text regardless of their reading competency
4. Determine if the students learn more effectively using an activity with the text
5. Determine if the students learn more effectively without using an activity with the text

3. **Groupings:** Identify how students will be grouped during the lesson (individual, pair work etc.).

Students will be working as individuals so that the teacher can assess the individual perspective of the above expectations in number 2 regardless the choice of text type and if an activity will be useful.

Students can also be grouped regarding their choice of text type (not reading level - remains confidential) from the individual assessment and to collaborate ideas that will help teachers to adhere to the needs of the students at a particular reading level.

4. Choose either your **Expectations** or your **Groupings** and explain how this component of your lesson plan is relevant to your problem/challenge.

Using the expectations, the problem is addressed because it allows the students to indicate their preferred text and activity (if chosen) and help the teacher assess which text they should use in their classroom based on the reading levels and difficulty of the text that is most preferred.

5. **Teaching/Learning Strategies:**

Explain which teaching strategies will be used in the lesson (lecture, think-pair-share, etc.).

The teaching strategies I would use would be:

1. A small lecture to introduce the learning objectives, the texts that will be available and an overview of the activity/exercise they will complete with the text.
2. Individual work period with the teacher walking around answering questions
3. Group the class according to the text they chose and discuss their thoughts about the use of the text and the activity
4. Final class discussion of the group ideas so the teacher can get a sense of the student's preferences

6. **Method:**

Summarize, step by step, how you will carry out the lesson.

- A small lecture will be given (learning objectives, texts available, overview of activity/exercise sheet, outline of the what the students' will be doing - individual and group and discussion)
- Lay out the texts for the students' to choose from categorized as easy level, moderate level, and hard level of reading difficulty. Hand out the activity forms that go with each text to help the students learn the material. Hand out the exercise sheet that will be filled out for each portion of the class activities (independent work, group work, class discussion)
- Have the students come and choose 2 of the 3 texts to assess their preference and competency for the material.
- Students will work independently to fill out the first portion of the exercise sheet that highlights their ideas about which text would work for them and why with support from their book and brainstorming individually. The students will also answer the questions from the activity forms that go with the particular text they chose. The teacher will walk around answering questions and helping the students.
- After finishing the independent work, the students will be asked to put their hand up as to which of the 3 texts they chose and the students will be put into groups according the choice of book.
- The students will work as a group to finish the exercise sheet for the next part of the class activity, brainstorming ideas about why their text would be good to use and if the activity forms were helpful when learning the material.
- The students will go back to their desks and will share and discuss their ideas about why their text would be useful in the class for everyone.

7. Choose either your **Teaching/Learning Strategies** or your **Method** and explain how this component of your lesson plan is relevant to your chosen problem/challenge.

Using the method, the problem is addressed because the students are assessing the quality of the texts based on their preference for a particular level of text used in class. The direct choice of text by each student will help the teacher become aware of the most preferred text by the class and possibly use that text in the classroom.

Also, having the students fill out the activity form that is associated with each text to help the students comprehend the material.

8. Details of Assessment:

Explain which approach will be used to assess the students' learning (test, portfolio, presentation, etc.) and how the assessment will be recorded (rubric, rating scale, anecdotal record, etc.).

The assessment approach for this lesson plan would be collecting the exercise sheets filled out in class at the end of the class and grading them on their ability to express their opinions of the text being used and the activity forms were useful or not. A grade of A, B, C, or D would be assigned based on the above criteria and recorded in an Excel spreadsheet.

9. Adaptations:

Identify adjustments that can be made to activities and assessment to address individual and unique learning needs or special circumstances (e.g. for exceptional students, students with special education needs, and/or ELL/ELD students).

Students that have special needs such as a learning disability and need more time while reading through the book and activity form will be known to the teacher and the teacher can pay closer attention to their progress and help them through the text and activity form. For exceptional students, teachers should add more complex optional and thought-provoking questions on the activity form that students that get ahead of the class can finish while waiting for the rest of the class to finish the independent work.

10. Resources:

Identify which resources will be used (textbooks, guest speakers, field trips etc.)

Various English texts would be used (easy, moderate and hard reading difficulty) would be used along with 2 handouts: an activity form that accompanies a particular text and an exercise sheet that the students will fill out for each portion of the class activities (independent work, group work and class discussion).

11. Choose one aspect of either your Details of Assessment or your Adaptations or your Resources and explain how this component of your lesson plan is relevant to your chosen problem/challenge?

Using the resources, the problem is addressed because the students are using the exact texts that could be used for teaching an English course. The use of the texts also help the teacher determine which texts to omit in later years as being too easy or difficult.

12. Identify a difficulty you might face in implementing your lesson plan.

A difficulty that might occur in this type of lesson plan could possibly be 2 situations:

- (1) Students will not be willing to participate or put effort into the exercise and group work or put their hand up to discuss their ideas with the class.
- (2) Students will not be able to read very quickly and properly assess the text in the time of the class.

How would you respond to this difficulty?

I would give the students 2 class periods to work on the assignment. One class to do the independent work and the next class for the group work and class discussion. In order to correct for the lack of discussion and participation by the students, I would try and engage my students with fun and interesting texts.

13. Additional remarks (optional):