

Platform Framework - Section III

Instructional Planning and Implementation

My philosophy for teaching has changed since the beginning of my teaching career in 1971. As a new teacher, my expectations of my students were based on the same background and abilities as myself. However, my eyes were quickly opened and as a result my philosophy has changed. Every student is different. Some students have a lot more background experiences and intellectual abilities than others and it is not fair to expect the same results from all students. My philosophical approach to the ELL student is driven by the amount of information that the child needs to know to be successful.

Basically, I use the Communicative Approach as the foundation for my teaching instruction. By teaching the wholistic perspective using all four modes of listening, speaking, reading and writing, the student will have a good foundation for their educational development. By listening to the information being discussed, the ELL student can hear the language and how it sounds so that they in turn can speak the language and communicate with the class on their ideas and conclusions. By providing a variety of reading materials in their language and in English, the ELL student will be able to develop their language skills to the next level of understanding. Eventually, after they feel confident with their understanding of the information and with their abilities of understanding the English Language, the final stage will be to have them develop their writing skills, which is the most difficult form of communicating in English. Each stage of the modes must also be addressed by addressing the different learning styles. Students need to be able to study to the best of their ability and their ability is based on how they learn. Teachers need to be sensitive to these different learning styles so that all student will feel successful in the classrooms learning environment. Usually this means that the teacher must make a conscience effort in her teaching or guiding of the lessons, to provide the information in the way the student learns best.

By having language sensitive content lessons as the core of the learning process, the teacher will use what is call the Sheltered Method. This method allows the teacher to be sure that the content of the lesson is comprehensible to the second language learner as well as to provide them with Opportunities to actively use the content language that they are learning. This allows the focus to be on the information and not on their ability to speak English. The Sheltered Method encompasses many learning theories that can be used in the classroom. According to Jana Echevarria and Anne Graves book, *Sheltered Content Instruction*. "It is important to keep in mind that classroom practices rarely are "pure" examples of one theory. Rather, effective teachers typically use a balanced approach that includes choices rooted in different learning theories. Sheltered instruction is not driven by a single theory but rather exhibits influences of several theoretical perspectives." In my classroom there is the combination of the Humanistic Learning Theory, the Developmental Learning Theory, the Social Interactionist Learning Theory, the Cognitive Learning Theory and the Behavioral Learning Theory. By combining different parts of all of these theories, the teacher can individualize the lessons for the ELL student as well as the other students in the classroom.

By choosing the Sheltered Method of teaching my strategies make it easy for me to assess the students progress. Cooperative learning is a strategy that I use in my classroom that provides for the ELL student a strong comfort level. They can listen to the other children's comments and participate by facial expressions instead of language communications. We do projects with our "Book Buddies" (students who are in the 4th grade - we are 2nd grade) and using cooperative learning with these upper classmates is most rewarding for our ELL students. I also provide a lot of 'hands on' activities. All students enjoy being successful, and by using 'hands on' activities, the ELL students are eager to try new experiences without the fear of being unsuccessful.

By using a Guarded Vocabulary, it not only helps the students to relate the vocabulary to the lessons but it keeps me on track as to the goal of the lesson. The Guarded Vocabulary is 811S0 helpful to use as an assessment tool to show parents exactly what their child is learning.

A technique that I use almost every day is Modeling. This technique is helpful to the ELL student, and the English speaking students to know what is expected and how the information should be presented. Sometime of the way that these presentations are done can be by using drama, writing demonstrations or even using video equipment. Modeling is a crucial part of the ELL students learning development to help and build their confidence in their own abilities, skills and social acceptance. Some other techniques that are used in my classroom are Big Books, manipulatives, flannel boards, chalk or black erase boards, puppets and using computers which help to provide different types of stimulus for the ELL student to use in helping them to expand their education and their English language development. It is also amazing how much the students learn from their experience with their Book Buddies. These older students seem to be able to communicate with my ELL students as well as my English speaking students in a special way. This communication seems not to be inhibiting or judgmental toward the students and they maintain the information from the lessons with great ease. This is an excellent Cooperative experience for both grade levels.

As a teacher for the public School district, there are certain curriculum standards that are to be met. It is important to me to set my goals to meet these standards and to help each child in my classroom achieve these goals. The way that I approach the curriculum challenges is up to me. By providing for each child's learn style I should be able to provide a good learning environment for each child's needs. Sometimes it is easy to get wrapped up in the text and not these goals. I must keep an open mind and continue to work with each child So that they will be successful and want to continue to be life-long learners.