
STRATEGIES FOR CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LESSON PLANNING



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ABSTRACT

The instructional design project (IDP) was researched and created because of the growing global need for teachers to better serve those coming into international school classrooms with limited social and academic English. Because of the growing number of students and families who seek to use English as their academic lingua franca, challenges will continue to exist as teachers are often underprepared to serve this educational need especially in text-dense subjects such as Religion and Social Studies. This IDP sought to address this by providing lesson planning strategies to meet the needs of educators where they may feel a knowledge and/or skill gap, using an exemplar of a combined lesson plan and template based on Psalm 23 for K-12 settings.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Classroom teachers embrace the privilege and the challenge of teaching for many reasons. Some may find that providing the next generation with strategies for sustainable success has far-reaching implications. Others may enjoy helping students understand the burden and benefits of globalization. This aspect of teaching finds immediacy in mixed-ability, multi-lingual and multi-cultural classrooms. To better serve the unique sub-cultures found in a classroom, lesson planning is an important component of creating a well-ordered learning environment (Wiggins, 2005).

A significant and emerging component of lesson planning is discovering and using strategies to serve students learning English as an additional language (EAL). While having a number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in urban classrooms is

not a new conversation in the educational field, this conversation is widening. The expected ratio of students needing English language support will continue to grow at an exponential rate in Burundi’s rural and urban settings.

The keen global interest to have English as lingua franca in international school settings and beyond is another reason why professional development opportunities on this subject provides added value to educators near and far. Programs are being developed (Echevarria J. &, 2010) to meet some of the needs of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, yet there are still under-served language learners in classrooms in both Burundi schools and in international schools around the world. The focus of this study will be to help classroom teachers, administrators, tutors, and support specialists in a K-12 setting find additional lesson planning strategies which serve both Englishlanguage learners and native English speakers.

Background Information:

Bujumbura International School (BIS, 2012) is a Private School, affiliated with International Schools of France (ISF, 2012). It was founded in 1993. BIS is currently located in Bujumbura, the meeting place of the Ntakangwa and Muha Rivers.

Bujumbura is a tri-city consisting of Ntakangwa, Muha and Mukaza, with over 2 million residents, and is located in the Bujumbura Province of Burundi. The school serves, and has served, foreign passport holders from more than 6 nations, including France, DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda Children are bussed in from across the city to attend this K-12 school that serves over 200 students. In 2014, the municipal government provided a new facility to serve the growing educational needs of local industries, which include foreign auto-makers. In 2013 BIS (mlf, 2015) was approached by France educational entity, Ecole Française (ecf 2015). Together they established a hybrid French and English collaboration. The common language of the school is English, yet a majority of the students come from homes which speak other languages.

Rationale for Instruction:

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Department of BIS has consisted of two ESL specialists, one serving Middle and High School and another serving Kindergarten and Elementary. In 2013, the team doubled in size, to four teachers, allowing the Director some time to continue developing an “Enriched English” program. Currently, in 2014, the team consists of seven ESOL teachers. Five of the teachers provide instruction for target students in ESOL classrooms as well

enter homeroom classes to support English language learners, using the “push- in and pull-out” methodology.

Two of the ESOL specific teachers have their own “Enriched English” homerooms in a newly established program to better serve students and teachers. One serves the lowest level English Language Learners of grades two and three, with collaboration peers teaching the other higher English level grade two and grade three students. The other serves the lowest level English Language Learners of grades four and five, in collaboration peers teaching the other higher English level grade four and grade five students. The goal of this “Enriched English” approach is to modify the grade level content to the language level of those newest to the school in those respective grades.

While these programs and innovations are serving the students well, there is a continued need for the professional development of the teaching staff, many of which came to China following graduation. Team members have been added to serve three levels of language speakers. Students admitted to BIS are assessed on their English language skills using the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Access Placement Test (WIDA W-APT, 2014). Even with the varied practices in place to serve ELLs, there continues to be needs. One of these needs is to support classroom teachers with specific lesson planning strategies to better serve ELLs in content and text- dense classes like Social Studies. The focus audience of this research is classroom teachers who want to better serve the ELLs who may make up the majority of their classrooms.

The researcher has been an English Conversational Instructor in different settings since 1984. Since that time many methods of teaching have been used. Currently in the capacity of both a teacher and a program director, the researcher recognizes the value of helping classroom teachers add ELL specific components to content-heavy and text- heavy classes. Because the philosophy of the school is founded on Christian principals, the researcher will target and give specific methods for Social studies and Bible class. Taken from the school’s website: “*All students are enrolled in a Bible class every semester. The middle school curriculum includes courses in Old and New Testament literature and culture, as well as the history of the Jewish nation and Christian examines a variety of ways in which Biblical ethics can be applied to contemporary issues. All courses are taught on an academic basis and receive academic credit.*” (BIS, 2015)

Statement of Objectives:

This Instructional Design Project seeks to help ELLs better access a complex academic text (Bible) by providing lesson planning strategies to support expatriate and national teachers in an international school setting. These strategies use learner centered, communicative English focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. This topic is important for this audience because traditional teacher training focuses on serving English speakers (Aminy, 2011). Teachers in international settings can find themselves at a deficit when working outside the nation they were trained to serve in. Important concepts related to this Instructional Design Project include the following components: Lesson Planning for ELLs, Communicative English, and Understanding World Religions through the use of Scripture. The researcher hopes teachers are able to imagine and create accessible content for ELLs at various levels (Teach Thought Staff, 2013). Teachers who have a variety of language speakers in their classrooms were given a variety of methods to aid the ELL's comprehension of content, to be used on an ongoing basis.

Summary

Because expatriate teachers embrace the privilege and the challenge of teaching cross-culturally, having additional practices to better educate English Language Learners can provide opportunities for teaching success. This success can be seen as giving students a better understanding of the burden and benefits of the globalization through the lens of language diversity. Considerations unique to teaching ELLs can be included in lesson planning, and targeting their needs is an important component of creating a well-ordered learning environment (Wiggins, 2005).

Using English as the common language in international school settings requires attention to the ongoing need for professional development related to language learning. Assessment tools (WIDA W-APT, 2014) and programs are continually being developed (Echevarria J. &, 2010) to meet some of the needs of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, yet there are still under-served language learners in international schools around the world. The target audience of this project will be classroom teachers, administrators, tutors, and support specialists in a K-12 setting. They will be provided with additional lesson planning strategies to better include English language learners.

The instructional design project is necessary because of the growing global need for teachers to better serve those coming into classrooms with limited social and

academic English. Because of the growing number of students and families who seek to use English as their academic lingua franca, problems will continue to exist as teachers are often underprepared to serve this educational need. This instructional design project seeks to address this by providing strategies to include in lesson planning to meet the needs of educators where they may feel a knowledge and/or skill gap, by using as an exemplar a lesson plan based on Understanding by Design (Wiggins, Understanding By Design, 2005) and template (Banville, 2005) based on Psalm 23 (Peterson, 2002).

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The content of this review will include the purposes and roles of three areas: lesson planning, English language learner inclusion, and strategies to teach Bible (text- driven content). The organization of this review, from broad to specific, was driven by the context the researcher works in, a K-12 international school in Bujumbura, Burundi. This school seeks to support teachers who desire to more effectively teach language learners as well as Bible content. The strategy used for searching the literature, online library, and internet-based content, was derived from educational research practices developed in previous studies with University of Burundi. Throughout the world, international schools which use English as the medium of instruction appeal to parents because of perceived academic opportunity and potential economic security. The trust that parents give to these schools creates an obligation to serve the next generation with an excellence informed by experience and tradition. Many parents believe the research findings that indicate that "...regularly using two or more languages seems to enhance brain elasticity and helps bilinguals perform better in some thinking related tasks." (Bourgogne, 2012, p. 24) Some international schools are understaffed and under-resourced, yet even in the schools with resources and well-trained educators, administrators may find serving ELLs an ongoing challenge. Most K-12 teachers are underprepared for the diversity they may experience in their classrooms, especially if they choose to work internationally. (Chang, 2014)

Due to the exponential growth of international schools around the world, the demand for teachers has also grown. Few teachers have specific training to serve the types of language diversity encountered in global settings. Teachers with some cross-

cultural exposure recommend that “...pre-service teachers be provided with more cultural experiences to prepare them to teach in diverse school settings. An example of such opportunities would be to offer pre-service teachers with multiple and meaningful field observation trips to culturally diverse school settings. The pre-service teachers believed they would be more effective if they received diversity training and more experience.

Some pre-service teachers suggested they “have come a long way and learned a lot but pointed out that one cross-cultural project was not sufficient to their preparation”. (Keengwe, 2012 , p. 203)

Even with experience in an international setting and immersion in another setting, teachers can be better supported. Through ongoing professional development, teachers and administrators can strategically utilize ESL specialists to better serve students by including opportunities to adjust curriculum strategies. Literature suggests that enhanced curriculum development and thoughtful lesson planning has the potential to help certified teachers. Lois M. Meyer suggests, "The four barriers to meaningful learning—cognitive load, cultural load, language load and learning load—are tightly interrelated. When their interconnectedness is overlooked, inappropriate teaching adaptations can occur. Topics that reflect the student’s culture may be included in the curriculum...English learners can be aided in their learning when teachers make efforts to lighten even one or two of these loads." (Meyer, 2000, p. 235) Even with text-dense content such as Bible, enhancements can include culturally sensitive classroom activities which target English Language Learners, yet include all students.

Purpose and Role of Lesson Planning

The purpose and role of lesson planning is to structure the time shared with students. The best use of time can be defined in many ways. Teachers who choose to teach abroad may arrive in new settings with false expectations that impact the classroom experience. “Every teacher brings to the classroom expectations about curriculum that are rooted in his or her training and experience. When asked to teach, we assume that the subject matter will be the same as that which we have learned and taught. We bring along our materials, our prepackaged lesson plans, and take our place in the classroom. We are the experts, and we assume our knowledge base is right for our assignment. In many situations, nothing could be further from the truth. Until we understand what our students have already learned and what they will do

with what they learn from us, we very likely do not have the “right” material for our assignment.” (Lingenfelter, 2011)

There are various indicators of best use of time, effective lesson planning, and healthy classroom management. “Busy, engaged children who are on task and working toward meeting an instructional goal have much less time to misbehave. Teachers categorized as strong were more aware of pacing and kept children engaged by asking questions, answering questions, and giving feedback. Future teachers and teachers alike would do well to model their practice on what we observed strong teachers doing: being alert and redirecting off-task behaviors, avoiding retreating, using appropriate praise and rewards, and being aware of pacing and keeping children engaged.” (Szpara, 2007, p. 20)

Lesson planning needs to be strategic, yet simple and accessible when preparing for a variety of language learners’ needs. In their studies of “Understanding by Design,” educators Wiggins and McTighe have distilled curriculum development and lesson planning into an accessible methodology which serves by beginning with: “identifying desired results, then determining acceptable evidence and finally planning learning experiences and instruction.” (Wiggins, Understanding By Design, 2005, pp. 17-18) A feature of UbD includes asking “essential questions.” Lesson planning includes these questions which keep lessons anchored in curriculum: content, activities, formative and summative assessment, and reflection.

An area of concern in regards to lesson planning and educational research is an over-reliance on methodology. “Professors themselves are aware of the dichotomy between research and practice, as one commented: ‘They should not be separated but, shamefully, we very often see research results are not fed back into practice or vice versa.’ Meanwhile, local education officials see their jobs more as office work than supporting teachers in schools: as one said: ‘I’m very often skeptical about whether I was selected as an education professional or as an administration assistant’. The lessons from this study are that, no matter how well meaning in theory, government policies which fail to take account of the contextual realities of individuals’ working lives and which constrain their opportunities rather than support their choices, stand little chance of bringing about the desired ‘improvement’. Teacher educator/teacher agency is critical to effective professional development.” (Hayes, 2014 , pp. 13-14) While Wiggins, McTighe with UbD, and Ferlazzo provide effective approaches to lesson planning, effective teachers use their context to refine their practice, in addition to effective methods.

Purpose and Role of English Language Learner Inclusion

In addition to structured lesson plans “...teachers must thoughtfully plan ahead in order to generate meaningful examples and interactive experiences that do not unintentionally prevent ELLs from gaining access to them.” (Brown, 2011 , p. 35) There is much involved in keeping the examples and experiences meaningful, but even so there are limitations according to Krashen: “Even meaningful and communicative drills may have their limitations, however. Even if they manage to hit the "next" structure (i + 1), which is unlikely for all students in a given class, they may fail to provide enough input or be natural enough for language acquisition. Perhaps the correct generalization is that the best activities are those that are natural, interesting, and understood. When these requirements are met, and where there is a great deal of input of this nature, it may be the case that i+1 will "naturally" be covered and reviewed many times over, and progress in language acquisition will result.” (Krashen S. D., 2002, p. 104) The “natural” coverage referring to ELLs includes “recognizing [that] developmental aspects of learning serves the teacher and student relationship.” (Vygotsky, 1978)

Teachers in China are aware of the need for the creation of inclusive lesson planning and a variety of content-driven strategies to support both teachers and students. Research specific to China indicates how teachers appreciate a procedural approach to a content-driven (often story based) English lesson, which "usually includes 4–7 activities related to the content of each lesson. The teachers said that those instructional activities ‘help reach the objectives of teaching’ and provide some organizational ideas for teachers to consider in delivering the activities, such as ‘individual activity,’ ‘pair activity,’ ‘small group activity,’ and ‘whole group activity.’” (Huang, 2011 , p. 64)

Stephen Krashen concludes, “Routines and patterns may be very useful for establishing social relations and encouraging intake. They could conceivably serve as intake for the creative construction process. This intake, however, is probably insufficient for successful language acquisition.” He continues by saying, “But these systems enjoy the limited success they do because they also provide at least some intake for the creative construction process. More successful teaching systems expose second language acquirers to input in which routines and patterns play a minor, though significant role.” (Krashen S. D., 2002, p. 99)

Krashen goes on to observe three essential ingredients that create inclusion and the intake of information in a classroom: the teacher, the classroom instruction, and

peers. “There are several ways in which a classroom can promote language acquisition. Intake is available via meaningful and communicative activities supplied by the teacher; this is the most direct way the classroom can promote language acquisition. As we have seen, there are other ways in which the classroom can encourage acquisition: in second language situations, it can aid in the development of the foreign student peer group, which is quite possibly an important intermediate source of intake. What is considered the most essential component of language instruction, explicit information about the language, and mechanical drill, may be the least important contributions the second language classroom makes. Although I can certainly study grammar on my own, I would elect to attend a second language class if I were again abroad for some period of time in a country where I did not know the language; my intention would be to gain intake, from the teacher, the classroom exercises, and from my fellow students.” (Krashen S. D., 2002, p. 116) Krashen places great value on the context and peer involvement, while those involved in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) focus on the role of the instructor, subject matter, and the learner. Beyond emphasizing the importance that students “have ample opportunity to use the target language (English); to hear and see comprehensible English; and to read, write, and speak the new language within the context of subject matter learning,” Echevarria et al. stress “*the language must be meaningful.*” (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010)

Researchers looking at supporting English-Language Learners in high school social studies emphasize the challenge of implementation: “Effective methods of instructing ELLs are available, but implementation has challenges. Teachers often do not have enough time in the school day to plan, collaborate with colleagues, and rewrite curricular materials. School administrators and teachers often do not understand how to reach out effectively to parents and community members and across potential differences in language, culture, or social class to build strong home-school connections. Teacher educators need to integrate ELL pedagogy and curriculum into ongoing teacher-education programs in addition to serving as consultants to in-service teachers.” (Szpara, 2007, p.

194) This research emphasizes the value of including all stakeholders in conversations regarding the purpose and role of ELL inclusion in every level of education. Beyond the all-inclusive conversation, diversity training can enhance preparedness. “It is also recommended that pre-service teachers be provided with initial cultural diversity training to enhance their experiences interacting with students

from other cultures. Additionally, teachers need to understand the cultural diversities represented in the classroom and first be ready for the challenge. If teachers subscribe to the idea that all children (irrespective of their cultural differences) can achieve, their actions and expectations must reflect that noble belief.” (Keengwe, 2012 , p. 203)

Purpose and Role of Strategies to Teach Text-Driven Content (Bible)

Pierson notes that English for Bible and Theology faces challenges on both linguistic and cultural fronts. "The EBT classroom exists to supply non-native English speaking students of theology the language necessary to connect English theological content both to their own selves and their communities. This connection combats abstraction and rests upon communication. A language classroom is meant to be a place of interaction. It is a context where affect is positive and errors constitute necessary milestones on the path to proficiency. In turn, EBT courses allow non-native English speakers to interact with theological content in a nonthreatening and encouraging community." (Pierson, 2013 , p. 39) There is an invitation for thoughtfulness: “In turn, perhaps the most effective strategy in avoiding the cultural conflicts described above is to emphasize the implications that language learning holds for academic discourse. As such, a goal of any EBT curriculum must be the communication of meaning, in particular, the foundational meaning that theology provides. The notion that language study exists to enable communication between students and the global community rightly presumes that every student has something important to both give to and receive from this interaction. In addition, when students share information, they will acquire the platform to express meaning in a manner of their own choosing.” (Pierson, 2013 , p. 41)

These needs have given birth to the field of English for Bible and Theology (EBT), which exists to bring these students to the English proficiency necessary for their context of theological study. “EBT is an inherently interdisciplinary subject as the fields of language learning and theology must be merged, often across chasms of cultural divides. Furthermore, amidst the challenge of EBT, an exciting possibility has been identified. There is the possibility not only to enable theological learning, but also to enhance it. That is, through the pedagogy of communicative language teaching, there exists the opportunity for students to more personally engage theological curriculum, rendering the content more meaningful than it would

otherwise be, as they prepare to enter the global theological discussion.” (Pierson, 2013 , p. 47) While this research relates to graduate level learners, it is still pertinent to consider the communicative aspect and the connection to meaningful language component which can occur with learners of every age.

The subcultural aspects of religious diversity need to be considered as well, in that “Multilingual and multicultural aspects of EFL should thus be integrated into teacher education programs and should be further fostered and promoted as a value in EFL and teacher education classrooms. Multilingualism, multiculturalism, and diversity in the center of education present a challenge for EFL. They are changing the role (and identity) of the EFL teacher. As a result, education authorities need to provide quality training and integrated programs that offer knowledge (theoretical and practical), understanding, values, and subject specific and generic competences (intercultural being one of them).” (Kuhlman, 2014, p. 2) When it comes to the specific teaching of the Bible as a content- driven class for ELLs, one must recognize that “...the task of interpreting involves the student/reader at two levels. First one has to hear the word they heard; we must try to understand what was said to them back *then and there* (exegesis). Second, we must learn to hear that same word in the here and now (hermeneutics).” (Fee G. D., 2014)

Joyce Purdy, in the article “Inviting conversation: meaningful talk about texts for English language learners,” invites a deeper directive conversation, when read in the light of including content dense text, such as Scripture. “Acquisition of literacy encompasses more than individual growth; literacy happens in particular contexts, in particular ways and for particular purposes. This article has suggested ways to invite conversations about text for the benefit of ELL students: questioning, teaching vocabulary effectively and structuring situations where students can engage in collaborative talk. Permeating these suggestions is the importance of drawing upon the home culture of diverse learners.

Teachers need to see the gap between what is and what could be. One way to do this is to encourage EL students to share their first language and cultural stories.” (Purdy, 2008 , p.50)

While Bible classes taught to include ELLs does not specifically focus on language arts, there are ways which students may self-select to read scripture as a best possible outcome of methods more inclusive than direct instruction. “In short, it is likely that language arts will consist entirely of direct instruction, with no time for self-selected reading. However, focusing primarily on direct instruction in reading

conflicts with the massive research that shows direct teaching of aspects of literacy produces very limited results and that most of our literacy and academic language competence is the result of reading, especially self-selected reading.” (Krashen S. , 2014, p. 42)

Sean Banville, a notable ESL/EFL curriculum developer, shared a potential template for incorporating specific religious text into Bible class lesson plans. His method, which uses news articles, includes many of the best practices for language acquisition. This approach involves many opportunities and ways to listen, speak, read and write, with and for peers and the instructor. Each aspect of involvement with the content adds layers of meaning to two paragraphs of text. When applied to Scripture passages, this has the potential to engage thoughtfulness and imagination on the part of both the instructor and the student.

Summary

When creating better ELL inclusive lesson plans and corresponding activities, participants in the educational setting can continually converse to create practices that better serve ELLs in a text-driven classroom environment. Creating learner-centered lesson plans with strategies to include ELLs is a collaborative process and an ongoing conversation between all stakeholders. Implementing practices to help ELLs access language when studying content dense text (such as philosophical, ethical, moral and religious vocabulary taken in Bible classes) requires ongoing development to serve both cultural and academic needs in a variety of contexts. When teachers are able to imagine and create accessible content for ELLs at various levels (Teach Thought Staff, 2013) ongoing practices and disciplines of creativity will emerge. "Elementary teachers recognize that they must provide more challenging and meaningful instruction to prepare their students for secondary schools. Mainstream content teachers in middle and high schools, having seen the many English learners spilling out of ESL or sheltered classrooms and into theirs, want to do what is right for all students. What these teachers need today from the nation’s schools are the structures and support that will enable them to move in these directions. Without better support for teachers, we cannot expect better student outcomes." (Calderón, 2011, pp. 118-119)

While foreign languages have always been offered in better schools, developing in many sectors is the demand for English as a medium of instruction in the K-12 setting. While there is the challenge of contextualization of content, methodologies

continue to serve a purpose in spite of recent changes. “The last decade has seen a turning away from the idea of methods as an organizational framework for research, analysis, and identity in the field of ESL. One way of describing this movement is to frame it in terms of a shift from the previous paradigm to a newer one. Two things are implied here; first, that the newer developments are in opposition to the old, and second, that there is an abandonment of one for the other. However, it may be more useful to view later developments as expansions of the previous ways of thought rather than as a departure.

Such an expansion allows for a much richer understanding of the underlying dynamics, involving a contextualization that seems to have been missing by the previous constraining a priori nature of the methods model. It also allows us to keep that which is of real value from the vestiges as method fades into the past. We are then allowed far more flexibility in modifying programs at each decisional level, whether institutional/curricular, instructional/syllabus, research, or even text writing. Adjustments that were not really attainable previously can also be made over time.” (Britto, 2007, pp. 82-83) As one looks to the future of fuller inclusion of English language learners in globalized academic settings, hopefully there will be an expanding horizon of possibilities for both teacher creativity and for the learners’ capacity to enrich all participants in school settings.

CHAPTER THREE: INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN MODEL

The Instructional Design Model endorsed and promoted by the Cairn University School of Education and detailed in this paper was developed by Peter J. Dean and Martha Ray Dean (1994). It is purposed to provide educators with a structured framework for crafting effective learning experiences. Instructional design covers all of the significant aspects of the instructional process in order to facilitate an orderly approach to designing instruction including measurable outcomes. This summative process covers all stages—from the initial planning to the final evaluation—of the learning experience. The stages, which Dean and Dean (1994) have identified and will be described in detail in this chapter, are as follows:

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to itemize and explain the ten steps to the instructional design model as proposed by Dean and Dean (1994). These steps provide a coherent framework around which effective instruction is developed. Each mutually inclusive step contributes to the overall task of developing an effective,

meaningful learning experience to a specific audience, which is the goal of this instructional project.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what the researcher has done in designing and implementing the Instructional Design Model endorsed and promoted by the Cairn University School of Education and developed by Peter J. Dean and Martha Ray Dean (1994). In addition to the Model, the researcher has included facets of learning from the coursework of Cairn University’s Masters of Science in Education.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to itemize and explain the ten steps to the instructional design model proposed by Dean and Dean (1994) as undertaken by the instructor of this workshop. These steps were created to provide a structure for others to review the goals and implementation of this instruction as developed for this context. The outlined steps sought to clarify the various tasks undertaken to create a useful learning experience for a specific audience in a specific setting. It was hoped that this approach would contribute to the ongoing professional development and continuing conversations between teachers regarding creating lesson plans using text-based content (Bible) to best serve ELLs.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reflects the evaluation of the designer's creation and implementation of the *Lesson Planning Strategies for English Language Learners* (ELLs) Instructional Design Project (IDP). The purpose is to provide a summary and review of the processes of the instructional design project. The author will review the purpose of the instruction’s objectives for the intended audience. In addition to conclusions and recommendations, the author will offer suggestions for future workshops on similar content for other audiences.

Summary of Purpose

The goal driving this IDP was a desire to better serve families who prioritize their child's acquisition of English by entrusting this task to an international school with a biblically-based Western approach to content. It was hoped that by providing

these teachers with lesson planning strategies specific to ELL needs in the content area of Bible, their skills in this area would be strengthened. Some of the specific objectives included the introduction and review of “Backward Design” lesson planning, an explanation of the local and online resources available, as well as some activities and assessments to reinforce the content.

The instructor’s varied teaching experiences in several cultural settings, studies with professors and classmates at Cairn University, and conversations with administration, teachers, and students revealed the need for using text-based content for ELLs and was the impetus of the IDP. A review of literature and a consideration of the research revealed the lack of training new teachers are given in spite of the growth of this specific need. In addition to the lack of teacher support, there is some controversy regarding how to best to serve ELL needs. Within the research, resources for teaching text-dense content such as Bible did address the cross-cultural needs of the international constituency this workshop sought to serve. Therefore the instructor created an ELL- supportive, activity-based template, using the Bible passage Psalm 23. This, along with an outline of lesson planning and essential TESL practices, terminology and resources, gave workshop participants strategies to address the vocabulary and cultural comprehension deficit often faced in Bible class. As global economies continue to overlap and expand, providing global educators strategies for both lesson planning and the inclusion of ELLs with text-driven content, such as Bible, has the potential for continued usefulness if crafted and refined to target the K-12 setting. While the priority for families may be English language acquisition, the philosophy of education in this specific setting includes a Biblically focused worldview. With some of the strategies this IDP touched upon, there was potential to serve the multiple priorities and perspectives of families (from varied faith traditions) as well as those of the teachers, administrators and the organizations overseeing standards and accreditation needs.

Conclusions

The instructor felt the target audience appreciated the information shared, yet could see how several elements of implementation might have added additional value to the workshop. Having one session of three hours would have best served the informational aspects around lesson planning, an overview of available TESL resources, and the activities based on the "Timeless Wisdom" template. While the feedback was mostly positive, this may have been based on covering similar content

three times in a row, adjusting for teacher grade level. The workshop instructor appreciated the audience participation, yet recognized how vast the topic and the significance of even a minor move toward the objectives. In subsequent conversations, four teachers were specific in saying they were already including one strategy taken from the workshop. This seemed to be a small yet significant step towards reaching objectives.

The first session was the shortest of the three, yet seemed to have the liveliest conversations between teachers during paired activities. The content of the workshop seemed to stimulate a collaborative conversational tone for the duration of the workshop. Based on feedback, the instructor was able to adjust the timing of the presentation and the PowerPoint to better serve the following sessions. Using the web-based Prezi (Prezi, 2015) rather than PowerPoint might have added a measure of dynamism, a consideration for potential future presentations. Time restraints and setting did not allow for the web-based software's steep learning curve. Some tools that would have been helpful for this group were additional books from the ESOL department, examples of an “alternative way to improve their [student] vocabulary and reading comprehension” taken from Rewordify (Rewordify, 2015), as well as lesson plan samples and assessment tools from Brainpop (Brain Pop ESL Placement, 2015). These additions would have pushed the workshop past the hour allowed.

The second session served teachers educating the least literate, preschool through grade one, so activities surrounding Psalm 23 were directed towards picture associations, role plays, age appropriate texts and the creation of conversations between students. With this group, adding an introduction to web-based resources would have served well. Also of value would have included a current Bible lesson plan along with a modified one, followed by spending a few moments writing a lesson plan. The third session was the initial audience for whom the workshop was targeted. The content seemed to best serve the needs of teachers working with middle and high school students. It was useful to show how essential questions can be tapped to redirect and remind students of life-long learning outcomes and how language acquisition activities can have obvious links to critical thinking, role plays, question-and-answers, surveys and academic writing. Modeling how these activities link to other subjects was a reminder of best practices and collaborative education. Recognizing how these specific activities not only supported ELLs but served Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs) kept the audience engaged. Once again, it would have been optimal to use examples of an “alternative way to improve

their [student] vocabulary and reading comprehension” taken from Rewordify (Rewordify, 2015). This resource, along with digital copies of all components of the IDP and a certificate of completion, was sent to all seminar attendees in a follow-up email.

Recommendations for the Future

Upon reflection, the instructor learned much while preparing for and presenting the Instructional Design Project. One of the bigger surprises was discovering how little teacher training some teachers have received for serving ELLs’ needs. It was also interesting to find out the school reflected, in a micro-cosmic way, the struggles being faced in serving ELLs in Burundi. The ongoing and challenging conversations around bilingual education and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010) is evidenced in many new programs and strategic planning meetings at Bujumbura International School. The recommendations for refining the content of this workshop fall into three categories. First, being clear on the possibilities intrinsic to implementing incremental lesson planning strategies rather than being overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. One way to do this would be to ask each teacher to share examples of past successes in serving ELLs, accessing prior knowledge. This could be done by using a preliminary survey along the lines of *Know, Want to Know, Learned* (K-W-L (Know, Want to Know, Learned) Ogle, 1986, 2015). Second, using more dynamic audiovisual presentation components, such as Prezi (Prezi, 2015), or using the audio feature within PowerPoint to highlight the value of repeated speech when helping achieve vocabulary and pronunciation goals. Finally, it would have been best to present the content in a three- hour block at a different time of day or to find substitutes to cover all classes and admissions assessments that coincided with the workshop. It would also have been more effective to have a conference room rather than a classroom, as set-up would have been smoother with more time. With additional presentation opportunities, some of these preparation elements may decrease. Later in the week the administration asked if there had been a video or audio recording of the event, with the hope that it could be used for subsequent professional development. This suggestion would help with pacing the material and delivery.

The most pronounced lessons the instructor learned through the implementation of this IDP was around scheduling. It was more difficult than anticipated to find a time and format suitable for the school, the teachers, and the facilitator. Conversations began in October, yet dates were not finalized until very near the time

of presentation. This element seemed to reflect the context and the nature of relationships. While this may not be a major factor in other settings, it will be a serious consideration if future opportunities arise for future workshop presentations. The main element the instructor would change is to continually strive to make the learning more student-centered. It would be valuable to allow time for all attendees to present content and lesson planning strategies that work in their classrooms. Perhaps because of the PowerPoint and some of the resources presented, the classroom dynamic was more “sage on the stage” than “guide on the side” (Hovious, 2013). Striking a balance between the progressive and the traditional

approaches to sharing information would better serve the communicative nature of serving ELLs. The facilitator would invite English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) specialists in attendance to present a component of the instruction to model a collaborative “push-in,” modeling teaching and potential components useful in this setting. Teachers need to know that ESOL specialists can provide additional strategies in a variety of areas, such as assessment/exam modifications, beyond the specific grades they are serving. Wuhan Yangtze International School (WYIS) is fortunate to have seven ESOL specialists, three of which are part-time, serving over 200 students. In the future, the instructor could see how either extending the seminar time or distilling the content would better serve most audiences, especially the national staff who attended the seminar. It was encouraging to hear positive comments by two national staff on strategies now being used to better teach France lessons. Crafting content and comparing favorite strategies for lesson planning and learning English would have provided valuable additional insight into the variety of methods used to deliver English as a Foreign Language in a variety of settings.

One thing that could be eliminated from future presentations is the paper handouts. If each participant came with a laptop, they could “in real time” adapt the content files sent to them upon committing to attend the seminar. A significant piece to add would be an Edmodo (EDMODO, 2015) environment which has useful and wide applications, and which the school already uses for middle school technology integration classes. The most significant changes to the presentation would be around resources and implementation. Framing the possibilities as opportunities to better serve students while enhancing one’s own digital teaching portfolio, while ambitious, seems a way to invigorate “buy-in” of better teaching practices across disciplines. The instructor believes that giving teachers of ELLs practical and effective lesson planning strategies has the potential to show students, through teacher example, how life-long

learning is made real through practices which use a variety of resources and strategies, especially with classes where it is crucial to find meaning in Biblical text.

Unforeseen time constraints, such as three one-hour sessions over one three-hour session, required distilling information in what seemed like helpful ways. The varied styles of instruction and assessment seemed to serve most participants. The author recognized several points that might have been better served. The inclusion of a “spelling scramble” as an example of “what not to do” could have been left out as it diluted the usefulness of the surrounding information. Having audio recordings of the Bible passages would have enhanced the PowerPoint presentation. Additional graphic organizers for the "Reverse Design" may also have served well. If more processing time and performance assessments were included, the workshop could have covered a 3-hour session. Given another context and the full three-hour session, the instructor would extend an invitation to interested parents to attend the training as either participants or observers.

Summary

It is the workshop facilitator’s opinion that the IDP implementation and post-presentation conclusions underscore the value of providing information and professional development opportunities specific to context. The specific need seen and addressed in this IDP targeted teachers serving a significant number of ELLs. The content examples and lesson planning strategies were taken from Biblical text, yet could be applied to any text-dense subject. The provision of additional strategies were embraced and implemented by workshop participants.

It also seemed that resources for future lesson planning implementation would be resourced in an on-going way. The author reflected on the presentations and saw several areas for improvement, as well as components that met objectives. The notable changes include more dynamic presentation tools as well as collaborative teaching possibilities both with national staff and other ESOL specialists. IDP learner objectives were met and the instructor came to better understand the IDP process. This process included literature review, planning and implementation of instruction, assessment activities, and evaluation of the presentation. This evaluation process will inform ongoing professional development for the instructor in an effort to better serve students, co-workers and employers both in the present and future.

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