

CETL Capstone Project
Faculty Certificate Program
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Assessment and Case Studies

While the CETL program did not specifically address using case studies as part of the assessment process, we did talk extensively about both topics. These conversations inspired me to attempt to use the concept of case studies in the midterm assessment for my spring semester TESL Methods course. For this section of the test, students were to read a case study and do some problem solving around one of the cases and then use that same case to write an approach to conducting a needs analysis.

Essay #1

Choose one of the following questions and write a complete essay. In your answer, discuss specific reflective teaching techniques (at least 2) that would be helpful in solving your problem along with your reasons for choosing those techniques over others. Try to anticipate some problems you might have in implementing those techniques and a plan for avoiding those problems.

1. Imagine you are an ESL teacher in a K-6 pull-out program in rural Minnesota. You work with approximately 30 students on a weekly basis (most of the students work with you in small groups a few days each week and most of those students are in 1-3 grades. You have 3 4th graders and 1 kindergartener.). This year a new student has come to the district in 6th grade. She has been in the country for about a year in another school district. She speaks English quite well, but often displays gaps in her listening ability. She reads at about a 2nd grade level and her writing is plagued by grammar mistakes to the point that it is often difficult to gain meaning from any writing that is longer than one or two sentences. You have been trying to work on her science and social studies with her through using class materials in your sessions (30 minutes, 4 days per week). You have spoken with the teacher a few times and she says that the student is very pleasant and seems to be understanding classes. At the mid-term, however, you discover that while she is getting A's on most of her homework, she is failing all of the tests. How would you figure out what is going on for this student and if you should be changing your methods and/or if the teachers needs to change the assessment methods and/or other changes that might need to be made.

2. Imagine you are an ESL teacher in an adult basic education program in rural Minnesota. Your class consists of approximately 10 students two nights a week for 1 ½ hours each night. Most of your students are working at least one full-time job and have families but hope to gain a level of proficiency that will offer them more economic opportunities. They are all somewhat recent immigrants/refugees and are all in a range of high beginning to intermediate levels of English. You are trying to implement a theme-based curriculum based on the students' perceived interests. The students seem to be enjoying the class while they are there, but usually only 4-5 students show up to class each night and often you only have 2-3 students – and rarely the same group. Because of this lack of attendance, you have a difficult time feeling like you are making any real progress. How would you figure out what is going on for these students and if you need to make changes in your class and/or in the program (for the future) and/or other possible areas of need.

3. Imagine you are a 9-12 EFL teacher in Japan. You teach 5 sections of EFL for an hour a day. You have one class of advanced beginners in 9th grade. There are approximately 40 students in that class. You have been working on developing the students' interpersonal communication skills by having them work in small groups, doing role plays, and holding class discussions on topics that you hope will interest them. You are noticing that most of the students don't participate at all during the whole group discussion. Your principal has indicated that she thinks it is very important to have some whole group instruction/discussion so you cannot simply drop the activity. How would you figure out what is going on for these students and how you can engage all the students in a whole class discussion or convince the principal otherwise.

Short answer #1 (approximately 1 paragraph). If you wanted to conduct a program reevaluation (needs analysis) for one of the above programs, what kinds of questions/instruments do you think would be most valuable and why?

While some of my students produced stellar responses to these questions, many others relied more on their previous experience and common sense than on our classroom learning to answer the questions. Because of the wide range of responses to these questions and the difficulty in assigning a grade to responses that might be reasonable responses but that didn't reflect classroom learning, I decided to be more directed in what I asked them to do in the second semester. As a side note, I was actually surprised by the number of students who attempted to answer these questions without any reference whatsoever to our readings or classroom discussion! Furthermore, I decided that they could come up with the specifics of the case study

as part of the question format. For both quizzes, I gave the students a review sheet ahead of time and allowed them to use a one page cheat sheet.

1. Imagine you are an ESL/EFL teacher in a specific context (of your own creation) and must take a leave of absence (3 months). The school is hiring a long term sub, but because of the specific circumstances of your situation (the actual circumstances are not relevant here), you will have no face-to-face contact with the new hire. You want to write out very detailed notes about your students as well as specific methods that you have found useful. You also decide that you want to encourage the new hire to use those methods, so you will include a rationale for each suggestion you make.

Write the notes on as many students as is necessary (1 is fine with me if you can do it!) to include all of the following terms and concepts:

terms

experiential learning, negotiation, Communicative language teaching (CLT), invisible culture, incidental vocabulary learning, collocations, extensive reading, grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence

For Licensure folks

Please also use the following terms
Efferent reading, Aesthetic reading

For Non-licensure folks

Please also use the following terms
lexical phrases, washback

concepts

vocabulary learning strategies, explicit vs. implicit vocabulary teaching, developing fluency with vocab, activities that promote classroom interaction (speaking), structured/guided discussion vs. a heuristic approach to classroom discussion, three modes of listening, transactional vs. interactional language, *listen and do* instructional format, self-access/self-study listening resources

For Licensure folks

Please also use the following concepts
Group Reading Inventory (GRI), comprehensible input and oral language development activities suggested in Peregoy and Boyle.

For Non-licensure folks

Please also use the following concepts
project work, 2nd culture learning/teaching

Extra Credit

narrow reading vs. wide reading

Please underline the terms when you use them, and write the concepts in the margins where you have referred to them. I, of course, assume that if you were actually writing to a long-term sub, you would discuss more than the topics listed here (certainly you would also be teaching writing, etc...) but don't try to fit any of the extra in. The task I've actually given you here will be challenging enough!

The responses for this second assessment were overall of a much higher quality and really reflected their understanding and ability to apply classroom learning. The essays were very exciting to read and required students to really synthesize and apply what they had been learning! This second essay format really provided an opportunity to get a glimpse into my students' futures as teachers and see what information they would be able to apply.

The distressing part of the midterm from this semester was that some of the students did very poorly, 4 students got either a D or an F on this quiz (grading explained later in analysis). Students were given the chance, though, with this midterm, to redo the test as a take-home test. I think this gave them the opportunity to see how much of the class they were missing, but then learn the material later. The original test also gave me the opportunity to see how many students weren't learning the specific material (I do believe they were learning a great deal even though they weren't gaining control of the vocabulary needed to articulate their learning, but that is a different question.) or weren't able to articulate that knowledge appropriately. I think that next year I will do more, smaller quizzes of this same sort.

The grading of the first midterm was also very difficult and I needed to come up with a new strategy for the second semester. The following rubric shows the rubric I used. I gave student one point for simply mentioning the term or concept and making an attempt to apply it. I gave a range of between 1 and 3 points for using the term/concept appropriately (1 point = not exactly right, but close, 2 points = right, but vague, 3 points = clear and right on the mark). And finally, I gave students 1 point for going above and beyond a clear use of the word. I was fairly generous with this "extra" point and counted a point for a range of answers such as specific examples, activities that targeted specific concepts, etc....

Terms

<p>1.Collocations <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>2.Communicative language teaching (CLT) <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>3.Competence grammatical competence <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond discourse competence <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond sociolinguistic competence <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond strategic competence <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>4.Experiential learning <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>5.Extensive reading <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>6.Incidental vocabulary learning <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>7.Invisible culture <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>8.Negotiation <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p>	<p>For Licensure folks</p> <p>9.Aesthetic reading <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>10.Efferent reading <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>For Non-licensure folks</p> <p>9.Lexical phrases <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>10.Washback <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate use of term <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p>
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concepts

<p>1.Activities that promote classroom interaction (speaking) <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>2.Developing fluency with vocab <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>3.Explicit vs. implicit vocabulary teaching <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>4.<i>Listen and do</i> instructional format <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>5.Self-access/self-study listening resources <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>6.Structured/guided discussion vs. a heuristic approach to classroom discussion <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>7.Three modes of listening <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>8.Transactionl vs. interactional language <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>9.Vocabulary learning strategies <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p>	<p>For Licensure folks</p> <p>10.Group Reading Inventory (GRI), <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>11.Comprehensible input and oral language development activities suggested in Peregoy and Boyle <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>For Non-licensure folks</p> <p>10.Project work <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>11.2nd culture learning/teaching <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p> <p>Extra Credit</p> <p>1.Narrow reading vs. wide reading <input type="checkbox"/> included <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate description of concept <input type="checkbox"/> above and beyond</p>
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In the end, I was very happy with the results of this quiz and will continue to use the format, but, as I mentioned earlier, I will use this format more frequently over smaller amounts of material. Some of the students complained about the format in the second semester as being “unexpected” and “too hard.” I think that the “unexpected” comment might be valid because I was too easy (unintentionally) during the first semester quiz. They expected to get away with

writing from prior experience instead of actually studying and learning the terms and concepts we were covering! I'm hoping that next year I can prepare students to expect such exams and take them without cheat sheets by the end of the course. I think students learn a lot by making a cheat sheet, but I think with type of exam over smaller amounts of material, they would gain control over the terms and concepts as the semester progressed. As for the comment that it was "too hard," I am less likely to take that into consideration – especially given the fact that a majority of the students received As and Bs. Perhaps having more, smaller quizzes, though, would help even those students see the amount of work as more manageable!