

## The methods course revisited: From a skills-based to multiliteracies approach

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### I. Sample Methods Course Calendar

RR = Reading reaction; TR = Teaching reflection

WEEK	TUESDAY SESSIONS	WORK FOR TUESDAY SESSION	THURSDAY SESSIONS	WORK FOR THURSDAY SESSION
1	<b>SEP 6</b> <i>Introduction: FRE 820 &amp; course materials/website</i>	---	<b>SEP 8</b> Workshop: Oral communication & designing communicative tasks	Week 1 readings; Blog #1 (RR); Bring to class: Your textbook & homework calendar
2	<b>SEP 13</b> <i>Getting the lay of the land: Teaching collegiate FL learners in 2011</i>	Week 2 readings, Blog #2 (RR)	<b>SEP 15</b> Workshop: Minimizing communicative breakdown by elementary-level FL learners	
3	<b>SEP 20</b> <i>Critiques of communicative language teaching, a place for literacy-oriented instruction in the lower-level FL curriculum?</i>	Week 3 readings, Blog #3 (RR)	<b>SEP 22</b> Workshop: Best practices in the use of textbook materials in the classroom	Blog # 4 (TR)
4	<b>SEP 27</b> <i>Teaching FL grammar through texts</i>	Week 4 readings, Blog # 5 (RR)	<b>SEP 29</b> Workshop: Teaching FL grammar through texts	

<b>5</b>	<b>OCT 4</b> Lesson Study 1: Preparation Phase Part One  (Learning to conduct observations)	Week 5 readings, Blog # 6 (RR)	<b>OCT 6</b> Lesson Study 1: Preparation Phase Part Two  (Collaborative planning)	Blog #7 (TR);  Bring to class: Materials for Lesson Study
<b>6</b>	<b>OCT 11</b> Lesson Study 1: Teaching/Observing Phase  (NO SESSION TODAY)	Lesson Study Preparation (teacher or observer role)	<b>OCT 13</b> Lesson Study 1: Presenting/Revising Phase	Lesson Study Analysis; Blog #8 (TR – on Lesson Study 1);  Preparation for Lesson Study 1 Group Presentation
<b>7</b>	<b>OCT 18</b> <i>Working with non-literary texts in the elementary FL classroom</i>	Week 7 readings, Blog #9 (RR)	<b>OCT 20</b> Workshop: Working with non-literary FL texts	
<b>8</b>	<b>OCT 25</b> <i>Scaffolding learning with literary texts in the elementary FL classroom</i>	Week 8 readings, Blog # 10 (RR)	<b>OCT 27</b> Workshop: Scaffolding learning with literary FL texts	Blog #11 (TR)
<b>9</b>	<b>NOV 1</b> <i>Working with audio and video texts in the elementary FL classroom</i>	Week 9 readings, Blog #12 (RR)	<b>NOV 3</b> Lesson Study 2: Preparation Phase (Collaborative planning)	
<b>10</b>	<b>NOV 8</b> Lesson Study 2: Teaching/Observing Phase  (NO SESSION TODAY)	Lesson Study Preparation (teacher or observer role)	<b>NOV 10</b> Lesson Study 2: Presenting/Revising Phase	Lesson Study Analysis; Blog #13 (TR – on Lesson Study 2); Preparation-Lesson Study 1 Group Presentation

<b>11</b>	<b>NOV 15</b> <i>Teaching writing to elementary-level FL learners: A genre-based approach</i>	Week 11 readings, Blog #14 (RR)	<b>NOV 17</b> Workshop: Teaching FL writing using a genre-based approach	
<b>12</b>	<b>NOV 22</b> <i>Integrating technology meaningfully in the elementary FL classroom</i>	Week 12 readings, Blog # 15 (RR)	<b>NOV 24</b> <i>THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS</i>	
<b>13</b>	<b>NOV 29</b> <i>Linking FL instruction and assessment</i>	Week 13 readings, Blog # 16 (RR)	<b>DEC 1</b> Workshop: Designing communicative, literacy-oriented assessment	Blog # 17 (TR)
<b>14</b>	<b>DEC 6</b> <b>Written Assessment</b>	Review for Written Assessment	<b>DEC 8</b> Workshop: Creating an Instructional Unit Portfolio	Bring to class: Instructional unit materials
<b>15</b>	<b>DEC 13</b> Individual conferences on Instructional Unit Portfolio <b>(NO SESSION)</b>	Prepare Instructional Unit Portfolio	<b>DEC 15</b> Conclusions	Blog #18 (TR), Prepare Instructional Unit Portfolio

## II. Sample Reading Reaction --Teaching Visual Texts

Posted on November 1, 2011

Swaffer and Vlatten's 1997 article on sequencing video viewing in the foreign language curriculum poses a model for using visual texts as a tool for instruction in the foreign language classroom. Bueno's 2009 article demonstrates a practical application of a similar model for using visual texts in the classroom with a feature film, *Yerma*, in an advanced Spanish class, while supporting the choices made for presentation of material with other studies and theories. Both articles start with an overview about the possible uses of visual texts and the state of visual texts in today's foreign language curriculum. For Swaffer and Vlatten, visual texts provide an important multisensory medium for listening comprehension; however, visual texts are often neglected because of instructor apprehension or technological ineptitude (1997, p. 175-176). All authors agree on the value of visual texts in providing extra contextualization for meaning making. Bueno especially emphasizes the importance of media literacy for students to talk meaningfully about visual texts in highlighting their literary, not entertainment, value (2009, p. 322) Swaffer and Vlatten propose five steps for sequencing tasks related to videos in order to limit cognitive overload in students: 1) silent viewing to make predictions about genre 2) silent viewing to examine cultural differences 3) viewing with sound to pick up major linguistic ideas 4) viewing with sounds to specify micro linguistic ideas and 5) self-expression related to video in foreign language, about the foreign language culture, or both (1997). This scaffolding of interpretation activities provides students with a means to access a text that may otherwise seem overwhelming. Both articles stress the importance of global comprehension before detailed comprehension or language production, so these strategies give students the tools they need to gain understanding and make meaning of the text. At the same time, Bueno claims that comprehension should become fuller as students progress in order to meet language goals (2009, p. 331). If this is true, how do students move from basic comprehension to deep comprehension of the text? At what point is this detailed scaffolding no longer necessary?

Swaffer and Vlatten also posit that the earlier sequencing steps should apply more to beginners and that the later sequencing steps should apply more to advanced learners (2009, p.182). If this is the case, are beginning students never asked to do more with the language than comprehend major themes? Are micro level details inappropriate for these learners? Likewise, are silent viewings no longer of any value to the more advanced foreign language students? Does focusing on the earlier or later steps just mean that more time should be allotted for consideration of those steps and all of them should be used at all levels? Will all of these steps always be used in some capacity for every text? While I think this model is based on some very important ideas, there are still many things that I am not completely clear about. I see the value of each of the sequence steps in helping students manage the task of comprehending an authentic spoken text—especially the silent viewings that help students to focus on the main ideas without becoming overwhelmed by the stimuli; however, I am not totally sure of how these steps play out in classroom instruction. Do all of these steps happen within one lesson in class? Over multiple weeks in class? Partially outside of class? The model seems rather flexible with regard to scheduling, but the flexibility also leaves some ambiguity in what this model practically looks like.

### III. Sample Teaching Reflection – Co-construction

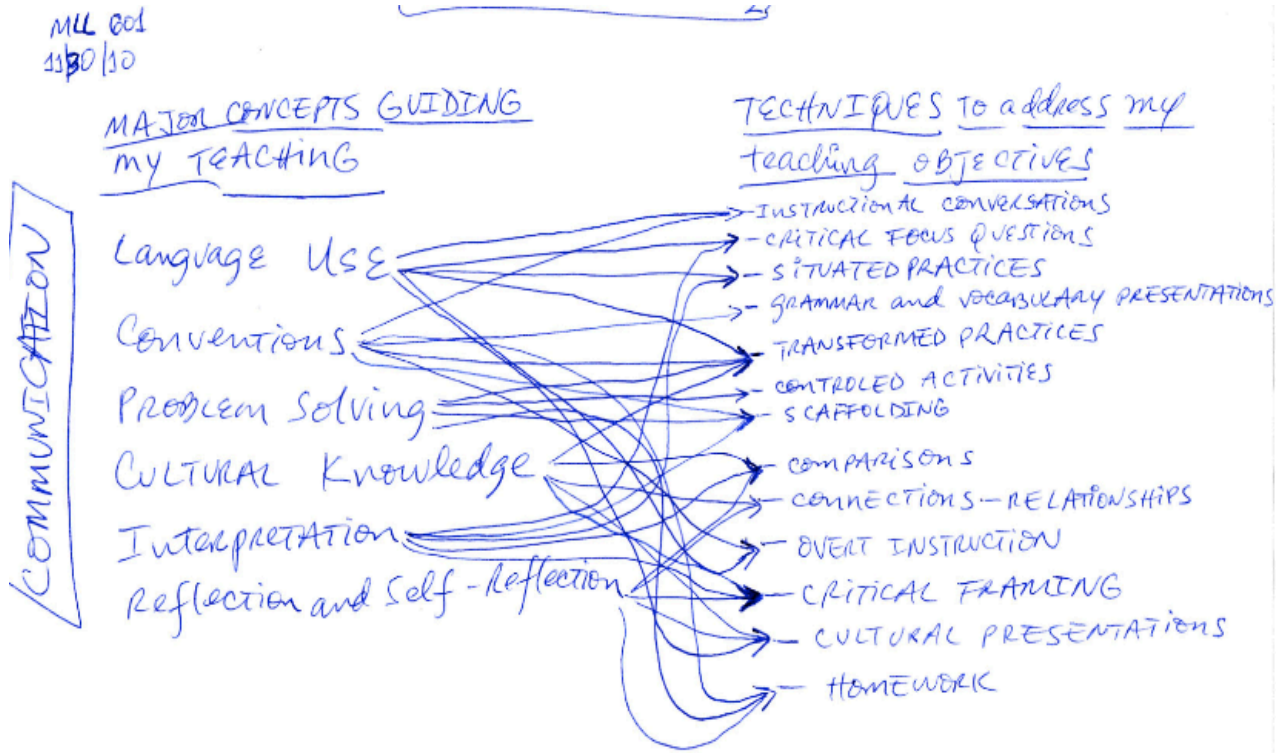
Posted on October 5, 2011

So far, I've found the PACE model to be most helpful to me. Perhaps I'm finally getting into a groove, but the idea of co-construction (actually more of a reminder for me, but this time with an « official » label on it) has been a spark of inspiration, for lack of a better term. While an entire PACE lesson does take up a lot of time, I've been able to minimize the time spent on pre-reading activities by having them overlap into discussions from a previous class. Also, I've opted for the presentation phase on being no more than 10 minutes of individual reading. I felt that when I read the articles that the presentation phase was taking away from students actually applying themselves to *reading* the text, as opposed to just *reviewing* and checking it to see if the teacher truly told (2-3 times) the same story. Getting over those two humps allowed me to concentrate on the teaching, or rather the self- or peer-teaching, of grammar that ultimately gets tested in quizzes.

Although co-construction has been a great tool to keep in mind, the times that I've used it so far have not been as successful as I hoped; many students were finding, or guessing at, « patterns » of structure that I wasn't targeting. For example, I tried to create two lists for how to use « dans » and « avec, » hoping that the most obvious pattern was that « dans » uses objects (maison, appartement, résidence universitaire) and « avec » uses people (mon colocataire, ma mère, mon copain, etc.) in the case of the « annonces » from [cherchecoloc.com](http://cherchecoloc.com). To my surprise, students were trying to find patterns in the other parts of the text, many of which were « être » plus adjective. While it was nice to have the students noticing something else and therefore being engaged and brainstorming patterns, it wasn't along the vein I had hoped and I therefore had to guide them back to « dans » and « avec » several times. In the end, it was okay and we got everything done, but it does make me nervous for the days when I feel I have a little less time to shove everything in.

I will definitely try to use co-construction again because I think it is the most immediately useful learning method for students with grades in mind, but it also seems to be a far better way to learn grammar and *retain* it. It seems like the closest process yet to how I eventually committed to memory so much grammar. Through tutoring another student, I actually made sense of all the rules I had been taught over and over again but never retained. I think co-construction is similar in that students have to think about how grammar works in order to figure out the rule instead of just memorizing the rule and realizing how it works later. So, inspiring is not the right word, but maybe it's a concept that lets me see a slightly brighter light at the end of the tunnel.

#### IV. Sample Concept Map



## **V. Sample "Key Concepts" for Written Summative Assessment (Weeks 1-8)**

### **Oral communicative tasks ("Speaking" online module from University of Texas COERLL materials):**

guided practice, communicative task, communicative competence (features), information gap task, discourse, dialogue, utterance, negotiation / negotiated interaction

### **National Standards (2006):**

Five goal areas (or "five Cs"), The three modes of communication from the Communication goal area, The three "Ps" of culture from the Cultures goal area

### **ACTFL Speaking & Writing Guidelines:**

functional competency, the four levels of proficiency

### **MLA 2007 Report:**

instrumentalist vs. constitutive focus of language study, the two-tiered system or two-track model, translingual & transcultural competence, integrated (undergraduate) curriculum

### **MLJ Perspectives (2006):**

audiolingual approach, communicative competence (limitations), CLT

### **Kern (2008):**

Texts, language as social semiotic (Halliday, 1978), the goals of reading & writing with a 'Connections' framework

### **Allen & Paesani (2010):**

literacy - definition (Kern, 2000), seven principles of literacy (Kern, 2000), design (New London Group, 1996), available designs (New London Group, 1996), four curricular components (New London Group, 1996)

### **Adair-Hauck & Donato (2002)**

PACE model, schemata

Scaffolding, TPS (think, pair, share), graphic organizers, sociocultural theory (Vygotskian) approach to teaching and learning

### **Paesani (2005)**

deductive vs. inductive approach, bottom-up, top-down and interactive reading models, schemata, steps in Paesani's model for teaching grammar inductively through literary texts

### **Kern (2000) Ch. 4 & 5**

reading as meaning design, interpretive constraints, (readers as part of an) interpretive community, the notion of apprenticeship, DRTA (directed reading thinking activity), mapping, dialogic transformation

### **Swaffar & Arens (2005) Ch. 3 & 4**

readability, bottom up versus top down reading processes (Ch. 4), text matrix

### **Maxim (2006)**

5-step reading model (pre-reading + four sequential steps)