

How to be effective at teaching and learning

Profession, Teacher



Introduction In this assignment I will discuss the roles, responsibilities and relationships in lifelong learning as described in Ann Gravels' book, *Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. I use my experiences of teaching abroad to clarify how the various theories and aspects of teaching affected my own role in adult teaching.

1. Roles and Responsibilities in lifelong learning

Role and responsibilities and Identifying and meeting needs (1.3/1.) Gravels (2012) states that the main role of a teacher is to teach a subject in such way that all students are actively involved during every session. By using clear language and terms that are understandable for all students, the teacher ensures the learning that takes place. Managing students from the beginning of the course to completion by monitoring progress, providing feedback and keeping accurate records is the final part of the being a teacher. A teacher is also responsible for keeping up to date with the latest developments and changes in their field.

In order to be effective at teaching and learning, a teacher has to address all the phases of the teaching cycle (Gravels, 2012: POP): In my own role as a language tutor at the Dutch Flemish Institute in Cairo, I was involved in all stages of this cycle. At the registration day for the course, students had to complete a registration form and have an interview. The application form could give an indication of potential literacy/learning issues, for example when students had someone else fill out the form, or had spelling problems.

The interview was simultaneously a tool to check whether the English level of the students was sufficient as well as a way of finding out what motivated the student and discuss the application form and course.

Step 1: Identifying needs

Before the start of the programme, I would check all my teaching

materials and go over the entire syllabus while using the evaluation of the former course to see if any adaptations to the lesson plan needed to be made. For example replace exercises that did not work with others or skip all together, replace grammar explanations that did not explain well for others.

A teacher needs to be up to date on the latest developments and changes in their subject field, and adapt the course accordingly. (Step 2: Planning Learning) Before the start of sessions I prepared the room, checked materials were resented and audio-visual equipment was working. During the sessions my lesson plan guided me through all the topics that needed to be covered. I made hand-outs that described the grammar in English for extra clarity with some extra exercises to try out, as the books were all in Dutch.

By using a variety of teaching tools and techniques I tried to keep all students actively involved throughout the sessions. (Step 3: Facilitating Learning) Mid semester I made my students do a test, which would count for half of the total of the written exam score. This test allowed the students and me alike to evaluate progress made so far and identify problem areas. As a result I could discuss problem topics again and sometimes advise students on studying methods.

At the end of the course there was a final written exam as well as out evaluation forms, which would be filled out anonymously to encourage students to speak their minds. These forms were taken by the Admit department, where they, combined with the results of the students and the teachers' own experiences, were used to evaluate the programme. (Step 5: Quality assurance and evaluation) Another responsibility as a teacher is the

record keeping. Records must be kept to satisfy the organization's needs, external quality assure but also to support the assessment of a student.

A teacher can keep a closer track on progress made if records are kept up to date on a regular basis. Records must be kept accurate, factual, legible and up to date. But more importantly, records should be kept secure and confidential. Every organization in the UK that stores personal data must do so by the guidelines and rules set in The Data Protection Act (2003) Legislation, regulatory requirements and codes of practice (1 . 1) Similar to other professions and work sectors, the educational sector is bound by legislation, requirements and codes of practices.

These can be generic, I. E. General to all teaching staff or specific, targeted to a specialist subject. A good example of generic legislation is the Education Act (2011) which covers a collection of laws relating to education. Other Acts address more specific parts of education, for example the Education and Skills Act (2008) is meant to increase participation in learning for young people and adults and providing second chances. Protection of Children Act (1998) was designed to protect children and vulnerable adults alike.

Practically it means that everyone working with people in these groups will have to be checked and approved by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DB'S) which replaced the Criminal Records Bureau. Depending on the institution I would go teach at, I might have to undergo a check by the DB'S. The Children Act (2004)/ Every Child Matters, the 5 main outcomes of this Act are that Every Child should: - be healthy, -stay safe, - enjoy and achieve,

-make a positive contribution, - achieve economic well-being. As a teacher I would have to ensure that these outcomes are incorporated in my interaction with the students.

For example provide access to ranking water and healthyfood. Or engage every student in group activities. According to the Freedom of Information Act (2000), teachers should provide access to the records that are kept on the students if the student requests access. For example, a student of mine was unhappy with the final grading at the end of a course, my records showed how the end grading was calculated and that no subjectivity was involved. The Code of Professional Practice (2008) by the Institute for Learning offers a guideline for teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector based on 7 behaviors.

Teachers should work in a manner that is in accordance with these behaviors so as to guarantee a profession standard. Teaching students about food handling, restaurant techniques or kitchen techniques, means the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system must be taught. This European system regulates the handling food and offers procedures to ensure the food is healthy to eat. It stipulates for example which temperature food should be stored at, and all stored food should be labeled with content, date of production and who produced it.

When teaching Dutch, I must follow the latest grammar and spelling rules as set by 'The Dutch Language Union'. Both of these would fall under the specific level. For the Data Protection Act see page, theHealthand Safety Act see page 5 and theEqualityAct Equality is about the rights of students to

have access to, attend, and participate in their chosen learning experience (Gravels, 2012). Diversity, according to Gravels (2012), is about valuing and respecting the differences in students.

The Equality Act (2010) is a consolidation of all harassment and anti-discrimination legislation into one Act that combines these two concepts. In order to abide by this Act, a teacher must himself and actively encourage all students to respect all others without regard for GE, disability, gender, race, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, marriage and maternity/pregnancy. While teaching in Egypt I found that the women in the class needed encouragement to speak up, and I also had to ensure that both Islam and Christianity would make an equal appearance in pictures and explanations. A key consideration in the planning and preparation of any lesson, therefore, is that it should create learning opportunities which are accessible to all the students and which do not make any student feel excluded, directly or by implication' (Wallace, 2001 : 47) This includes ensuring all learning styles (VS..) will be used in each session, that students with learning problems like dyslexia or deafness will be accommodated and that materials and examples are chosen in a way that no student feels excluded. Professional Boundaries and Points of Referral (2. +2. 2+2. 3) A teacher should always behave in a professional manner and work within the boundaries of the responsibilities that come with the role. For example, keep a healthy distance between the student and the teacher both physically and virtually. Don't hand out private phone numbers or exchange social media details with the students. Students might need assistance with issues,

some things the teacher can assist with but other issues are crossing the boundaries of a teacher's knowledge and responsibility.

For example when a student came to me with problems with his visa, I was not able to help him but I did refer him to the person at the embassy who could help him. Another student had issues with paying for the course; I referred him to the Administrator to discuss the possibility of a payment plan. Sometimes the teacher can help by referral to a colleague. One semester I had a student in my group who with in the first hour of the first session had shown that he ally was not a 'beginner'.

During the break I spoke with my colleague who taught the intermediate level and introduced the student to her. We all agreed it was in his best interest for him to leave my class and join the other class. The next I made sure the Administration was aware of this change and that new books would be prepared before his next session. Whenever problems arose during a session, I would inform the Admit department about it and my actions, so they would be aware in case of a complaint.

My fellow tutors and I shared extra course material we made, so all students would have the same experience no matter who their tutor was. When dealing with students, colleagues or external parties a teacher should always remain professional and aware of the standards of the institution you work for. A Safe Learning Environment and Appropriate Behavior & Respect (3.1+3.2) involves not only the venue and resources used, but also your attitude and the support you give to your students. " (Gravels, 2012: 24) The way the room is set up can send a first signal on what students can expect.

A class room setup suggests an autocratic, pedagogical (teacher centered), lecture style where as a horse shoe or a square setup suggests a more democratic, ontological (student centered) style of caching. Whatever style the teacher chooses there other aspects to consider as well, e. G. , ensuring that all students have a clear view of the teacher and the visual aids used but also light, temperature and fresh air can have an impact on a student's learning. The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) is a piece of legislation that covers occupational Health and Safety.

Teachers and the institutions in which they work are responsible for enforcement. In the classroom this means the teacher should explain what the procedures are for evacuation in case of emergency or warn against ripping or falling off chairs. The teacher should be active when seeing a potential hazard, not reactive. One way of promoting appropriate behavior and respect is by creating ground rules. Ground rules are boundaries, rules and conditions within which students can safely work and learn. Gravels, 2012: 91) Some ground rules can and will be set autocratic by the teacher or institution; " nosmoking", " respect each other", " no swearing", fire regulations. Other ground rules can be set democratically, the students can make a list of rules they want to impose in the class room, e. G. , " if ate, do not disrupt", " phones should be on silent", and " offer each other help when needed". The advantage of democratic rules is that students will be more engaged in enforcing these rules. The ground rules should at all times be clear and unambiguous.

Ground rules can help when disturbances occur during a session, by reminding students what behavior was agreed upon. Appropriate behavior and respect can and should be encouraged by the teacher's behavior. Through body language, tone of voice, choice of words a teacher can show respect to students but also indicate a level of trust and confidence. This should make a teacher more approachable for students who might need some extra help and also encourage and motivate students to behave similarly through leading through example.

A supportive teaching environment can be created by encouraging students to ask questions during the session or after, if it relates to more personal matters. Another way is to ensure that all learning styles are addressed in each session. Students should be aware of what they will learn, why they need to learn it and how they will learn. As a teacher I would try to include Flemings (2005) BARK method, by using visual, aural, read and write and kinesthesia elements in my session so that the information would be offered in a way that suited every student's needs.