

# A personal practical theory



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Trends in education have grown through the years, technology advances as well as principles and theories were developed for education to cope with the changing world.

There have been criticisms about the teachers' apparent lack of understanding of what is really happening in their own territories, and that classroom researchers fail to impart the findings and results of their studies and therefore building gaps between them and the teachers.

“ Teachers have been represented as theory builders who continually construct, elaborate, test and refine their own practical theory.” (Busher (1998) as cited in Mangubhai 4) This must be the reason, among other reasons why teachers are encouraged to document their personal experiences in forms of practical theories to be able to share these personally proven and tested principles and thus influence the system of education.

Practical theory, as defined by Sanders and McCutcheon (1986) are the conceptual structures and visions that provide teachers with reasons for acting as they do, and for choosing the teaching activities and curriculum materials they choose in order to be effective. They are the principles or propositions that undergird and guide teachers' appreciations, decisions and actions. (pp. 54-55 as cited in Ritchie p. 2)

These practical theories are most commonly tacit, and must be documented. Batten et. al. (1993) explains that it “ demystifies the teaching process” (as cited in Ritchie p. 4) and was supported by Cooper and McIntyre (1996) claim that “ successful teaching does not depend on the application of recipes, but

rather a kind of flexible responsiveness to students and other circumstances.” (as cited in Ritchie p. 4)

Sources of my readings are in agreements that indeed, the actual experience in teaching makes a good resource for benchmarking of better techniques and styles and more effective teaching methods, if only these are documented.

This paper is my response to this need and my contribution to the education community. Is a detailed documentation of the personal practical theory developed in the course of my teaching Public Speaking in English language. The paper, which is presented in a first person storyline, is in two (2) parts.

Part A - presents my teaching profile and analysis of literature as background to the discussion on my personal practical theory. This part also includes a structural framework of the theory.

Part B - presents an evaluation or assessment of the theory, its strengths, areas of concern and possible areas for improvement.

## Part A. Components and Structure

### My Teaching Profile

#### Me as aTeacher

I grew up with the dream of becoming a teacher, convinced that it is the most noble and relevant profession that will fulfil. So I amply prepared myself and completed a masters degree in Education specializing in Teaching English as a Second Language. I then worked as full-time teacher in

one of the local colleges in our community, teaching Public Speaking to eight graders.

In the duration of my five years working experience as an EnglishCommunicationArts teacher, I was given different subject assignments, mostly in oral communication. I taught Speech and Phonetics, Drama, Oral Expression and Public Speaking. I was also assigned moderator of the different student theatre organizations and speech clubs and was frequently asked to train contestants in oratorical and extemporaneous speech contests.

My interest and enthusiasm was sustained and I have grown to love my career more and more through the years. Armed with my youth, dynamism and innovative ideas, complemented with training opportunities to develop my teaching capabilities, I was able to efficiently and effectively deliver results.