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Implementing New Strategies in FLAN 312: Pedagogies in Foreign Language Teaching

VALERIE MORGAN
vmorgan@csusb.edu

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Implementing New Strategies in FLAN 312: Pedagogies in Foreign Language Teaching

Abstract:

FLAN 312 is a pedagogy course that will be offered during the semester system as WLL 3112. The ACUE course provided evidence-based teaching practices which were examined to improve on FLAN 312 as the campus transitions to a semester system. Several strategies were tested in class or developed for subsequent classes. They include aligning assignments with learning objectives and creating transparent assignments, developing rubrics and checklists, and using large group activities to encourage collaboration and discussions.

1- Learning Outcomes and Transparent Assignment

These are my learning objectives - unrevised at this point - for my pedagogy class Fall 2019. I will revise them for Spring 2020:

Course objectives:

- *Students will design a unit plan and a one day- lesson plan, they will demonstrate their adherence to the National Standards for Language Learning and will apply pedagogical tools and notions such as: individual learning styles (multiple intelligences), Common Core Standards, stage vs. level, Effective Instructional Sequence, the 5 Cs, backward design and essential questions, functional objectives, setting the stage, comprehensible input, guided practice, independent practice, assessment (summative, formative), rubric, etc.*
- *Students will observe language teachers in action through videos. They will need to think critically about their own experience as learners (past and present), the methodologies observed in the language classrooms, and their own future as teachers.*
- *Throughout the quarter, students will gather material in a portfolio for use in their future career.*

I have chosen the “transparent assignment”, because I would like to work over the winter quarter on my next pedagogy class. I have incorporated my reflection as ideas came to me. I will use the first learning outcome:

- *Students will design a unit plan and a one day- lesson plan, they will demonstrate their adherence to the National Standards for Language Learning and will apply pedagogical tools and notions such as: individual learning styles (multiple intelligences), Common Core Standards, stage vs. level, Effective Instructional Sequence, the 5 Cs, backward design and essential questions, functional objectives, setting the stage, comprehensible input, guided practice, independent practice, assessment (summative, formative), rubric, etc.*

Since students design their unit first, then their lesson plan, I will split the learning outcome above into two learning objectives:

Unit plan:

Students will design a unit plan in which they adhere to the National Standards for Language Learning and apply pedagogical tools and notions such as: individual learning styles (multiple intelligences), Common Core Standards, stage vs. level, the 5 Cs, backward design and essential questions, functional objectives, assessments (summative, formative), etc.

Lesson plan:

Students will create a one day- lesson plan, applying pedagogical tools and notions such as: individual learning styles (multiple intelligences), Common Core Standards, Effective Instructional Sequence, the 5 Cs, functional objectives, setting the stage, comprehensible input, guided practice, independent practice, etc.

I will focus on the unit plan, which is worth 120 points (I may reduce the number of points for next course).

Unit plan - transparent assignment.

Flan 312 learning outcome:

Students will design a unit plan in which they adhere to the National Standards for Language Learning and apply pedagogical tools and notions such as: individual learning styles (multiple intelligences), Common Core Standards, stage vs. level, the 5

Cs, backward design and essential questions, functional objectives, assessments (summative, formative), etc.

Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to put you in the shoes of a foreign language teacher, and to help you create your own unit plan.

In this assignment, you will:

- Work with unit templates created by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
- Collaborate in a small group to design a 4-6 week unit with clear learning objectives.

Knowledge:

By working on this assignment, you will gain and/or reinforce the following skills:

- Collaboration with others, paramount in teaching programs,
- Application of learning theories to concrete situations in the classroom.

Schedule of tasks:

Turn in your work in the Google Classroom for my feedback, always use my feedback to refine your work the next time it is turned in.

10/14: Blank unit template with a global theme and an essential question.

10/16: Add 5 learning objectives and find 5 authentic sources for activities related to the LOs.

10/18 Summative assessment that includes the three communication modes.

10/21: Unit toolbox.

10/23: Add the 5 Cs and the connections to the Common Core.

10/25: Add technology integration, formative assessments, and vocabulary Tier 1 and 2. Bring to class for peer review.

Continue revising your unit as you are designing your lesson plan.

12/04: Turn in completed unit.

Rubrics:

Unit Design Rubric (graded by instructor)

	Superior 10 points	Good 8-9 points	Basic 6-7 points
Theme/topic Essential Question	Your essential question encourages critical thinking and gives a deeper purpose for the study of the unit. Your topic matches the theme.	Your essential question matches the topic but may lack depth.	Your essential question lacks depth and is a sub-unit question. There may be no connection between the theme and the topic, or between the essential question and the topic, or no topic
4 Goals	Goals align with the Standards, are based on observable facts, include conditions, action verbs and audience.	Goals align with the Standards, but are lacking one essential component, such as culture.	Goals are too vague or do not align with the standards, or do not use action verbs, or mention structure.
Summative Assessment with Communication Modes	Mirrors the goals and objectives, includes all communication modes, is performance-based.	May not mirror the goals or may need clarification. Problem with one mode.	Assessment is not performance-based and/or does not mirror initial goal. Many problems with one or more modes.
Toolbox Language Functions & Patterns, Vocabulary	Shows ability to connect functions with structures and vocabulary. Translated into English.	Weak link between functions and structures/vocab or not translated into English. You don't understand Tier 2.	Shows little evidence of TL teaching knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary.
Cultures Products Practices Perspectives	Difference between the 3 Ps is well understood. Your use of culture in the classroom is excellent!	Problems with one of the Ps. Your use of culture in the classroom is appropriate.	The cultural content of the unit is not adequate. You need to raise cultural awareness. You don't understand 2 Ps or none of the Ps.

Connections Making connections Acquiring information	Very good connections with other subjects and with cultural perspectives	Making connections works, but the connection with cultural perspective is weak.	Your connections are either too weak or too vague.
Comparisons Language & Cultural	Many opportunities to compare the language and the culture of the TL with that of the US.	Your sample evidences are a little weak or you forgot to translate into English!	You misunderstood the term "comparisons", no translation into English.
Communities school and global Lifelong Learning	You give good sample evidence.	Your sample evidence is vague.	Your sample evidence is very weak, you may have misunderstood what communities/lifelong learning are about.
Connections to Common Core	At least 4-5 connections, very well described	2-3 connections or the definitions are too vague.	2-3 connections and the definitions are too vague.
Resources & Technology integration	At least 4-5 resources which are integrated in the unit, include a mode of communication, at least 1 integration of technology.	Not enough resources or no mode of communication, or resources not found in any of the unit assignments.	Resources not related to the unit, incomplete.
Key learning activities and/or formative Assessments descriptions	At least 5-6 activities, thorough descriptions	3-4 activities or the descriptions are a little vague.	3-4 formative activities which do not tie well with the objective.
How do KLA/FA tie in with unit goals? Modes of Communication & interculturality	Good grasp of the modes of communication and of interculturality, tie in well with the unit objective.	Good grasp of modes of communication but a little vague on interculturality, tie in well with the unit objective.	Not very clear on interculturality or with the modes of communication, and do not tie in well with the objective.

Peer review rubric

Total: _____ / 45

<u>Names:</u>	<u>Excellent</u> <u>5</u>	<u>Good 4</u>	<u>Missing to Fair</u> <u>0-3</u>
Global theme, topic for unit, essential question			EQ: 3 pts, GT or topic: 1 pt each
4 goals minimum. Include action verbs, culture, should not include structure.			
5 summative assessments in 3 modes, mirror goals, matches stage in target language (Standards)			
Toolbox. Functions match goals, structures match functions. Voc T1 is generic for unit, Tier 2: advanced vocab or culturally pregnant vocab.			
Cultures: products: what people make, practices: what they do with it, perspective: what does it tell us?			
Connections to other school topics and to how other cultures do things differently (can repeat perspectives). Comparisons language (cognates and false cognates) and cultures.			
Communities (local trips, visitors to class, blogs with other classes) and lifelong learning (what will students retain). CC connections (fit your goals and unit)			
Resources and technology: list of Websites and others for your unit, as well as ALL tech use.			

<p>Learning activities and formative assessments: describe (first column). 3 other columns: How do they fit in with goal, explain what mode. Interculturality: S: students reflect about themselves, W, C: they talk about the others around them, W: they find out about the world.</p>			
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The rubrics are a little long, I didn't use to have them incorporated in the description for the assignment, but they were available on Blackboard. I understand the purpose of having them printed out for my students so they can take a look at them more easily, so now I will have them available in the same document.

I never had the learning outcome, purpose nor the knowledge gained stated clearly in the document, but I constantly reminded my students that this was exactly the kind of design they would need to work on as teachers. This is the only class I teach that has real concrete ties to the outside world. As an ex high-school language teacher myself, I find it easy to connect language learning theories and learning activities in the classroom, and this is something I always convey to my students. They know I have been there, and I was a rookie once with absolutely no guidance whatsoever, since I started on an emergency credential (no experience at high school level, no pedagogy training!). I always remind them that I don't want this to happen to them, and that everything we do in class and outside class is to prepare them to be the best teachers they can be.

2- Developing a rubric and a checklist for a paper

For our ACUE module, I decided to rewrite the requirements for my pedagogy students' reflection paper this Fall. When they turned in their papers last fall, I had noticed that they were a little uneven. Some students had also asked questions that I want to answer beforehand if possible through clearer criteria for this current class.

I have linked the paper to the course's outcomes (although I may rephrase them on the syllabus). I had not done this last year.

This is one of my course's learning outcomes:

- Students will observe language teachers in action through videos. They will need to think critically about their own experience as learners (past and present), the methodologies observed in the language classrooms, and their own future as teachers.

I have rewritten the description to include different parts, as last year's class turned in some papers where there was no clear outline or distinct paragraphs.

Reflection paper: Answer in 1,000-1,300 words (excluding my questions), 12-font, double-spaced:

Part one: Concepts relevant to language teaching.

In separate paragraphs, explain in your own words the following concepts:

- Essential questions, why do we use them?
- Backward design, why is it important?
- The 5 Cs, how can you integrate them in your teaching?
- The Common Core standards, why do they apply to languages too?

Part two: A good lesson plan:

What are the different parts of a lesson plan? In separate paragraphs, write at least 4-5 sentences for each part and give a concrete example for each. (For example, how would you set the stage for a class on food?).

Part three: My favorite learning activity:

Think of one activity we have discussed in class, or that occurred in class, and that you particularly liked. Describe it and tell me when you could use it in your own class.

Part four: Teachers I wish to emulate:

Choose two of the learner.org videos that you preferred. Describe each one in a paragraph, include:

- The teacher's name and the language taught.
- The reason why you liked the class.
- The way the teacher used AT LEAST two communicative modes: mention which mode and describe what activities were performed in those modes.

Part five: Personal questions and answers.

Think of at least two or three questions you had about teaching when you started the class. Attempt to answer them in a paragraph with examples of what you have learned during our ten weeks.

I have written a checklist and I have mentioned what happens if one part is missing. I had not done this before.

This is the checklist for this paper:

Your paper should include 5 clearly titled parts:

- Part 1, with 4 paragraphs on concepts related to language teaching and pedagogy as a whole.
- Part 2, with a few paragraphs to describe the sections of a good one day-lesson plan.
- Part 3, about an activity you discovered in our class and that you favor.
- Part 4, with your observation of 2 teachers' classes, and their uses of the communicative modes.
- Part 5, with the questions you asked yourself at the beginning of the course and your attempt to answer them now.

Each missing part: - 20 points.

I did have a rubric before. I have tweaked it a little with what I remember from last year's papers. For example, I recall that a lot of students got carried away writing lengthy papers, so I have increased my minimum requirement, but I still want to limit it because I want my students to be relatively concise and to be able to summarize what they have learned and observed. I had also not mentioned the font or spacing required, and I recall that some students had asked me last year. I am quite lenient on spelling and grammar because almost all my students are first generation English-speakers, some of them are dreamers, and they may have very sound ideas, but they don't always have the fluidity that is expected at university level. However, I want them to find ways to proofread each-other's work as much as possible.

This is the rubric:

	19-20	16-18	13-17
Length/ Format	Perfect	900-1,000 words or 1,400-1,500 words or wrong font or not double-spaced.	Under 700 or over 1,500 words and/or wrong font and/nor double-spaced

Fluidity and fluency	Perfect, proofread, no more than 5 grammatical mistakes.	5-10 grammatical mistakes, may sound awkward when read aloud.	This was not proofread! Many grammatical mistakes.
Course concepts	Great grasp of the concepts learned in class both for pedagogy as a whole and for the lesson plan.	Quite vague on concepts, you repeat what was on the slides but you don't demonstrate understanding. One or two concepts are missing.	You are still struggling with some basic concepts, three or four concepts are missing.
Reflection on videos	Thoughtful reflection, good focus on the teacher's activities and on the communicative modes.	All parts are there, but no personal reflection, too vague or one communicative mode only.	What did you get out of these videos? This is not clear, or you may have forgotten to include the communicative modes, or you may have focused on one sole video.
Personal reflection	You have learned a lot, your enthusiasm shines through!	Good points, but you need to delve deeper into what teaching is about!	Many common places, What did you get out of the class generally?

3- Using large group activities to encourage students' collaboration and participation.

Through the ACUE course, I have become familiar with a few large group activities. I have tried the think/pair/share activity, the 4 corner-activity and last, the fishbowl.

3.1- The think/pair/share activity is conducted thus:

- Students think about a concept you want them to process, they can jot down notes for a few minutes.
- They pair up with another student and discuss their notes for 5-10 minutes.
- They share with the whole class (instructors call on individual students or ask the class questions): in any case, they will be prepared!

This is an example for my FLAN 312 class:

1- Think: go over the following for 5-10 minutes. Take as many notes as possible.

Grammar translation method

Direct method

Audio lingual method, Skinner (behaviorism)

Functional notional approach

TPR/TPRS, Asher

Task/Project - based and content-based

Socio - cultural theory, zone of proximal development and private speech (Vigotsky or Vygotsky)

Krashen (explain each one of the five hypotheses),

2- In pairs: discuss your notes.

3- Share: with teacher and whole class.

3.2- The four corner-activity:

The class needs to be divided into 4 groups. Instructors need a way for students to go to 4 different areas of the class. Room UH 042 has one very wide whiteboard, and two smaller side whiteboards: I post one question per small board, and 2 at each end of the wide board. Each group is assigned one corner and a marker with a specific color. The group has 5 minutes to answer their question before moving on to the next "corner". When the activity is over, the instructor reviews the various responses. The color-coded answers identify the groups that responded.

- This is an example of a 4 corner-activity for FLAN 312:

4 corner activity chapter 2

1- write a goal for a unit about what people wear. Each goal has to be different from another group's goal, and each goal has to address at least one communication mode.

2- Choose one topic and find its global theme. Don't choose a topic that another group has selected already. Explain in a sentence why the global theme applies to that topic.

A- celebrations around the world.

- B- Fighting climate change.
- C- The refugee child.
- D- What is school about.

3- You want your unit topic to be about the Spanish-speaking arts in the US, what could be your overarching essential question?

4- Consider these goals:

- Students will compare and contrast mealtimes in France and the US.
- Students will read menus in French restaurants, and students will create a menu for their own French lunch at school.
- Students will discuss what they eat at lunch at school, they will watch a video about a French school cafeteria and fill out a Ven's Diagram.
- Students will keep a diary of their food intake for a week, then calculate their calorie intake. They will also place their different food types in a food pyramid then present their findings to the class.
- After researching the differences between organic and non organic foods, students will discuss the pros and cons of organic food.

Link one of these goals to a standard (ACTFL, Common Core, 21st century Learning). You can choose the same goal as long as the standard differs from that of another group.

3.3 The Fishbowl activity:

This is the description I have written for my FLAN 312 class:

A fishbowl is an activity when the teacher pulls out students' names randomly and sits them at the center of the classroom. The others form a circle around them and listen in silence to what they have to say. There is no interference until the conversation is over (it may last 8-10 minutes).

What is the point of this activity? This is an activity that you might want to remember for future use in your advanced classes, AP classes or conversation classes for example. It replaces the instructor's lecture. The students prepare outside class, then repeat the information they have learned, thus increasing the memorization of facts. Any erroneous fact will be corrected by the teacher once the fishbowl is over.

For a happy fishbowl experience, be ready to chat using your notes as backup.

First, read your notes two or three times before coming to class.

Don't read your notes during the fishbowl, but you might want to say "I remember reading that..." , then you can read a sentence or two.

Listen to your fishbowl partners, because you don't want to repeat something that has already been said.

Keep the conversation flowing, if you run out of things to say, look at your classmates and ask them what they think.

Try to keep looking toward your partners, make eye contact, you can smile, crack jokes, don't be shy! Don't look at the rest of the class nor at the teacher.

You must all speak at some point, so one of you, if you feel you've been speaking enough, might suggest a way for the others to get involved, for ex : "What did you find out about...?" or "don't you think that..."

Nobody else but your partners will interfere in the conversation, we will let you speak for 5-10 minutes, then I will stop you.

All topics need to be mentioned and explained.

The other students will be taking notes of anything they had not found in their research, or anything that they think may be faulty. This will be discussed as a whole class discussion after the fishbowl.

These are the fishbowl questions for chapter 1 of our textbook:

- 1- Find the characteristics of today's learners.
 - What incidence does it have on the way teachers teach?
 - Are all learners created equal? Explain.
- 2- What is the phrase that summarizes successful communication in a foreign language? (this needs to be memorized) and explain each component with second paragraph on page 5.
- 3- Be able to explain figure 1 page 3 without notes!
- 4- What can influence how teachers teach?
- 5- Figure 1 and page 5: in one sentence for each, explain what *i* and the three circles surrounding the *i* mean.
- 6- Summarize each of the 5 Cs and their corresponding 11 standards. No more than 1-2 sentences for each. You can refer to page 97
- 7- Explain the difference between performance and proficiency.

8- Name two documents that can help you design a foreign language course. Be able to summarize them.

9- Find them also on pages 98-99 and 108. Read the description of figure 3 with these documents in annexes B, E and F.

10- Also visit the links mentioned as homework for 10/1.

11- Prepare one or two questions about muddiest points in the readings. Is there something you found hard to understand? Ask them first to your group when discussing the same pages, then to the teacher after the activity is over.

The fishbowl has been a huge success. I was initially concerned to place 4 random students at the center of the classroom, and to draw all eyes on them. However, this activity is a good way to get to know your students better, and to put them on the spot without terrifying them. The fact that they all face each-other and chat is more casual and relaxing than cold-calling them for answers in a traditional setting. We have since had three more fishbowls, and this is an activity I will keep for as long as I teach.

The other two activities presented here are more informal, and are good ways to review and apply course material.