Using the Multiliteracies Approach in Planning Effective ESL lessons

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23 JULY 2015
• While there are many excellent teachers in the Malaysian education system, a 2011 research study (Malaysia Education Blueprint, 2013) found that only 50% of the lessons are being delivered in an effective manner.

• The study revealed that the lessons did not sufficiently engage students and followed a more passive, lecture format of content delivery.

• These lessons were found to achieve surface-level content understanding, instead of higher-order thinking skills.

• This statistic is alarming as an estimated 60% of teachers will be teaching in 20 years time.
PARADIGM SHIFTS IN LEARNING

- Learning is no longer a passive acquisition of knowledge.
- Learning is not memorisation and rote-learning.
- Regurgitation of knowledge – less value.
Emergence of a knowledge society results in a necessity to adopt new approaches, “to change and reconceptualise what learning is” (Kalantzis and Cope, 2005:3).

Teaching English language literacy skills in contemporary ESL classrooms is evolving dynamically.

In addressing the challenges in teaching and learning of ESL, students require new approaches to understand literacies.
The term ‘Multiliteracies’ refers to two major aspects of language use today.

The first is the *variability of meaning making* in different cultural, social or domain-specific contexts. These differences are becoming ever more significant to our communications environment.

The second aspect of language use today arises in part from the *characteristics of the new information and communications media*.

Meaning is made in ways that are increasingly *multimodal*—in which written-linguistic modes of meaning interface with oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile and spatial patterns of meaning.
• The proposed Multiliteracies framework allows the birth of new kinds of pedagogy.

• The Multiliteracies pedagogy extends the concept of the traditional text and literacy to include multimodal meanings.
Learning by Design Pedagogy

• Grounded by the Multiliteracies theory, it uses eight ‘Knowledge Processes’. A Knowledge Process is an activity type which represents a distinct way of making knowledge and of learning.

• As designers of learning environments, teachers can choose any mix and ordering of Knowledge Processes. The purpose of indicating the Knowledge Process underlying each activity is to prompt teachers to think explicitly about the most appropriate range and sequence of learning activities for their students and subject matter.

• Teachers use the Knowledge Processes as prompts to design, document and deploy their learning programs. We call the mindful and considered use of these Knowledge processes ‘Learning-by-Design’.
Knowledge Processes (Learning Element – lesson plan)

Knowledge Process are kinds of activity, or things you do to know

- **Experiencing**
  - The Known
  - The New

- **Conceptualising**
  - By Naming
  - By Theorising

- **Analysing**
  - Functionally
  - Critically

- **Applying**
  - Appropriately
  - Creatively

THE MULTILITERACIES APPROACH
**Experiencing …**

- **the known** – learners reflect on their own familiar experiences, interests and perspectives.
- **the new** – learners observe or take part in something that is unfamiliar; they are immersed in new situations or contents.

**Conceptualizing …**

- **functionally** – learners analyse logical connections, cause and effect, structure and function.
- **critically** – learners evaluate their own and other people’s perspectives, interests and motives.
Knowledge Processes (Learning Element – lesson plan)

Analysing...

• **functionally** – learners analyse logical connections, cause and effect, structure and function.
• **critically** – learners evaluate their own and other people’s perspectives, interests and motives.

Applying...

• **appropriately** – learners apply new learning to real world situations and test their validity.
• **creatively** – learners make an intervention in the world which is innovative and creative, or transfer their learning to a different context.
The Multiliteracies Pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designs for Learning</th>
<th>Multiliteracies Pedagogy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Knowledge</td>
<td>Situated Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Knowledge</td>
<td>Overt Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Knowledge</td>
<td>Critical Framing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Knowledge</td>
<td>Transformed Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiliteracies Designs of Meaning

Visual Design
Colour,
perspective, size,
shape, vectors,
foreground, b/ground

Audio Design
Music, sound effects,
voice quality,
voiceover effects,
silences

Spatial Design
R’ships within and
across texts, and
within the physical
environment

Gestural
Bodily control and
placement, proxemics,
kineetics, gesture,
emotional effect,
presentation, behaviour

Linguistic Design
Text types and
structures, cohesion,
modality, textual
features, vocabulary,
figurative elements,
grammars, syntax,
semantics
The Learning Element

- Teachers use the Learning Element to create their learning designs, ‘marking up’ the activities they select with the Knowledge Processes.

- **The Teacher Resource Space**: a curriculum and lesson planning environment, a scaffold for designing learning processes. Here, learning designs are created using the professional language of education: framing objectives, developing and sequencing activities and devising assessment.

- The **Learning Element** brings learning design into a 21st century web environment. It provides enormous ‘social networking’ capacities to share plans with colleagues, be they an individual colleague, the members of a division in the school, or a professional grouping extending beyond the school.

- Teachers are able to share Learning Elements with colleagues in their own institution and beyond, and discover re-useable Learning Elements via variables such as grade level, discipline area and topic. They are also able to adapt and rewrite others’ Learning Elements, giving due credit to the previous authors of a rewritten text.
The Learner Resource Space: a place where curriculum content can be assembled by teachers for delivery to students, directly paralleling the Teacher Resource space. Here, the learning designs are translated into the language of the classroom, allowing autonomous and asynchronous (in addition to directed and synchronous) access by individual learners or groups of learners. This content may consist of a wide variety of sources, including original material written by teachers, links to web-based material, embedded multimedia content, scans of excerpts from conventional print texts, etc.
Sample Learning Element

Side-by-Side Rendering of Teacher and Learner Resource: The Opening Screens of an Early Literacy Learning Element
The Online Learning Element Design Space: A Screengrab
Using the Multiliteracies Approach in Planning Effective ESL lessons

- **Group Discussion:** (10 groups, 9 teachers in each group)
- **Activity (15 mins)**
  
  Discuss how you would go about planning a lesson to teach one or more English Language skills using the Multiliteracies Approach. One representative from each group will present overview of lesson.

**To discuss how to plan lessons using the Multiliteracies Approach, refer to the handouts in your file:**

i) Sample Learning Element

ii) Predicting purpose and function: the 8 Knowledge Processes of Learning by Design
Good TEACHING is all about:

- **BEING**
  Who you are!

- **VALUING**
  What you believe and value!

- **DOING**
  What you do with your kids (or adults)! AND (more importantly) where you “allow” them to go!