

# CTL

# NEWSLETTER

January, 2018, Issue 1

## NEW IDEAS FOR A NEW YEAR

Welcome to the first official issue of the newsletter! The new year is the ideal time to make changes in your life. Dr. Frances Kalu has done just that. She starts her new beginnings with us as she joins UCQ in the Centre for Teaching and Learning. In this newsletter, Frances introduces herself to us. Not only is the new year a time for changes in your life, but it is also a time to incorporate new ideas in the classroom. As you read this issue, take a walk through Raigne's classroom as she writes about her use of the instructional strategy, gallery walk. Puzzle with Angela over how to incorporate jigsaw activities into your classroom. Valerie relates her experiences testing new technology, Zeetings, in her classroom. Try a new twist on testing as Zohra and Carolyn write about their experiences with cooperative testing. Respond to your students' writing with a fresh approach as Falina explains evidence-based practices for responding to students' writing. Many people also take the opportunity to reflect in the new year, so contemplate your own teaching and learning experiences while you read Jessie's reflection on her own educational path, comparing then and now.

Have a wonderful new year!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION TO NEW CTL FACULTY

Introduction to Dr. Frances Kalu 2

### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Nursing Diagnosis: A Gallery Walk 2

Taking the Puzzle out of Reading: 3

A Jigsaw Activity

### EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Zeetings: Creating an Interactive 4

Environment

### ASSESSMENT

Cooperative Testing: An Interactive 5

Testing Strategy

### WRITING

Language Versus Content: Balancing 6

the Feedback in Student Papers

### OPINION

Then and Now 9

### REFERENCES

10

## INTRODUCTION TO DR. FRANCES KALU

Hello everyone,

I am Dr. Frances Kalu, and I will be taking on a new role as a Teaching and Learning Specialist at UCQ in January. Currently, I am a faculty member and Curriculum Development Specialist at the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. As part of my role in Calgary, I provide consultative leadership to faculties undergoing the curriculum review process, as well as those developing new projects. This involves providing educational opportunities to build capacity among faculty members, through resource development, facilitating retreats and workshops, individual consultations, and building a community of practice across campus. I also work with faculty and graduate students towards improving teaching and learning through consultations, reviewing teaching dossiers, teaching and learning awards, and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant applications.

In the past, I was a curriculum developer at the Cumming School of Medicine, where I developed the Physician Assistant Program, the Professionalism Education framework, and conducted a review of the Public Health Residency Program. I also have extensive experience teaching in K-12 and at the university level. I hold a Masters in Educational Leadership and a PhD in Education, specializing in Curriculum and Learning.

Being very passionate about education, I have a strong interest in developing foundational understanding of curriculum and its role in education. My research interests include identity development, intercultural competency among faculty members, and inclusive education.

## NURSING DIAGNOSIS: A GALLERY WALK

Raigne Symes

While considering possible activities to include in my *Nursing 201: Introduction to Nursing* class this semester, I found an activity called a 'gallery walk,' which I chose to implement in my classroom. A gallery walk requires students to work in groups to answer a question and then rotate between stations to provide peer feedback to the other students' responses (Rodenbaugh, 2015). "Gallery walks are beneficial since they promote critical thinking, communication, and practice with critical evaluation of new information as students wrestle with nuance and misconceptions that may be included in the products they review" (Rodenbaugh, 2015, p. 411). Based on this and other literature I found, I was excited to use this teaching and learning strategy in my classroom.

In the past I have done a lot of board work and brainstorming activities in the classroom. We have shared ideas with the class and within table groups, but I have never had students rotate through the classroom to provide peer feedback. For my first attempt using this learning strategy, I chose to use the nursing process, specifically 'creating nursing diagnoses,' as the content students would engage with. For those who may be less familiar with the nursing process, this is the method that we use to plan and provide nursing care in a systematic way (Ferguson & Rohatinsky, 2014). The nursing process includes: assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation of the nursing care provided. In the diagnosis stage, nurses analyze

assessment data, identify health problems, risks and strengths, and then formulate a nursing diagnosis based on this data (Ferguson & Rohatinsky, 2014).

Prior to coming to class, students completed a reading about the nursing process as well as a worksheet about the content. I then explained the concept of the nursing process and discussed several examples on the whiteboard with students calling out answers to my questions. In their responses, students were required to use the following format:

(diagnosis) related to (physical, psychological concern, or medical diagnosis) as evidenced by (assessment data).

To promote student understanding, I did not allow them to use the standardized NANDA nursing diagnosis for this assignment. I then broke students up into self-selected table groups to participate in the gallery walk. Students were asked to create two nursing diagnoses, one actual and one risk-based, for an assigned condition.

Flip charts and whiteboards were arranged throughout the classroom, each with a different patient assessment. There were five stations total. In groups, students moved to different flip charts and whiteboards to work on creating their nursing diagnoses. Students were given six minutes at their first station to create an initial nursing diagnosis and then an additional two to three minutes at two other stations to revise their classmates' diagnoses. Due to time

constraints, I decided not to have students rotate through all stations. As a class, we then reviewed the nursing diagnoses.

Students' anecdotal feedback about the experience was positive. Students stated that they like to participate in group work to share their ideas and engage with content. One student said she felt pressure to get it right knowing other students would be looking at their work. I believe that this was an effective teaching strategy in this class. The first iterations of nursing diagnoses were often

incorrect but with revisions from other students the material was corrected five times out of ten; however, in one case the nursing diagnosis was changed from correct formatting to incorrect through the gallery walk. I will use this activity again in my class as a means of engaging with content and discussion. I feel that a gallery walk was a great activity to reinforce content that many students struggle with.

## TAKING THE PUZZLE OUT OF READING: A JIGSAW ACTIVITY

Angela Waigand

As academic reading is a cognitively complex task for students, particularly second language students, I often incorporate jigsaw reading activities into my classroom, a strategy that allows students to learn from each other, thereby enhancing comprehension. In a jigsaw reading activity, a reading is divided into sections, the puzzle pieces. Students are required to read and understand the section that they are given and then share the information with others in the class in order to put the pieces of the puzzle together. Jigsaws motivate students to become experts on a topic so that they can teach their peers (Barkley, 2010).

Last semester, one lesson of my *UNIV 205: Learning Beyond High School* course focused on study strategies. I found an article that explained the five most effective evidence-based strategies to study for a test. The article was divided into five relatively equal parts, so I cut the article into five pieces. I had 25 students in my class, so the math was simple. I needed five copies of each part of the reading. To simplify group formation, I made five copies of each strategy onto coloured paper. For example, I had five copies of the first strategy on blue paper and five copies of the second strategy on green paper.

Before starting the activity in class, I explained the procedure to the students. I put students into groups of five. With group creation for jigsaw, I generally follow one of two different strategies. Sometimes I mix the groups so that more proficient readers are with less proficient readers so they can help each other read. However, if some sections of the reading are clearly easier, I may

allow groups to self-select but give the simpler passages to students whose English is not as proficient. Once I had created the groups, each member of a group was given the same reading passage. Students were given ten minutes to read the passage together, help each other understand it, and remember the key information.

After ten minutes, students were told to form new groups with one representative from each of the colour groups. In other words, each new group had a member with a piece of blue, green, pink, yellow, and white paper. As soon as the groups were formed, I took their papers with the reading passage away. Students were required to explain their part to the other members of the group. Next each group listed the key points of all five strategies in point form on a flip chart. After they had completed their notes, in plenary we quickly reviewed all of the flip charts and evaluated whether or not a group was missing a key point and then discussed the possible order of the strategies from most to least effective before I revealed the answer.

Students tend to enjoy doing jigsaw readings. They can help each other understand the reading passage, but they also experience a small amount of positive pressure to understand it since they will be responsible for teaching it to others. Students also enjoy the interaction with different group members. Jigsaw activities are adaptable and can be used for all types of content. For more complex content, the preparation can be done as homework rather than an in-class activity. Although common in English classrooms, the use of jigsaws to enhance student learning is supported throughout the disciplines.

On a tangential note, if you were wondering, the most effective study strategy is self-testing and the second most effective is distributed practice, or practicing over time (Dunlosky, Rawason, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013). The two used in conjunction are a power duo.

For other variations of jigsaws and several more classroom activities, check out Barkley's *Student Engagement Techniques*, available in the [Learning Commons](#).

## ZEETINGS: CREATING AN INTERACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Valerie Banfield

Using new technology in the classroom can improve student learning but can cause some trepidation for instructors like myself. Concerns about: what will I do if the technology does not work? what if the internet is not functioning? and what will my backup plan be? are thoughts that often prevent me from trying out new technological tools. Therefore, after attending a CTL information session provided by Simon on the use of a variety of online educational programs, I decided to use a program that offered some familiarity.

The program I chose is called Zeetings, a presentation tool which at first glance looks like PowerPoint but offers more functionality, including quizzes. To access Zeetings, you must go to <https://about.zeetings.com/> and set up an account through Google. The website offers instructional videos which help you to understand how to upload your previously developed PowerPoint. Students can access the presentation and quizzes on their own devices. However, one disadvantage is that you cannot revise the PowerPoint once it is uploaded. One caution about Zeetings is that the free license only provides the ability to use the interactive component for 25 participants. Therefore, Zeetings can only be used in classes less than 25 students unless you choose to use a team approach for student participation where only one person would answer the questions on behalf of the team.

When I used Zeetings in the classroom, everything worked smoothly. It was an advantage not having to maneuver between my PowerPoint presentation and YouTube videos. Zeetings provides the capability to insert YouTube videos into the presentation so that videos automatically begin once you reach a specific slide. Students enjoyed actively participating by completing the online quizzes and short answer questions that I added directly into the Zeetings' platform. Once students entered the URL for the presentation on their phones or iPads, they had little difficulty with the site.

However, I did not notice a big difference in using the technology compared to the previous way I used quizzes in the classroom. I often intersperse paper-based multiple choice and short answer questions throughout the teaching session. The students complete these questions individually and then discuss their answers in teams. Once the students conclude their team discussion, they take turns sharing their rationale for why multiple-choice options are either right or wrong. They use these worksheets to help them study for future quizzes and exams. To determine if the PDBN students preferred online or paper-based quizzes, I used the Zeetings' survey to poll my PDBN class. Students indicated they liked both types of quizzes but most of the students (79%) preferred the paper-based quizzes as they could use these materials when studying for exams. One limitation to my survey, however, was that it only focused on a small cohort of PDBN students. BNRT students may have different viewpoints.

My experience with Zeetings and other online tools such as Socrative indicates that these technologies help grab the learners' attention, promote interactive learning, and encourage the introverted learner to participate. Therefore, in order to respond to a variety of student learning styles and to engage students to be active participants in their own learning, I will continue to include these tools in my lesson plans.

### Looking for other educational technology ideas?

For other ideas on incorporating technology into your classroom, Simon recommends John Allan's blog at <http://blog.teslontario.org/author/john-allan/>. Although the site is aimed at English as a Second Language instructors, the ideas can be used in a variety of classrooms. John teaches at CNA-Q and can be contacted if instructors would like more information on a particular topic.

## COOPERATIVE TESTING: AN INTERACTIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Zohra Hasnani-Samnani & Carolyn Wolsey

Within our courses at UCQ, we have been utilizing various interactive teaching and learning strategies in our classrooms to create an engaging and active learning environment for our unique student population. During one of the instructional skills workshop classes, we learned about cooperative testing as an interactive assessment strategy. After implementing this approach in our theory class, we found that not only is it a good teaching and learning strategy for assessment of learning, but it also creates an environment where the students can interact and learn from each other while taking an exam. However, during the use of this teaching and learning strategy, we also faced challenges related to group size and formation as well as difficulty fostering understanding of the group process and the students' roles within the group and during the exam. For weak students, it also inflated test scores, which were not reflective of individual learning. Additionally, we had concerns related to maintaining integrity in the classroom during the exam and ensuring effective group processes that included everyone and emphasized that group discussions were adhered to.

### **What is Cooperative Testing?**

Cooperative testing is a two-part exam. The students first take the quiz individually and then take the same quiz together as a small group with the exam grade assigned as a combination of their individual and group scores (Zipp, 2007). Cooperative testing can be used as a standardized testing strategy throughout the course, a single testing method (mid-term or final) with some prior mock exams. It can also be used as a peer-review structured quiz, in which after completing a test, each student reviews the quiz of another and provides feedback, a group discussion as a prelude to individual work, a case study, or a tool to teach team work (Baumberger-Henry, 2005; Coppola, & Pontrello, 2014; Vasan, et al., 2009; Yokomoto & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007).

### **Why Use Cooperative Testing**

Several studies have been completed utilizing cooperative quizzes in higher education across several disciplines, including chiropractic, astronomy, math, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, dental hygiene and medicine (Coppola & Pontrello, 2014; Fei & McGivney-Burelle, 2012; Yokomoto & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007). Several aspects of the cooperative quiz have been researched including group assignment, impact on

grades, student anxiety, retention of information, and critical thinking (Zipp, 2007). It has also been utilized in nursing (Zipp, 2007). We were able to retrieve 24 articles between 1996-2016, which included research conducted by Rivaz, Mommenneasab, and Shokrallahi (2015) in Tehran and by Martin, Friesen, and De Pau (2014) in Canada. These studies revealed that cooperative testing promotes learning retention and motivation, creates less stress, decreases anxiety, promotes critical thinking and transfer of learning, encourages discussion, and promotes role modeling, whereby weaker students observe more successful students (Gallagher, 2009; Martin, et al., 2014; Yokemate & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007). Additional benefits include improving individual effort, increasing perceptions of peer support, processing learning more effectively, promoting professional and social skills such as leadership, and sharing of ideas and communication (Gallagher, 2009; Martin, et al., 2014; Yokemate & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007). It may also assist instructors to identify knowledge gaps and evaluate their teaching (Gallagher, 2009; Martin, et al., 2014; Yokemate & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007).

---

*These studies revealed that cooperative testing promotes learning retention and motivation, creates less stress, decreases anxiety, promotes critical thinking and transfer of learning, encourages discussion, and promotes role modeling, whereby weaker students observe more successful students (Gallagher, 2009; Martin, et al., 2014; Yokemate & Ware, 1997; Zipp, 2007).*

---

Although the above research demonstrates the usefulness of the cooperative testing strategy, it also highlights the research gaps and opportunities for further exploration. Despite the demonstrated and positive use of this assessment and teaching strategy, it has not received sufficient attention in the context of nursing education and there is a scarcity of research related to the effectiveness of collaborative testing in nursing education in the Middle Eastern context.

### **Our Experience with Cooperative Testing**

Based on the findings from the literature, we re-implemented cooperative testing with modifications that

were highlighted in the literature. For example, instead of giving the weight of 50% for individual and 50% for group quiz, we modified the weighting to 70% and 30% for individual and group scores respectively to give greater emphasis to individual learning. Instead of asking students to submit one answer sheet as a group, they were given an option of submitting their own answers if they did not agree with the group answer, allowing for independent decision making. In addition, we gave a mock quiz before the actual test to help students understand the process. We also implemented random groups versus self-selected groups. These modifications helped in overcoming some of the challenges, described earlier.

Based on our experience as well as anecdotal feedback from our students, in addition to being an engaging assessment strategy, the cooperative testing strategy has several benefits. It promotes collaboration, peer teaching and learning, positively affects test scores for most students, generates discussion as students are free to communicate in their own language to understand concepts, and increases ownership and responsibility to the group. It also assists students with learning good study skills and test-taking strategies from each other.

Informal student feedback related to the challenges of this strategy included high-achieving students feeling

additional pressure to assist the perceived weaker group members and the expectation to have all the correct answers. These students expressed the desire to have formed their own group. Other feedback from students included a decrease in test-taking anxiety, their appreciation for a higher overall mark from this strategy, and positive feelings about this strategy.

### **Conclusion**

Understanding our students' perceptions of cooperative testing is critical to its continued use. The UCQ student population is a unique mix of students that require skilled teaching and a willingness to use exciting teaching strategies to aid learning. We believe that having a more formal understanding of this approach in our transnational educational context and with our unique student population will help us in implementing this interactive assessment strategy in our program. Formal research to understand students' views and experiences with cooperative testing will contribute to our understanding of students' perceived needs and their learning styles. An understanding of how our students learn, retain course content, and work together in a low stress assessment environment may encourage other instructors to utilize this strategy in their courses.

## **LANGUAGE VERSUS CONTENT: BALANCING FEEDBACK IN STUDENT PAPERS**

Falina Norred

Conversations between writing specialists and faculty frequently concern unclear writing and weak use of sources in student papers. The issue of written expression, however, seems to be the most enervating as faculty struggle, sentence by sentence, to secure a foothold on students' responses to assignments. Many nursing instructors have said it's a challenge to provide meaningful feedback for writing, and this is where the angst sets in. How do you provide feedback on content when language bars the way to that content? How do you cope when your expertise is nursing, not language instruction?

Clearly defined purpose is critical with any writing task, and with feedback, most would agree that it serve and benefit the student, namely in meeting target assignment objectives and rubric benchmarks (Vardi, 2013; Wiliam, 2016). Students also expect that they will be apprised of how they are meeting these targets through feedback (Ferris, 2011; Vardi, 2013). Likewise, for many faculty, feedback on student work serves to justify an assigned mark (Iqbal, Gul, Lakhani, & Rizvi, 2014). Faculty also feel ethically bound to point out errors where they occur. The logical assumption is that students cannot learn grammar and sentence structure without "input" of the correct form (direct correction). The hope is that feedback will promote learning, and that it will be applied in future work. When feedback promotes future learning or "transfers" to future assignments and goals, it is referred to as *feedforward* (Carless, 2006; Ferris, 2011). An important observation is whether feedback transfers over to a future paper in a different assignment and not just the paper you have corrected. If you have repaired errors on a final version of a paper, it is unlikely students will go back and repair them (Ferris, 2011). If the student does not revisit the work, the opportunity for feedforward is lost.

Direct correction of student writing is dictated by each student's particular pattern of error and is therefore individualized, which Ferris (2011) has noted, is of great benefit to students. The caveat, however, is that the feedback should be comprehensive and corrections should be explained (Ferris, 2011). There are other important considerations for the

application of direct correction. William (2016) argues that it appropriates the student's voice. For example, if the correction does not precisely capture the student's intention, the student has also lost an opportunity to struggle to articulate an idea and develop critical thinking and argument skills.

Others take a more moderate view of direct correction but still observe some pitfalls to the method. Direct correction of grammar does not hurt, but there is no evidence to support that it promotes learning, except among low-level language learners, which is the ken of English teachers (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2011). Direct correction can be effective and feed forward when discreet items (i.e., the use of commas) are specifically taught (Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2011). In more advanced students, however, a focus on grammar and sentence structure could result in issues of organization and source use being overlooked. When we correct students' writing, we are assuming that they can extrapolate rules from the feedback. In my experience, only the most intrepid of students can operationalize this type of feedback because of the cognitive load they are sustaining.

Nursing faculty have the opportunity to advance the level of students' writing skills in numerous way, but especially in the moment of feedback. So how do we improve the chances of our feedback feeding forward into future assignments and courses?

### **1. Avoid Correcting Sentences with Multiple or Structural Errors.**

To make direct correction effective and avoid confusing students, Ferris (2011) recommends avoiding correction of sentences with multiple or structural errors that make the sentence incomprehensible. If the sentence is incomprehensible, it's a content issue. Distinguish between global (can't understand) and local (can understand) errors, and then prioritize accordingly (Ferris, 2011).

### **2. Identify Patterns of Error.**

Preserve precious time and sanity by devoting feedback to critical issues such as argument, organization, and source use. But do help students become aware of their most pervasive error patterns (Ferris, 2011): Start with the more important global errors (e.g., plagiarism) and then more local errors (e.g., sentence fragments). The advantage of this strategy is that it focuses the student on one type of error and assigns responsibility for correction to the student (problem solving).

It's important that when you point out a pattern of error, that you note where this item was used correctly! Ferris (2011) suggests the following compromise instead of direct correction:

*As you revise this paper, be sure to pay attention to your verb tenses and to the placement of commas in your sentences. I've underlined several examples of each type of error on the first page of your essay.* (Ferris, 2011, p. 92)

### **3. Encourage the Idea of Writing as a Process.**

Students learn through the "process" of writing, so encourage process rather than drawing attention to surface errors (Ferris, 2011). A good way to encourage critical thinking and writing-as-process is to ask questions about sources and evidence through writing and other communicative activities that contextualize and solicit students' opinions and ask what they have gleaned from them. Comments regarding source use are situated within the context of argument and content when it comes to your rubrics, and so feedback can disabuse students of the idea that writing well is only about grammar. Remember that over time, simply through exposure, students' grammar may be improving (Ferris, 2011).

### **4. Compose Clear, Concise, and Legible Comments.**

Ferris (2011) cites several studies that have found that second language students value feedback about their grammar and will always ask for it. In terms of what kind of feedback they found most helpful, students prefer error identification that is clear. For your feedback to be used, it must be understood, so avoid symbols and shorthand abbreviations. Handwriting should be legible and preferably print or typed (Khowaja, Gul, Lakhani, Rizvi, & Saleem, 2014). When final comments or notes at the end of the paper refer to errors, these comments should always be anchored to an error in the paper.

### **5. Focus on Assignment and Course Outcomes.**

Feedback should feed directly towards assignment expectations and course outcomes to provide in-task guidance (Vardi, 2013). In addition, spending time constructing a rubric at the beginning of the course will save you time marking later. Alignment of feedback is key, not only to student learning, but also to your own workload and stress management.

### **6. Use Rubrics.**

If grammar and sentence structure are part of the grade, rubrics should set out clear expectations of levels, and explicit instruction should be provided to enable students to attain this level (Tate, Rupiper-Taggart, Schick, & Hessler, 2014). For example, at the high range of the rubric, "varied sentence structure" could be a criterion while at the lower range, the

presence of “sentence fragments” could be noted. Providing resources to support these expectations can focus student attention to specific requirements. Ask the Writing Centre how we can support you with resources and supplementary instruction. Use your rubric to set clear boundaries between grammar and content: 10% of the mark should warrant 10% of the comments. If most comments on a paper concern grammar, students will focus on perfect sentences, which they may copy-paste.

### **7. Support Critical Reading.**

Struggles with language in reading leads to lack of control over grammatical and syntactical structures in student writing (Ferris, 2011; Howard, Serviss, & Rodrigue, 2010). Students who cannot read cannot use source texts appropriately or effectively (Howard et al., 2010). Our students need to be taught how to read complex sources critically and how to work with and summarize extended portions of text (Project Information Literacy, 2011). Reading is intrinsically linked with writing, so ask the Writing Centre about how we can assist you in your course.

### **8. Establish Relationships with Feedback.**

Your comments can establish relationships and therefore build trust (Lindemann, 2001). Encourage students to take necessary risks to break bad habits. The risks that they should be taking are writing more, questioning texts, and applying ideas from texts in different and novel situations. Written feedback should be “non-imperative” and purposeful (Ball, Franks, Jenkins, McGrath, & Leigh, 2009). Asking questions about choices made in the paper rather than statements about what was done wrong in the paper respects students’ autonomy, and a focus on future improvement rather than error is empowering.

### **9. Encourage Students to Read Comments.**

A common refrain among UCQ faculty is the challenge of explaining assigned grades to students. As noted earlier in this text, feedback is often used to justify a mark, and so when approached by students, we refer to these comments and read or explain them to the student whose main purpose is challenge a grade. If the purpose of feedback is to support students’ improvement then some adjustments to the way we use feedback are called for. In response to this challenge, some faculty use an innovative strategy of a “cooling-off” or “wait” period before allowing students to discuss the grades they have received on their papers. The procedure is that students will not be seen until a certain time has passed (e.g., two working days), the comments must be read by the student, and the student must come to the instructor’s office ready to respond to the feedback comments. In this way, the ball is in the student’s court: he or she must support and justify a position with respect to the feedback. Whatever the outcome of the discussion, there is benefit to the student because the comments have been processed.

## **Conclusion**

*Feedback should change the student, not the work.*

William, 2016

Writing is an acquired skill that takes place over time, and communicative activities (e.g., “talking out”) while a struggle, support writing (Lindemann, 2001). Engaging students at the level of ideas, not language, gives them the opportunity to struggle for expression. Ultimately, restraining from the urge to correct the work places the burden for correction and expression on the student, which is how they find their voice and develop self-efficacy in their academic work, especially writing.



## THEN AND NOW

Jessie Johnson

As we go about life in our classrooms, we need to be mindful of creating an approach to a pedagogy that does not rely on or treat the students as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge. We need to adopt a pedagogy that encourages students to take (albeit small at first) responsibility for their learning in a non-threatening way. I come from a background where learning does not come easy and where building blocks were not laid perfectly before me. The only style of teaching in those days was didactic and included rote learning. This was not a style I adapted to and hence dropped out of school in grade 10. I simply could not understand what the teacher was trying to teach me and, quite frankly, because of this I shied away from class participation. It was not out of laziness I adapted this behaviour but out of a feeling of ignorance. This gave the teachers the notion that I was not interested in what they were saying while in class; if they only knew that it was a defense mechanism for me. You see, didactic teaching is not a style I could adapt to during a three-hour lecture. Put yourself in my shoes and imagine yourself sitting in a classroom listening “patiently” to someone rambling on about genomics. This was coupled with the fact that my teacher had a flare for the vernacular. I had no idea what they were saying, and it felt as though I was in another country, where the people did not speak English, at least not the English that I knew! You see I was one of many students who do not learn the same way as others and I *know* I am not alone in this.

Here in Qatar, students have English as a second language (or a third, or a fourth!) and thus need to be given a chance to learn in their own way and in their own time, within reason of course. I realized as an instructor that it would be difficult to offer a new concept in class and ask them to reflect on it by the end of that class. How could they, when English is not their first language? As such, they may not have completely understood everything I was saying or they could have interpreted what I was saying differently. I realized early on that in this culture learning requires ‘facilitation with’ and not ‘teaching to.’ I also realized students want to take responsibility for their own learning - they really do - however it needs to be fostered in such a way that is not intimidating to them. Students are keen, although they may not show it. These insights have resulted in my adopting a teaching style that relies on a narrative pedagogy, where storytelling can be used to place or cement concepts.

Learning should have a component of active participation within the classroom as students take responsibility for cementing concepts. This may be in the form of strategies or techniques such as case studies or visual cues. Now that I have gained experience as an instructor, however, I recognize there is no one-size-fits-all approach; there are some students in class that may engage quite readily in the didactic style of learning, and we need to attend to this. Classrooms are not the same as they used to be back in my day, neither are students for that matter, and we as facilitators need to be adaptable enough to recognize this and hence adjust our practices to accommodate this change.

## REFERENCES

- Aijaz Khowaja, A., & Gul, R. B. (2014). Perceptions and experiences of written feedback of nursing students. *International Journal of Nursing Education*, 6(1), 1-5. doi:10.5958/j.0974.6.1.001
- Ball, E., Franks, H., Leigh, J., Jenkins, M., & McGrath, M. (2009). Annotation is a valuable tool to enhance learning and assessment in student essays. *Nurse Education Today*, 29(3), 284-291. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2008.10.005
- Barkley, E. F. (2010). *Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Baumberger-Henry, M. (2005). Cooperative learning and case study: Does the combination improve students' perceptions of problem solving and decision making skills? *Nurse Education Today*, 25, 288-246. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2005.01.010
- Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. (2012). *Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Carless, D. (2006). Differing perceptions in the feedback process. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 219-233. doi:10.1080/03075070600572132
- Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12, 267-296. doi:10.1016/S1060-3743(03)00038-9
- Coppola, B., & Pontrello, J. (2014). Using errors to teach through a two-staged, structured review: Peer reviewed quizzes and "what's wrong with me?". *Journal of Chemical Education*, 91(12), 2148-2154. doi:10.1021/ed500286y
- Dunlosky, J., Rawson, K. A., Marsh, E. J., Nathan, M. J., & Willingham, D. T. (2013). What works, what doesn't. *Scientific American Mind*. 47-53. Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/what-works-what-doesn-t/>
- Ferguson, L., & Rohatinsky, N. (2014). The Nursing Process. In B. Kozier, G. Erb, A. Berman, M. Buck, L. Yiu, & L. Stamler, *Fundamentals of Canadian Nursing: Concepts, Process, and Practice* (3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Ed.).(pp. 454-507). Toronto, Canada: Pearson.
- Ferris, D. R. (2011). *Treatment of error in second language student writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Gallagher, P. (2009). Collaborative essay testing: Group work that counts. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 6(1), 1-13. doi:10.2202/1548-923x.1845
- Howard, R., Serviss, T., & Rodrigue, T. K. (2010). Writing from sources, writing from sentences. *Writing and Pedagogy*, 2(2), 177-192. doi:10.1558/wapv2i2.177
- Iqbal, S., Gul, R., Lakhani, A., & Rizvi, N. F. (2014). Teachers' accounts of their perceptions and practices of providing written feedback to nursing students on their assignments. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 3(3), 70-80. doi:10.5430/ijhe.v3n3p70
- Khowaja, A. A., Gul, R. B., Lakhani, A., Rizvi, N. F., & Saleem, F. (2014). Practice of written feedback in nursing degree programmes in Karachi: The students' perspective. *Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan*, 24(4), 241-244. doi:10.5958/j.0974-9357.6.1.001
- Lindemann, E. (2001). *A rhetoric for writing teachers* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, D., Friesen, E., & De Pau, A. (2014). Three heads are better than one: A mixed methods study examining collaborative versus traditional test-taking with nursing students. *Nurse Education Today*, 34(6), 971-977. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2014.01.004
- Project Information Literacy. (2011). Sandra Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard: Unraveling the citation trail. Retrieved from <http://projectinfolit.Org/smart-talks/item/110-sandra-jamieson-rebecca-moore-howard>
- Rivaz, M., Mommenneasab, M., & Shokrollahi, P. (2015). Effect of collaborative testing on learning and retention of course content in nursing students. *Journal of Advances in Medical Education and Professionalism*, 3(4), 178-182. Retrieved from <http://jamp.sums.ac.ir/index.php/JAMP>

- Rodenbaugh, D.W. (2015). Maximize a team-based learning gallery walk experience: Herding cats is easier than you think. *Advances in Physiology Education*, 39, 411-413. doi:10.1152/advan.00012.2015
- Tate, G., Rupiper-Taggart, A., Schick, K., & Hessler, H. B. (2014). *A guide to composition pedagogies* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Vardi, I. (2013). Effectively feeding forward from one written assessment task to the next. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38(5). 599-610. doi:10.1080/02602938.2012.670197
- Vasan, N., DeFouw, D., & Compton, S. (2009). A survey of students perceptions of team-based learning in anatomy curriculum: Favourable views unrelated to grades. *Anatomical Sciences Education*, 2(4), 15-155. doi:10.1002/ase.91
- Wiliam, D. (2016). The secret of effective feedback. *Educational Leadership*, 73(7), 10-15. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>
- Xue, F., & McGivney-Burelle, J. (2012). Using group quizzes to engage students in learning calculus. *Mathematic Educator*, 4(1), 4-8. Retrieved from <http://www.amatyc.org>
- Yokomoto, C., & Ware, R. (1997). Variations on the Group Quiz to Facilitate Cooperative Learning, Proceedings of the 1997 Frontiers in Education Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, Nov. 1997. doi:10.1109/fie.1997.644946
- Zipp, J. (2007). Learning by exams: The impact of two-stage cooperative testing. *Teaching Sociology*, 35, 62-76. doi:10.1177/0092055x0703500105

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**The purpose of *CTL Newsletter* is to share research, ideas, and insights into teaching and to build a community of educators.**

**The CTL extends a special thank you to the authors of this edition.**

If you are interested in writing for the next edition, we are looking for contributors who have:

- successfully tried a new teaching idea in class
- observed a class that used a great teaching strategy
- tested a new assessment strategy that was successful
- attended a workshop at UCQ or elsewhere that others might find useful
- read an article about teaching that others should know about
- conducted research on their teaching that they would like to share.

### **Submission guidelines**

- All articles must be related to teaching, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or education and they must be relevant to the UCQ context.
- If citations are used, they must be formatted according to APA style.
- All articles submitted are subject to editorial review.
- The deadline for submission for the next edition is April 1, 2018.

**If you would like more information, want to discuss your ideas, or are interested in becoming part of the editorial board for the newsletter, please contact Angela Waigand – [auwaigan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:auwaigan@ucalgary.ca)**