

Stella Rodriguez
Dr. Kim
TEL 6450
June 7, 2025

Second TESOL Course Accomplishment Reflection - AMM

A transformative experience in my TESOL master's program came through the course TEL 6210: ESL Teaching Methods, taught by Professor Robert Randez. This course emphasized both the theoretical foundations and practical application of established ESL methodologies, particularly the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) model. Throughout the semester, we focused on developing meaningful language objectives, planning activities that integrated reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and identifying gaps in how multilingual learners (MLs) are supported in our classrooms. The course challenged us not only to observe current practices but to engage with them critically and, when necessary, courageously revise them.

The Analysis and Modification of Materials (AMM) project was a powerful turning point in my learning. I selected to feature this assignment because it was the first time I fully realized the agency I have as a classroom teacher. I don't have to accept the curriculum exactly as it's written. I can, and should, adjust it to reflect the needs of my students. This realization was both empowering and practical. It shifted my mindset from one of following instructional programs to one of co-constructing learning experiences that align with best practices in second language acquisition and responsive teaching.

For the AMM project, I chose to analyze and modify a lesson from our phonics curriculum, UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute). While UFLI provides a strong foundation in phonics instruction, I noticed my ML students were not always fully engaged or able to access the vocabulary-rich content without additional support. My goal was to make the lesson more accessible while maintaining its academic rigor. I made several key modifications: incorporating vocabulary instruction that emphasized meaning and context, integrating student talk and peer interaction, and embedding metacognitive strategies that encouraged students to reflect on their own learning.

Grounded in language acquisition theories such as Krashen's concept of comprehensible input and the interactionist perspective, these changes were intentionally designed to increase both understanding and authentic language use. Instead of relying solely on rote repetition, the revised lesson invited students to use new words in meaningful contexts, connect their learning to prior knowledge, and engage with the material through movement and collaborative discussion. This blend of systematic phonics instruction and differentiated support created a more inclusive and responsive classroom environment where all students had a better chance of success.

This project also had a lasting impact on my confidence and practice as an educator. I've always made small adaptations—skipping a slide here or inserting movement there—but this was my first time intentionally adding elements to curriculum materials to better serve my learners. It opened up a new world of possibilities. I no longer view misunderstandings or disengagement as fixed barriers, but rather as signs that a different approach is needed. Now I know: I can come back the next day and try again, equipped with new strategies and a mindset of flexibility and hope.

Perhaps most importantly, the AMM project helped plant the seed for my TESOL Capstone Project. When paired with my earlier PERA project, which focused on representation and equity in school-wide practices, I began to see clear connections between curriculum, assessment, and access. I noticed that my ML students struggled disproportionately with our math assessments, not because of their math ability, but because of how the assessments were written and delivered. The PERA project taught me to look closely at patterns of exclusion. The AMM project gave me the confidence to take action. Together, they helped me realize that if the materials my students need don't exist, I have the ability, and responsibility, to create them.

This reflection is more than a record of an assignment completed. It's a reminder of the kind of teacher I want to be: one who is responsive, proactive, and unafraid to question the status quo when it doesn't serve all learners. The AMM project helped me see my classroom as a space of possibility, where thoughtful modification isn't just allowed, it's essential. I carry this mindset forward as both a commitment to my students and as the foundation of my continued growth in the field of TESOL.