

LTS AEI Internship Reflection

Giving/Modeling Directions:

The instructor gave instructions in various ways at the same time. For example, she would be saying instructions while maybe physically pointing to the board while maybe underlining or circling important things. I liked how the instructions were concise. I have an issue with making my instructions concise and not rambling so I liked being able to see this. When Nicolas and I taught the lesson plan we designed, the instructor gave us notes such as “tell students where to look before telling them about what they’re seeing, otherwise they don’t really tune in to what you’re saying.” This comment is helpful because the ordering of directions is also very important. It’s difficult to know whether adding something will help the students or distract them. Another comment was “it can make a world of difference if you tell students what format you want the answer in, e.g. number, letter, word, fingers, etc. and give an example.” This is referring to if you are asking students to give the answer along with the whole class or if you are going to ask them to answer questions based on a video or audio file. I think running through or giving examples is very important but it is easy to overlook this and assume students know what you are asking. The last comment I will address on this topic is “instead of asking for broad comments on an activity, you can ask a Q and have Ss answer with a partner.” This makes more sense to me because students are not as likely to share in front of the class. Something I often neglect in my lesson plans is pair work.

Classroom Community/Management:

The class was smaller which helped with building a classroom community. The instructor used pair work a lot which I thought was a good way for students to not only get more speaking time but it also allowed students to get to know other students better. For a warm-up, the question was usually about something casual or more personal to the students. For example, “what did you do last weekend” or “what will you do this weekend.” Having this kind of conversation everyday before class starts I think contributed to fostering a classroom community. This is also established and fostered through projects where students have the ability to be creative (like making videos or presentations) where they are able to choose a topic interesting to them and show their

personality through the projects. The instructor also showed how important it is to tie the topic or theme to the students as individuals. For example, one of the activities I was asked to design turned out to be a “left or right” activity. This is what the activity looked like:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1hQkboKYpvcXbM9BHJr-Dcse9Ef5_1NfWdtu0cnsnef4/edit?usp=sharing

Since the theme was budgeting or spending money, the questions were related to this topic (except for the first question which was just a warm-up question for students to understand what they were supposed to do). These questions not only ask the students to begin thinking about the topic, but they also ask the students to relate the topic to themselves (such as personal preference or facts about themselves). For Halloween, we had a sort of fun or party day where we had a costume contest, listened to scary stories, ate candy, and talked about superstitions and urban legends. The interns and the instructor were included in these activities so we got to participate and connect with the students in more of a casual or conversational way. Talking about these things is also tied to culture or one’s upbringing so it allowed for everyone to share this with the group in a fun way.

I also think I contributed to the classroom community by asking students how they are doing or relating to them about things that are stressful to them. An example is with the video assignment, students were stressed about having to watch themselves on video in front of their classmates and they didn’t think they were good at making videos and editing. I told them how I also wasn’t good with video assignments and talked about how I would mute the Zoom meeting if my video was being watched or I would plug my ears if it was in person. On the last day, a student in the class told me that they appreciated that I was kind and was friendly and helpful to them, so that felt good :)

Experimenting/Flexibility:

I noticed that the instructor was not afraid to take some time to explain something related to the activity but not necessary to complete the activity. For example, when the class was sharing fall activities they had planned on doing, the instructor drew pictures while talking about her plan to go to the pumpkin patch with her family and even took time to show students areas to go to using google maps. When a student shared about corn mazes or haunted houses, she searched those as well to show students. Since the instructor thought that there was a good class discussion going and that there was an opportunity for enriching the students' experience in the US, she decided to be more flexible with the time and activities to make room for that. Nicholas and I were also given a lot of freedom and opportunity to try new things. If we wanted to lead a quick activity or design a quick activity to lead, she allowed us to do so. She gave us guidelines for when we designed a full class lesson plan and trusted that the plan we came up with was good (and also made it clear that if something didn't work, it wasn't the worst thing in the world). Since I was assigned to a student (that I'm calling J) who was level 0-1 with special permission to attend classes at the AEI, I often had to modify activities or completely come up with other activities or strategies for her to participate in class. Since her level was so low, giving instructions or asking her questions in English was a little too difficult for her to understand so we had to work together to communicate and finish tasks together. This gave me an opportunity to be more flexible and more comfortable with not having a strict plan and allowed me to problem solve on the spot.

Conclusion:

What I learned from this experience overall is that I know more than I thought, but also need to have more practical experience in order to instinctualize the smaller details such as when giving directions or scaffolding a real class. Since I had a similar experience in my senior year of highschool with a student similar to J, it was cool to see how far I have actually come in terms of teaching. I really like having more practical experience because I feel that I don't really know how much I know until I'm asked to implement it. Being able to implement these skills makes me more excited to actually work.

Notes:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UHeWEjGYaVMXl1GnqGZqpPAW68EPdZ1syekTTeMr2kA/edit?usp=sharing>