A Common Sense Approach to Language Teaching

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Common Sense

- Good sense
- Practical wisdom
- Average understanding
- Community opinion
- Universally admitted impressions of mankind

An inner consciousness unifying the 5 outer senses
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Why do I teach? I look back in my mind to the reasons I gave when I started my PGCE course and began my teaching career but now they feel like a very small part of the answer. That is because the reasons I gave were for the benefit of someone conducting an interview. In those circumstances reasons are polished and positive, not real and sometimes derived from feelings of inadequacy. Now I have to answer that question for myself, which means I have to be completely honest.

My family—perhaps the most significant reason I am a teacher...
Away from home...
Not teaching but still wanting to teach...
Becoming an employed teacher...
Perhaps this is why I teach and why I want to research story telling and listening
So the conviction that I might contribute to making society more equal and break down some of the barriers that exist between and within people, provides me with energy and direction for teaching. It informs the way I ask the children to work in groups, identifying strengths and weaknesses within the group and also when they consider their own development and progress without involving notions of elitism and ‘being in the top/bottom group’ (very strong thoughts that fundamentally affect children’s self-esteem and are little talked about in school). Patterns of understanding, respect and a belief in mutual benefit can appear in the behaviour of the children as the direct result of teaching (children also seem to have a natural understanding that this is the right way to behave). I am also very interested in how traditional stories...

Last and most precious note
.. As I know my significance as a Father and a partner, I am able to feel that I am in the right place and this lets me simply be myself rather than strive to hit imposed targets or visions of what an inspector would want. When the children see a teacher being a story teller or a mathematician or an artist and not a sausage manufacturer of ‘standards’, they can become completely engaged with the learning because they see it making sense, making someone happy and fulfilled. Fraser [his child] and my Wife have both helped me to be the artist, mathematician or human being with doubts and questions that the children in my class need to meet everyday that they come to school.

http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsaiw/monday/paynteach.htm
Accessed 11/06/04
So what am I going to be doing for the next 2 years?

My logic

Fairness and love

References

Endnotes
### Case Study Authors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>#</th>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>University teacher educator</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International experience</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
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Case Studies Series/ Chapter Format

- Introduction
- Context
- Description
- Distinguishing Features
- Practical Ideas
- Conclusion
Case Studies Series/ The “What”

- What’s desirable?
- What’s new?
- What’s practical?
- What’s tested and true?
Case Studies Series/ The “Where”

- History
- Politics
- Language
- Geography
- Culture
- Region

- Institution
- Program
- Approach
- Policy
- Teachers
- Students
Writing “Context”

- Juxtaposition
- Articulation
- Coherence
- Creating relationship
- Creating perspective

Making the Common Uncommon
This chapter’s main aim has been to dispel the myth that journals are time-consuming for teachers [statement]. If structured using the four golden rules laid out in the Description section, journals can be effective and take up little of the teacher’s time [hypothesis]. The rules have worked for me [assertion]. In fact, 3 years after I had them in my class, six students are still writing journals to me (with their teacher’s knowledge, of course) [substantiation]. Finally, if this chapter tempts teachers to try out journals with their classes, then I will have succeeded in what I set out to do [projection]. (Quirke, 2001, p.34)
Conclusion 2

I return to where I began: with my own professional development. This project [action research] has allowed me to understand...

The project also led me to reflect at some length on... Two points here seem particularly relevant...

As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, the project described here constituted a milestone in .... Reconceptualizing the...allowed me to move forward...This development took the form, not of resolving my problems, but of helping me redefine them and move onto to new issues.... The three central tensions that I see follow....

My project, then, has not ‘solved my problems’; it has, however, helped me to see the situation in a radically new light, and to move forward toward new understandings of my work. This alone has made the process worthwhile. (Johnston, 2000, pp.171–2)
Conclusion 3

Although we have encountered a number of unforeseen obstacles..., each year we move forward.

(Feak, 2002, p.22)
Our collaboration began with the CS’s frustration over…. We conceived our collaboration as… We recognized that… and we tried to…. That we cannot claim… does not mean…. On the contrary, we believe that were there incentives for… such as ours, CSs would be well advised to…. Further, they would be best served…. In fact, what the present CS most importantly takes away from this collaboration is….

Although this case did not conclusively identify sheltering as…, it has prompted us to reexamine…. It suggests…. That… is another argument in their [sheltering courses] favour. (Schneider & Friedenberg, 2002, p.168)
Outcomes

Outcomes in... can be conceptualized in at least three ways:...

Milestones

... For one teacher... this meant... For myself, it meant... For all of us, it meant... The effect of these milestone experiences extends beyond the project itself.

Individual/group products

In terms of... there were successes and setbacks. Successes came through... I see some of this at work... where JNT talks about... [2 paragraphs from a teacher's Action Plan].

A more-group oriented outcome is... This came home to me in...

So what about the students?

Whereas... the project itself necessarily involved... Each of us gathered impressions from students through... These reports highlighted a number of key points:

... ...

Finally, here, an outcome with great resonance:...

Reflections

There are five points about the mechanics and nature of the project that I would suggest are worth repeating and considering for those about to engage in teacher research projects.

... ...

(Melles, 2001, pp. 153-156)
### A Reflective Writing Framework

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[1] Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages