

Assignment 5 Educational activity - Reflection Report

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After reviewing the reports from both Chen and Titia I've consolidated a couple of key situations which I would like to address, namely the lack of good pre- and post-class summaries and excessive apologising when a missing course component was discovered.

Situation: Summaries

The start of the class featured a slide deck I'd created for the express purpose of introducing the topic to the audience. This included a couple bullet points of what we would cover, but it wasn't called out as a lesson plan, and it didn't include learning objectives. This should have been included as it would help learners identify the lesson contents and schedule and mentally prepare for the day.

Looking Back

In an ideal lesson, these aspects would be covered sufficiently, and perhaps even I would have a checklist to go through before a lesson to ensure the presence of key components. However, I need to balance my perfectionism in this case, with the negative self talk that can result, and be measured in my evaluation of the situation, i.e. was it significant enough to warrant stress. In my ideal, every class is up to my standard of organisation because that's what I expect from others, and organisation is something I value quite highly.

Awareness

This feels like a process failure to me, it was such a trivial part of the lesson to include that missing it feels like a significant oversight of something quite basic and easy to check for. By not being more careful, I miss the "low hanging fruit" of lesson preparation, I feel that I'm limiting my students in their education.

Alternatives

A course day "checklist" I think would be an extremely valuable tool for me to develop for myself here. I use checklists in many other

contexts to ensure I'm well prepared, this would be an ideal tool to leverage in the teaching context as well. It gives me an adaptable, interactive tool to make sure that all necessary elements are part of the day's plan. The primary disadvantage is ensuring that it's used consistently across lessons, a problem which will need to be explored during a trial.

Trials

Before my next course, I plan to make a checklist and try going through it to see if it helps me achieve my desired level of preparedness and organisation for my courses. I want to try that out as a tool for ensuring lessons meet my standards and are useful to the students. I need to be careful that it actually gets used regularly, and I find a good way to integrate it in my workflow, maybe via regular calendar reminders.

Situation: Apologies

During the start of the course, students needed to connect to a web service only available within the Avans network. EduVPN allows access to this service, but it was not included in the instructions despite that it should have been caught during review. I apologised repeatedly for this mistake since I felt responsible for missing it. In the end one of the TOAs directed them through installing and it was fine.

In this case an additional bit of information was not made public - that the lesson had not been on my calendar, it was officially assigned to a colleague, and I was not told I'd be teaching until the day before. I wrote the materials over 6 hours of testing and re-testing, but it did not have time to be reviewed by any colleagues before the lesson.

Looking Back

I have high ideals for the success of lessons and this failure gives me strong negative feelings which puts me on the wrong footing at the start of a lesson. I value proper prior preparation.

Awareness

Even though there were clear process failures leading up to this point, the excessive apologies were my own responsibility and could have been avoided, I don't need to take responsibility for group failures like that.

Especially when I'm able to handle similar technological failures and work around those (e.g. when my cocalc stopped loading temporarily), it is remarkable that I feel so much responsibility for missing this section of the materials.

Alternatives

I saw some great examples from Titia during her courses, she was a really good role model here by acknowledging the issue without taking responsibility or apologising excessively. Even once is enough and then moving on to the resolution of the issue. The students know issues happen and don't care.

Trials

While I don't desire to intentionally introduce a failure to force me to practice this situation, I at least know I should work on my self confidence with handling these teaching failures.

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM
TO BE USED AT LESSON VISITS

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM BDB+, MODULE DIDACTIC SKILLS

BASIC INFORMATION

NAME PARTICIPANT:	Helena Rasche
NAME OBSERVER:	Chen Shen
DATE:	31/01/2022

START OF THE LESSON

The teacher welcomes the students at the beginning of the lesson.	Yes, briefly.
The teacher indicates which goal (s) this lesson is being worked on.	Yes, a new interactive web-based coding tool (quite cool to see)!
The teacher indicates the usefulness and added value of the lessons.	Yes, with a focus on the good features of ColCALC (in comparison to Jupyter and RMarkdown).
The teacher will announce the structure of the lesson.	Minimally, can be added in the future.
The teacher activates the prior knowledge.	Yes, by linking back to Jupyter and RMarkdown.

CORE OF THE LESSON

The teacher actively listens to the students.	Yes.
The teacher responds adequately to non-verbal signals from students.	Hard to tell, as the session was an online session.
The teacher uses examples from practice.	Yes, it was a very hands-on session.
The teacher uses different teaching methods that fit the learning objectives.	Yes, through demonstration and instructed steps.
The teacher uses activating forms in the lesson.	Yes, through questions.
The teacher keeps order in her lesson.	Yes, through verbal instructions.
The teacher gives compliments and feedback.	Yes (more feedback than compliments).

<< CORE OF THE LESSON	
The teacher knows what he is talking about (expertise and preparation).	Yes!
The teacher gives clear instructions.	Yes, sometimes step-by-step instructions.
The teacher uses both auditory and visual support in his instruction.	Not largely present due to the content.
The teacher checks regularly whether everything is clear and provides additional explanation if necessary.	Yes.
The teacher uses concrete examples to explain the material, if applicable.	Yes.
CONCLUSION OF THE LESSON	
The teacher closes the lesson.	Yes, the teacher thanked the students for joining the session.
The teacher evaluates the lesson and learning goals with the students.	Not really.
The teacher looks ahead to the next lesson.	Not really.
PERSONAL PRESENTATION	
How was the interaction between teacher and students?	Nice and organic.
How is the use of voice of the teacher?	The use of voice was clear, but perhaps a bit on the monotonal side.
How does the teacher handle resources?	Quite well (lots of recourses covered).
TOPS	
Great expertise knowledge/competent. Very hands-on session with lots of practices. Very attentive to students' questions.	
TIPS	
Add an outline at the beginning and a summary at the end. Perhaps add more illustration/demonstration prior to practices.	

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM
TO BE USED AT LESSON VISITS

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM BDB+, MODULE DIDACTIC SKILLS

BASIC INFORMATION

NAME PARTICIPANT:	Helena Rasche
NAME OBSERVER:	Titia van der Ploeg
DATE:	November 26 th 2021

START OF THE LESSON

The teacher welcomes the students at the beginning of the lesson.	Yes, you say welcome everybody and then: Titia is here because I am in BDB
The teacher indicates which goal (s) this lesson is being worked on.	It is not a lesson about CoCalc, the students are teachers. You mention briefly the content of the class.
The teacher indicates the usefulness and added value of the lessons.	Not explicitly but it is quite clear because they are introduced to a new system they will use to create courses.
The teacher will announce the structure of the lesson.	Yes, there was an overview
The teacher activates the prior knowledge.	Not really, you refer to a previous meeting and show a few slides to get everybody aligned.

CORE OF THE LESSON

The teacher actively listens to the students.	Yes
The teacher responds adequately to non-verbal signals from students.	No. It is possible though online with such a small group. You could refer to facial expressions or to soft laughing (due to the course name of MiaoMiao my course is a legend).
The teacher uses examples from practice.	Yes, by showing how it works and by showing warning signs and buttons and explaining how to deal with them.
The teacher uses different teaching methods that fit the learning objectives.	Not many. You start explaining a bit and then to teachers have to implement. This is a kind of a practical, and I think this way of teaching suits the objective.
The teacher uses activating forms in the lesson.	Yes, all the time by letting the teachers work on their project within CoCalc and by letting them also share their screen.
The teacher keeps order in his lesson.	Yes ☺
The teacher gives compliments and feedback.	Yes you do. You clearly explain what to do and if somebody is not doing it the right way, you are very patient. You say: yes, correct, fantastic etc.

<< CORE OF THE LESSON	
The teacher knows what he is talking about (expertise and preparation).	Yes and gives clear explanations. I like the slides in between with texts like: Not convinced yet? They trigger me and I am curious to read the next slide.
The teacher gives clear instructions.	Yes. However, in the beginning, when the teachers are logging in, no screen is shared. I could have been helpful when one of the teachers would show what he or she was doing. In stead you react when one asks to get an example 'my screen looks different than yours'
The teacher uses both auditory and visual support in his instruction.	You used ppt at the beginning, with some nice (focusing) slides. During class you share your screen and so do the teachers.
The teacher checks regularly whether everything is clear and provides additional explanation if necessary.	Yes
The teacher uses concrete examples to explain the material, if applicable.	Yes. It is all example ☺
CONCLUSION OF THE LESSON	
The teacher closes the lesson.	Yes
The teacher evaluates the lesson and the learning goals with the students.	Not explicitly
The teacher looks ahead to the next lesson.	Not applicable?
PERSONAL PRESENTATION	
How was the interaction between teacher and students?	It is nice to see how calmly you explain information, how you give space to the teachers. The result is that there is a lot of interaction, that everyone dares to ask or contribute. What strikes me is that not all participants say anything during this meeting. you could ask them if it's clear, or let them show their results in the group. In that way you know for sure that they participate and have understood your explanation.
How is the use of voice of the teacher?	Your voice is very pleasant to listen to. The tempo is good, you have a low, calm voice. Sometimes I hear a melody when you go up in pitch.
How does the teacher handle resources?	You know what you are doing. Even if the program crashes, you keep calm and solve the problem. This is very nice because there will be no/less stress in your class.
TOPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, this was a very nice and useful lesson you conducted. You are very friendly, welcoming and inviting, which resulted in high participation of the teachers throughout your class. Your instructions are clear, which leads to understanding the material you teach. 	
TIPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the beginning you apologize a few times. In my opinion once would be enough. Also in the beginning I missed an example executed by one of your teachers. Probably that could have helped them. I did not hear all the teachers. You could have asked more frequently if everything was clear and make sure that everybody was following you. Maybe a break-outroom with pairs could have worked. Let them work for 10 minutes and then present the results. 	

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM
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BASIC INFORMATION	
NAME PARTICIPANT:	Helena Rasche
NAME OBSERVER:	Chen Shen
DATE:	2022-02-01
START OF THE LESSON	
The teacher welcomes the students at the beginning of the lesson.	I think this occurred just before the video started which makes sense.
The teacher indicates which goal (s) this lesson is being worked on.	Same as above
The teacher indicates the usefulness and added value of the lessons.	Not as much, but I think the value was self-evident for students, since you were going to help them understand how to resolve ongoing and new situations they encounter, the value of that is very self-evident especially since they experience these problems.
The teacher will announce the structure of the lesson.	She immediately discusses the plan for the day, that a difficult situation should be described. I missed a timeline of the day, maybe it was in the slides, but I really liked the "(10 minutes)" that you do after slide titles to show what happens now/for how long.
The teacher activates the prior knowledge.	Yes, great, colourful slides doing the recap of what is an intervention! I watched another teacher do this with keywords and then asking the students to supply the definition/description, maybe that's something useful for the future to really force them to recall course materials.
CORE OF THE LESSON	
The teacher actively listens to the students.	Yes, great eyecontact and focus as the students began to describe their difficult scenarios and responses at the appropriate interval. Echoing back the situations at the end of their sharing indicates good understanding of the students and feels very supportive! :)
The teacher responds adequately to non-verbal signals from students.	Yes, you noticed a student with something to add and gave them space in the lesson to contribute.
The teacher uses examples from practice.	Yes, by bringing student examples they're even more relevant to them and easier to grasp for students than if you'd provided abstract examples.
The teacher uses different teaching methods that fit the learning objectives.	Yes, here the lesson is really problem-solving based, and the group discussion model interspersed with a guiding presentation to organise the discussion fits nicely. The quite thinking periods are surely useful for students who need that decrease in distraction to think. I'm not sure I would involve more work forms here!
The teacher uses activating forms in the lesson.	Yes, all the time by letting the students lead the discussion, or ask each other questions about the situations
The teacher keeps order in her lesson.	Yes
The teacher gives compliments and feedback.	Yes, providing feedback after students share their relatively vulnerable difficult situations.

<< CORE OF THE LESSON	
The teacher knows what she is talking about (expertise and preparation).	Absolutely.
The teacher gives clear instructions.	Yes, the students all understood the assignment that was due, brought a relevant situation, and were prepared to discuss the facts of their matters. The reminders before the activity starts are also useful, the “come up with at least 3 solutions” when they’ve just started to write to reinforce the bounds of the activity.
The teacher uses both auditory and visual support in her instruction.	Good use of colourful powerpoint slides to enhance great discussion! (The text was too small from the position of the camera, but I’m sure it was good as well) A whiteboard or similar might have been a good addition to help e.g. write down student problems as you go, but overall it was quite good with attractive visuals.
The teacher checks regularly whether everything is clear and provides additional explanation if necessary.	Yes, e.g. after discussing facts, she checks in with the quieter students who haven’t been contributing to the discussion yet. Also good summarising of the “bullet points” of what to do in the same situation next time.
The teacher uses concrete examples to explain the material, if applicable.	Yes, using the situations of the students was quite good, and way more concrete. I really liked this approach, better than just having them discuss or theorise how they would handle this or that hypothetical situation.
CONCLUSION OF THE LESSON	
The teacher closes the lesson.	I liked the reflection section where you invited students to ask questions
The teacher evaluates the lesson and the learning goals with the students.	Yes, the reflection slide served this purpose to summarise what they’d learned during the day.
The teacher looks ahead to the next lesson.	Yes, with a nice “important dates” slide which was good :)
PERSONAL PRESENTATION	
How was the interaction between teacher and students?	Very good, good discussion, good back and forth between the discussion
How is the use of voice of the teacher?	Great, good variety in tone and emotion in the voice to reinforce various points or empathise with students.
How does the teacher handle resources?	The time issue was handled well when the discussion of the first issue ran on, there was still time to discuss the spanish problem.
TOPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall this was a really nice lesson to observe, I really enjoyed the balance of discussion between you and the students. Very friendly and welcoming, you ensured everyone discussed and even the quieter students contributed As someone who apologises too much, I appreciated learning from your Spanish discussion how to convey that a situation was bad and would be changed without taking personal responsibility for it. 	
TIPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I’m not sure if it’s just my personal preference, but I missed having sort of collaborative list making exercises / summarising discussion on a whiteboard or so. I think maybe I would’ve struggled with that – unless I was constantly taking notes and organising them I would’ve lost the summary a bit Some of the students were more talkative and some more quiet (esp on left side of video) it’s hard to tell from a single lesson if those students are talkative at other times, and the balance is ok overall, but maybe an opportunity to get them to contribute a bit more. 	

