

# Principled Pedagogical Practices of ELC Teachers

ELC teachers strive to exemplify the following pedagogical practices for themselves, their students, and all who may observe their classes.

## 1. Rely on course outcomes

Teachers understand the course outcomes for the skill and proficiency level in which they teach and effectively communicate them to students. They can describe student behaviors that demonstrate these outcomes, and they successfully design classroom-learning activities that help students progress toward achieving them. Teachers engage in ongoing informal and formal assessment activities and provide personalized feedback based on the course outcomes.

## 2. Plan lessons effectively

Teachers carefully plan lessons so language development will be optimized during the class period. Teachers plan to incorporate an appropriate number and variety of learning activities that are meaningful and engaging. These activities build incrementally from more simple uses of language to more complex uses that are authentic and communicative. Teachers consider the best ways to ensure that communication of explanations and expectations are clear and concise in order to maximize student language practice. This includes preparing the board or other materials well ahead of class time. Teachers also prepare contingency plans in order to adjust for a variety of unforeseen circumstances and changing student needs.

## 3. Optimize class time

Teachers feel a sense of urgency about using as much of the classroom time as possible for meaningful language practice. They convey this sense of urgency to their students by starting class on time and by carefully managing activities and transitions in order to maximize communicative language practice. However, rather than rushing through their lessons, teachers skillfully connect activities and ensure that students achieve the needed level of mastery before moving on. They anticipate potential threats to effective use of class time such as problems with technology, excessive student questions, inappropriate student behaviors and so on. Their responses to such challenges are principled and appropriately bring the class back on course. Teachers also end class on time.

## 4. Cultivate a positive learning environment

Teachers understand the necessity of a positive learning environment in order to optimize learning. They recognize that positive teacher-student interaction is at the heart of the environment they seek to cultivate. They foster genuine concern for their students and their learning based on principles of respect and trust. They leave personal concerns behind as they plan and teach their classes. They are consistent and equitable in their classroom practices and help students to see how classroom policies and activities facilitate language development. They create a non-threatening learning environment that is cheerful, upbeat, and optimistic. They inspire students to do their best, and they help them experience the joy of effectively applying what they learn. They sincerely praise students and regularly express confidence in their abilities.

## 5. Evaluate learning effectively

Teachers are committed to the ongoing evaluation of student learning. They skillfully use diagnostic tests, classroom instruction, language practice, and formal and informal assessments to clarify individual learner needs in relation to established course outcomes. They also regularly solicit qualitative input from their students regarding learning materials and methods. This information is then used to make appropriate adjustments in lesson planning and the selection of materials and methods used in the classroom. Teachers help students to understand the rationale for adjustments that are made as well as areas where continuity may be necessary.

## 6. Utilize homework strategically

Teachers understand the potential for effective homework to help students achieve course outcomes. Rather than assigning *busy work*, they carefully consider the quantity and specific kinds of learning activities that are needed by their students in order to foster language development or to help them better understand and diagnose learner needs. They are able to effectively communicate the rationale for various types of homework to their students. They demonstrate the value of the homework in the way they follow up and process the homework. They know when it may be appropriate to review certain types of homework in class and when the class time should be used for other activities. They utilize student performance on homework to inform their ongoing instruction in the classroom.

## 7. Provide meaningful and timely feedback

Teachers know that feedback is essential to effective learning. They regularly provide students with feedback that is meaningful—it focuses on the most important language elements for each learner; students understand the feedback, why it was given, and how to apply it. Though teachers ensure that ongoing feedback is timely, they are careful not to overload the students' cognitive ability to process and apply the feedback. Along with feedback, teachers provide students with abundant opportunities to practice and apply the feedback in a variety of learning contexts.

## 8. Exemplify professionalism

Teachers value and participate in orientations, training, and workshops. They are well prepared, punctual, and complete all administrative tasks on time. They act and look the part of a professional in the classroom including adhering to the dress and grooming standards and maintaining appropriate teacher-student boundaries. They are respectful and courteous with their students and other teachers with whom they share resources such as classrooms, offices, technologies, and learning materials. They consistently evaluate their own teaching and seek to improve through feedback from students, administrators, and peers. They appropriately apply the relevant feedback they receive.

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