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Current Issues in EFL/ESL
Policy - Spring 2025

Overview: This three-hour-per-week course offers review and practice regarding EFL/ESL course development focusing on two overarching issues: authenticity and autonomy. Both of these ideas have been around since the 1980s, with the advent of CLT and more cognitive approaches to learning and teaching, but they still not have received the attention they deserve and therefore classify as current. In addition, much research has been conducted with these two issues in recent years. In the course we will be unpacking the issues of authenticity and autonomy from a modern perspective with the idea that they should function as guides to EFL/ESL course development. As such, in the course we will be endeavoring to integrate elements of authenticity and autonomy into all aspects of course development, lesson planning, and evaluation. With the advent of new technologies, both of these issues have become readily doable, making them more contemporary.

Objectives: This main objective of this class is to give the students an opportunity to delve deeply into the issues of autonomy and authenticity as guiding principles for EFL course design, lesson planning and evaluation. This is a not a theory class. In this class we will be doing a lot of hands-on, practical work related to these two issues. Additionally, these are not issues of level or age, although how they are applied is different according to these variables. It is thus intended that the course directly impacts all teachers no matter what their teaching situation.

Texts and Materials

In this class, a wide range of different materials will be used. These include a variety of different types of teaching materials (both L1 and L2) as well as journal articles and academic books. All of these are available through Snowboard.

Classroom Texts

The regular weekly readings will be in the form of carefully selected journal articles. Entire books will also be provided as an additional resource, but they are not part of the acquired reading. All these texts will be made available via Snowboard.

Additional Materials: There will also be different materials loaded up each week in snowboard. These materials typically take the form of practical teaching materials or those related to actual teaching practices.

Methodology

Language Policy: Following the tenets of international educational situations, students are expected to produce all course work in English. This means all assignments, writing, and discussion is expected to be conducted in English. Korean, or any other language, can and should be used appropriately as a means of enhancing and integrating understanding of the course materials, not as a way of avoiding English or classmates. Students are expected to follow international standards on language use and sensitivity with English as our designated working language.

Design: This course is to be conducted as a student-centered, blended learning class and to do so effectively we will be using several different on-line tools in the running of the course. In general, the course will be managed using the Sookmyung Snowboard system. All sorts of support materials will be loaded up into Snowboard including class videos, summaries and assignments in advance. Students are expected to come to class fully prepared.

Classroom: The class sessions will be discussion-oriented and contain a wealth of interactive activities. In class we will be unpacking ideas together. The class sessions also try to serve as a model for the issues of authenticity and especially autonomy. Interactions in class seek to develop awareness and strategies for each of the issues discussed. Class sessions are to be seen as training sessions for the students regarding these issues with the intention that they will implement these ideas into their teaching as they see fit, but with a high level of reflection and awareness.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. The class sessions are where we discuss and practice using (retrieving) the information newly encoded. As such, they are pivotal for student success in the course. Two or more absences will result in a significantly lowered final grade. Being late twice is counted as an absence. Arriving more than half an hour late is also counted as an absence. Students themselves are responsible for all material covered and assigned in class during their absence. If you are going to be absent and know it beforehand, make sure you contact me as far in advance as possible.

Assignments: Students will be given homework assignments on a regular basis. In this class the assignments will usually take the form of reflections, but participants will also be asked to bring in materials to sharing and discussion as well. All assignments will be posted into Snowboard, and students can put their assignments right there into the Snowboard system for feedback and evaluation.

Reviews: In this class there are going to be two days set aside for reviews. The first one comes on Week 8, April 28 and this reviews the issue of authenticity. The second comes week 15, June 16 and this reviews the issue of autonomy. For each of these reviews the student needs to pick a specific topic related to the focal issue and write up a plan for how they are going to implement that in their class.

Grades: Final grades will be based on performance in the following categories.

Class Participation	30%
Assignments	30%
Review Authenticity	20%
Review Autonomy	20%

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