Teaching with Technology
Linguistics 495
Epstein
Week 1

Pedagogy Overview

What am I trying to teach?

- Before deciding on how you teach, it is important to know **what** you are teaching. What are the new skills, knowledge or attitudes that your students should acquire?
- One way to think about your educational goals is to categorize them by Bloom's Taxonomy. For example:
  - Do you want your students to recall information or do you want them to evaluate it?
  - Do you want them to learn to use a computer program or do you want them to understand how the program works?
- Knowing what kind of knowledge and skills you are teaching will help you develop your instructional strategies.

Why give a lecture?

- Gives you control over the subject material, and allows you to present a lot of material in a short period of time.
- It's how you learned.
- It's what you're comfortable doing.

Why you shouldn't lecture:

- Students only have a 15-20 minute attention span.
- Students forget material quickly when they learn passively.
- Not all students learn well by listening.

Techniques for enhancing your lectures:

- Incorporate two or three pauses in your lectures to allow students to compare notes with each other. You can also ask students not to take notes for a 20 minute lecture, and then have them get together to create a lecture summary.
- Give short writing assignments during or at the end of a lecture ("short writes"). N.B. a one-minute writing assignment takes about 3-5 minutes to implement. Some possible assignments:
  - What was the main idea presented in (this part of) the lecture?
  - Describe the concept of ____ in your own words.
- Give ungraded quizzes in the middle of the lecture. If the quiz can be answered by a show of hands (i.e. a multiple choice quiz), you can get immediate feedback on students' comprehension of the material.

Collaborative learning

- Students work together in small groups to accomplish a common goal.
- Helps students develop critical thinking skills because it requires them to take a stance and defend it.
- For effective collaborative learning, you must provide students with some structure.
    - Students must be prepared to do the assignment. They should know the necessary background materials and analytical framework (e.g. they've all read chapter 5; they know how to diagram noun phrases).
    - It's often helpful to give students a brief prepatory worksheet so they can prepare their own ideas to discuss with their classmates. This way they are more likely to learn from each other by presenting and defending their ideas and not just passively absorb the ideas of one person in the group. Collaborative learning is <u>not</u> unstructured learning.
- Problems
    - It's time consuming.
    - Not all students work together well and not all students will work equally as hard.

Questions to ask yourself before incorporating active learning techniques into your lectures:

- How does this activity meet my course objectives?
    - What do I want my students to know?
    - What do I want my students to do?
- Are students prepared to do the assignment I'm giving them in class? Do they have the skills? Will they have read the necessary materials?
- Do I have a clear set of instructions for the activity? Should students be working as individuals, pairs or small groups?
- Do I have realistic time expectations? Remember that in-class excercises generally take longer than you may have expected. Also, you need to be prepared to reorganize the class schedule if activities take longer or shorter than expected.
- What are the physical limitations of my classroom? Are the chairs and desks fixed? Am I able to wander among the students? Remember to check out your classroom design before planning any activity. By the same token, how many students are in my class?
- Am I comfortable using these techniques?