Students' Journals, a Source of Information for Assessment

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This article reports on a small-scale project conducted with first semester preservice students of an ELT teacher education program at Universidad Distrital during the first semester, 2004. This article explores the role of journals as a rich source of information for assessment. Assessment is understood as nonmeasurement (qualitative) techniques that provide information useful for instructional planning (Genesse and Upshur, 1999). The following two related questions guided this small-scale project: How can students' feedback inform my decision-making in ongoing instructional planning? What kinds of assessment information do students' journals provide? The findings concentrate on assessment information provided by students' journals by analyzing their weekly entries. The results suggest that valuing instructional activities, identifying language skills, strengths and weaknesses and students' experiences with language learning outside of school are the most frequent types of assessment information that constitute rich first-hand information for a teacher's decision-making in ongoing instructional planning.

Key words: journals, assessment, decision-making, ongoing instructional planning

Este artículo describe un proyecto a menor escala llevado a cabo con estudiantes de primer semestre del programa de Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Enfasis en Inglés de la Universidad Distrital de Bogotá durante el primer semestre del 2004. Este artículo explora el papel que cumplen los diarios como una fuente rica de información con propósitos de evaluación. Se entiende evaluación como las técnicas cualitativas no medibles que proveen información necesaria para llevar a cabo planeación instruccional (Genesse and Upshur, 1999). Dos preguntas guiaron este estudio : ¿Cómo puede la retroalimentación de los estudiantes guiar mi toma de decisiones con respecto a la planeación instruccional continua? ¿Qué tipo de información evaluativa proveen los diarios de los estudiantes?. Los hallazgos encontrados se basan en la información dada por estudiantes por medio del análisis de las anotaciones semanales de los diarios. Los resultados sugieren que la valoración de actividades de instrucción, la identificación de fortalezas y debilidades en las habilidades de lenguaje y las experiencias de los estudiantes con la lengua fuera del aula, son el tipo de información evaluativa mas frecuente y constituyen una rica fuente de información de primera mano para guiar el proceso de toma de decisiones del maestro en la planeación instruccional continua.

Palabras clave: Diarios, evaluación, toma de decisiones, planeación continua de actividades de instrucción.

Introduction

In graduate school at Universidad Distrital I took a seminar on testing and evaluation in which participants were invited to enhance their reflective decision-making regarding evaluative processes in the ELT curriculum. Following that line of thought, I became interested in exploring students' journals as a source of assessment information that could inform my instructional decisions in class. My interest in evaluative processes was primarily concerned with the information teachers can collect for assessment purposes that can inform us about factors that affect student achievement. Among some of the factors that inform teachers' decision-making in the classroom we have, on the one hand, students' backgrounds, prior educational experience, medical history, family literacy and education. Other factors, on the other hand, comprise learning strategies used to complete tasks, attitudes toward learning and school, interests in specific instructional activities and study habits. There are methods of collecting information inside the classroom such as journals that allow the collection of information about students' backgrounds and teaching and learning processes. This type of information is important for teachers to obtain since they usually base their class methodology on students' interests and abilities. Journals are far easier to collect than other information sources such as conferences or interviews and a lot more reliable and systematic than informal conversations with students. Our reality has us faced with large classes, which makes the task of learning about our students a lot more difficult by means such as conferences or interviews. Journals, on the other hand, are time savers since they are kept during time outside the class and allow teachers to obtain information more expediently.

Justification

In the context of higher education, particularly the teaching/learning process with students pursuing a major in English teaching, this small-scale project is important for a number of reasons. First, using students' feedback contained in their journals constitutes a primary source of information for evaluation purposes, principally for ongoing instructional planning that responds to students' current and changing needs. Also, journals encourage student involvement in and ownership of learning and the assessment process itself (Genesse and Upshur, 1999).

Second, there are important contributions that journals bring when they are incorporated into an EFL course. Journals give students the opportunity to provide feedback about their learning experiences ; for instance, their learning style; whether they, enjoy working in groups or by themselves; strengths and weaknesses they

experience in their learning process; and their own learning goals, etc. Journals also represent a low-risk freewriting practice which is contextualized and directly related to the course goals. In sum, students provide feedback in their journals that teachers might not have access to otherwise.

Besides the contributions of this small-scale project to the students' learning process mentioned above, it is important to undertake this type of research in this particular setting because the "Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés" program seeks to educate teachers; therefore, these students will not only benefit from the application of their feedback for instructional planning and the low-risk free-writing practice that the journal offers, but also will be able to use this experience in their future career as teachers. The reflective tone preservice students can develop through journal keeping is also a valuable source for future reflective practices (Richards and Lockhart, 1994) such as the teaching practicum and their future as in-service teachers. Quintero (2003) pinpoints the need for research that focuses on classroom assessment, since it is latent that in Colombia, a policy of the use of standardized norm-referenced achievement test is becoming increasingly used. For our future teachers, it is of paramount importance to experience first assessment as an ongoing process; that is, a process that is an integral part of instruction and based on everyday classroom activities. As Quintero (2003) asserts, the most important implication of this view of assessment is that teachers (and teachers to-be) need to be well-informed individuals who make assertive decisions in the classroom by exercising critical questioning and finding answers to those questions. It is my belief that through journal keeping about their learning process, preservice teachers can have firsthand experience regarding the act of asking themselves critical questions about their own learning process and figuring out ways to resolve those questions by themselves and with the help of their teachers. Since they become known in a personal way by their teachers, later on, such first assessment practices can be put into practice when they are occupying their roles of EFL teachers. They will come to understand that assessment has to be promoted in their classrooms and become aware of the implications of viewing assessment as only standardized norm-referenced achievement tests.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned contributions, I adopted journals as the tool that would inform me about students' learning processes and was able, as a result, to make decisions in class. The tenets of this educational practice are summarized in the next section.

Literature review

This small-scale project is grounded on the concepts of assessment, evaluation and journals. In order to narrow the scope of such terms, assessment is viewed as a key aspect for the purpose of ongoing instructional planning in the classroom and journals are used as the data collection instrument that will provide students' feedback that informs instructional planning. Let us begin by exploring the definition of assessment.

Assessment

The terms evaluation and assessment are used in this particular study to refer to nonmeasurement (qualitative) techniques that provide information useful for instructional planning. According to Genesse and Upshur (1999), assessment of student achievement is the WHAT and HOW MUCH students have learned in order to monitor the effectiveness of instruction, to plan ongoing instruction and for accountability purposes. However, they propose that assessment should go beyond the assessment of achievement. For them, decision-making in the classroom is not only about achievement; it is also about the processes and factors that affect student achievement. Likewise, Quintero (2003) discusses the purposes of assessment that teachers must understand, from which diagnosing individual student needs (e.g. assessing developmental status, monitoring and communicating student progress, certifying competency, determining needs) is closely related to the view of assessment being discussed here.

Another important term used in this project is **assessment information,** which is the type of information as regards how students have acquired the language skills necessary to keep up with content instruction, information that examines students' progress to determine if they are ready to proceed to the next instructional unit(s) and for planning the next unit(s), how effective the unit(s) was, whether it was too easy or difficult and whether the materials were interesting and adequate. The type of information retrieved from the students will foster the understanding of student achievement and, therefore, the planning of appropriate and effective instruction for them.

Another important aspect worth being considered in the view of assessment that is being discussed is teachers as active agents in the mediation of the learning experience, which enables them to understand closely the formal and informal aspects of curriculum experience of all students and how to access it. Quintero (2003) turns our attention to the definition of journals and their value as a method of collecting information is offered below.

Journals

I was inspired to use journals since I first came across the book *Strategies for Success* (Brown, 2002). In this book, Brown addresses English students by telling them that a journal is a "very informal diary about your own feelings and thoughts as you study English. It's easy to write a journal and it will help you to be a better student". The idea of giving students a tool with which to write about their learning process was very appealing to me and I started to implement it right away. My first experience with students' journals was in 2002 and I have continued to implement it ever since, every time with various purposes. The particular experience that this article presents portrays journals as a tool to gather students' feedback that later will inform ongoing instructional planning and decision-making in the classroom.

Below, I present a series of views about journals that can help us understand their nature and usefulness. According to Wilcox (1998), a journal is a place where our thinking can become visible, a place where we toss around ideas, consider what others think, make connections between new and prior information, examine our own thinking strategies, and judge our own learning. Wilcox presents a taxonomy, of thinking journals according to content and language of thinking; from her taxonomy the responder journal keeper contents include interpretations, reactions, questions, comments and through them he/she illustrates, expresses, describes, selects, justifies, deduces, supposes and sorts.

Journals are also defined as places where students can try out their expressive voices freely, without fear of evaluation. Students can write about academic problems and progress to sort out where they are, how they're doing and perhaps discuss what to do next (Fulwiler, 1991). Given the free-writing nature of journals, they can be used for diverse purposes. They can be used as class starters, to summarize important aspects of a lecture or lesson, as a vehicle for posing and solving problems, to monitor the students progress through the class, to give students the opportunity to write to each other about concerns and questions raised in the class, etc.(Fulwiler, 1991).

For the purpose of this small-scale project, journals were regarded as a method of collecting information for evaluation purposes that can be likened to conversations between learners and teachers (Genesse and Upshur, 1999). In this sense, journals are also referred to as interactive diaries or dialogue journals. Journals provide information that can be collected using, for instance, interviews or questionnaires. Genesse and Upshur (1999) pinpoint the uniqueness of journals because they are methods for collecting information that are extensively under the control of students because they can write whatever they want and however they want.

There are a number of benefits to dialogue journals and Genesse and Upshur (1999) highlight six of them. First, they provide useful information for individualizing instruction; for example: writing skills, writing strategies, students' experiences in and outside of school, learning processes, attitudes and feelings about themselves, their teachers, schooling and their interests, expectations and goals. Second, journals increase opportunities for functional communication between students and teachers. Third, they give students opportunities to use language for genuine communication and personalized reading. Fourth, they permit teachers to individualize language teaching by modeling writing in their responses to student journals. Fifth, they promote the development of certain writing skills and sixth, they enhance student involvement in and ownership of learning. All of the above benefits of journals are pertinent to this project, especially numbers 1,2,4 and 6.

There are certain features journals should have in order to be useful for evaluation purposes. First, they should be interactive. This means that students should share their journals with the teacher and he/she, in return, should respond to them in a written form since the journal is a space for students to explore and extend ideas; therefore, content is what matters and not a focus on the grammar and mechanics of the language used. Avoiding evaluative comments on form in the students' entries enhances spontaneity and sincerity. The type of feedback should focus on meaningful communication and, when this does not happen, comments should ask for clarification on the part of the students. This should keep the process going and, therefore, ensure that journals are really interactive and conversational, which means that you shouldn't impose structure or limits on what the students write.

Given the advantages journals have, I decided to implement this instrument in my class. I told my students that journals were an invaluable learning tool because they could freely write their thoughts, ideas and feelings about their own learning process without being judged or graded. I also explained that the journal would be the means to dialogue with them by responding to their thoughts and concerns, thus, leading me to a better understanding of the learning process of each one. I added that they could also comment on the instructional activities done in class and could feel free to make suggestions to implement in class. This account of the process was appealing to them and we started it after the first week of classes. They were able to give their unique and personal touches to the journals by choosing the type of notebook and layout of the entries. Some of them decorated their journal pages with drawings and colors. They responded positively to my feedback and, as the semester progressed, they became more confident and critical in their entries. The journal helped create rapport in the classroom as well.

A literature review on the use of journals with preservice students in the Colombian context has shown me that they are widely used as both tools for reflection and as a source of data for analysis. My exploration of literature was not successful in terms of the use of journals as a tool for assessment. Having this aspect in mind, I found three relevant studies that show the ample use of journals in preservice education. Viafara (2005) conducted a study with student-teachers in which he designed tasks within a reflective framework to support student-teachers' learning in their practicum. One of the reflective tools that he used was journals, which he said "traditionally have been widely used in teacher education courses to provide participants with an opportunity to engage in one of the most successful manners of reflection: dialoguing with oneself or someone else" (p.61). The student-teachers not only shared their journals with the researcher but also among themselves, thus creating a group dialogue for peers to react to by answering or posing questions, providing suggestions, narrating experiences, agreeing and disagreeing, and so forth. As part of the main gains in using journals, Viáfara states that journal writing, along with other reflective tasks, not only facilitates student-teachers' reflections, but also informs the supervisors, whom he calls counselors, about issues that arise from the practicum in order to arrange meetings to address student-teachers' needs and expectations. A second study, conducted by Quintero and Guerrero (2005), used journals with eighth semester students in order to provide a space for reflection on critical pedagogy. The focus of the study was to investigate student-teachers' discursive actions as they were reflected in their journal entries. They observed how the student-teachers' individual discursive actions evolved as they reflected on critical pedagogy tenets and aspects that are crucial to their lives as professionals. Some of these tenets are reflection and being critical and sensitive to the human and social dimension of themselves and their pupils. In a third study conducted with eighth semester student-teachers, the author (2005) used student-teachers' journals as a source of data to inform her study about the way student-teachers construct their own image as teachers. The reflections of the journals contained rich information about the student-teachers' beliefs as regards teaching and learning, their philosophies as teachers, how they engaged in collaborative work with their teachers, supervisors and other peers, among other significant aspects.

In this theoretical framework, I have discussed the characteristics of assessment and evaluation that apply to this particular small-scale project and the value of assessment information that students provide. Afterwards, I included a description of what journals as tools for collecting assessment information represent for the project I undertook and briefly described the story of this implementation. Finally

I presented a review of studies conducted with preservice students that had used journals as either a tool for reflection or a source for data.

Research design

The research questions that grounded this small-scale project were the following: How can students' feedback inform my decision-making in ongoing instructional planning? and What kinds of assessment information do student journals provide?

This small-scale project was oriented towards some objectives that included identifying information about students' backgrounds and about the teaching and learning processes that is useful for ongoing instructional planning and to make decisions on instructional planning that responds to students' current and changing needs.

Participants

The students that took part in this small-scale project were first semester students from the TEFL preservice program at Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas in Bogotá. Most students in this class belong to socio-economic stratum 1,2 and 3 and have graduated from both public and private schools.

The TEFL preservice program includes in its plan of studies 10 hours of English instruction per week. Classes are medium to large size ranging from 15 to 25 students in the first levels of English.

The class was composed of twenty four students. They all wrote journals during the semester as part of the class activities. However, for the purpose of data collection and data analysis, only five students were selected. Following a purposeful criteria for selection, two male and three female students (age ranging from 16 to 20, average age 18) were selected; that is, the criteria for selection was based on choosing those students whose journals provided relevant and enlightening data in order to answer the questions of this project. Likewise, a balance of female and male participants was sought.

Instruments for data collection

Students were invited to take part in this small-scale project by writing their journals as part of the regular English classes. All students agreed to keep their journals outside of class time in the form of weekly entries. I obtained their oral permission in order to use the data and their anonymity was guaranteed for the publication of results. Over a 12-week period, students' journals were collected and commented on every other week. Journals were analyzed for feedback that

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could inform my decisions in ongoing instructional planning. Every time I collected journals, I kept records of important observations and insights from the journals that could be used for instructional planning.

Data analysis consisted of examining the data carefully to search for salient patterns. Emerging commonalties were used to construct the final categories. Below I include an account of the main findings of this small-scale project. Data extracts taken from the journals are used to provide and reveal the participant's perspective. The extracts of the participants have not been modified or grammatically corrected in order to ensure authenticity.

Findings

As mentioned previously, the data were collected through students' journals. The findings were intended to shed light on the two related questions that were proposed for this project, namely, how students' feedback can inform my decision-making in ongoing instructional planning and the kinds of assessment information that student journals provide.

As the questions are closely related to one another, the final categories answer both questions. The categories proposed to give account of the findings are called Valuing instructional activities, Identifying language skill strengths and weaknesses, and Students' experiences with language learning outside of school.

The first category portrays students' appreciation of instructional activities. Such information was a key in the decision-making process of further instructional activities. The second category comprises the students' strengths and weaknesses in their learning process, thus providing information crucial to design activities that tackle specific learning areas. Finally, the third category informs of the students' engagement in autonomous learning activities outside the classroom. Such information enriched the possibilities to implement new activities in class. Let us now turn to the account of each category.

1. Valuing instructional activities.

In this category I discuss how students value instructional activities. I begin with this category first because most of the students' entries included information that valued specific instructional activities. Such information is varied, rich and covers appreciating group activities, individual activities, multimedia sessions, skill based activities such as listening, reading, speaking, writing and pronunciation; sketches, and movies, among others. Their entries also included aspects of instructional activities that were not so effective or that presented difficulty to

carry out. Such information was very valuable for making decisions on the type of activities that were more appropriate for students trying to tackle their likes and interests in certain topics; for instance, music and sketches. The discovery of these two elements provided for the association of students with others that shared similar interests and likes. It also helped to grade the level of difficulty that best suited the majority of the students in the class. Most group activities were planned taking into account the grouping of more advanced students with those who had a lower level of language command thus creating an atmosphere of collaboration. On the other hand, students' feedback also showed that they were able to identify learning objectives in most of the activities. Below I include an extract from a student's journal that illustrates the appreciation of a group work activity :

"Any way the activity of Claudia's group was very joyfull. I think that in some future she'll be an excellent teacher, I'm begining to know Diana and I think she will be good teacher too. About the saying good bye activity and the greeting activity is interesting the fact that as in Spanish in English there are many ways of you to say good bye, since that class I have many more ways of to do it and I joy it very much playing with the meaning of what I want to say..." (S1, journal entry : Feb. 23rd to 27th)

In this particular extract, a male student shows his appreciation of another group's activity. Likewise, he reflects upon the cultural aspect of "saying good bye" and "greeting" somebody in English by establishing a connection with his mother tongue.

Another student writes :

"For example, the wednesday's game was very interesting and funny, because some partners sang songs, and we practiced the pronunciation. The thursday class I learned a new vocabulary with the pronunciation and the meaning. The science of Coldplay [the song The scientist by the British group Coldplay] was an excellent form to practic our pronunciation and familiarize us with the didactic material. My objectives or goals is to learn, to write, to understand and teach this class. I'll work very hard and I going to give the best for me."
(S2, journal entry: Feb. 6th, 2003)

This female student's entry serves as a thermometer for measuring not only the appeal of certain instruction activities but also their usefulness by identifying specific learning objectives. That's the case of the activity based on a song, which she

not only found attractive but also found to be an excellent opportunity to practice pronunciation. Finally and what is really interesting is that both students see these instructional activities as a source of modeling teaching practices for the future.

The following extract from a female student presents a suggestion for future instructional activities:

> "I wanna make a suggestion about a organization of the class. I think that maybe we are working the topics a little mixed, for this we could distribute the time of a particular way. For example, if we work the simple present tense, one day is for structures, another is for grammar, and one for each abilitie, to listen, to speak, to write and to read, or something similar."
>
> (S3, journal entry : March 23rd to 26th)

This entry shows in Genesse and Upshur`s (1999) terms, student involvement in and ownership of learning. Entries of this kind, in which students propose variations and suggestions for instructional practice, were found in several of the students' journals. This student made me realize that they have different views and approaches to learning and teaching. I learnt that she profits from long, intensive sessions which is not necessarily the case of many other students in the class who benefit more from less extensive and varied activities. Also, I need to highlight the value of beginning a process of reflection that, in fact, should start in the early stages of any teacher education program.

2. Identifying language skill strengths and weaknesses.

This category provides important insights to the questions I posed. In the students' entries I found information about their strengths and weaknesses in their learning process. Their journals were a firsthand source of information for planning instructional activities appropriate to their level as well as activities that aimed at reinforcing and reviewing in order to tackle students' needs. I was able to identify specific problems through their journals that otherwise I wouldn't have been able to.

> "I'm a little happy but also I'm a little sad because in this week I had an experience in which I realized that my grammar is very good and I'm satisfied because of it, however my speaking is not very good and in fact it should be because my grammar is good. I would like that you help me to develop and to improve my speaking part in the classes, I would really appreciate it."
>
> (S4, journal entry : March 29th to April 2nd)

In this extract, this male student was engaged in reflection but also in an authentic dialogue. He felt the need for more opportunities for speaking in class and his as well as other students' concerns regarding the same point were taken into account. I included 15 to 20 minute speaking activities 2 days a week, in pairs and small groups. Students engaged in conversation/discussions based on questions or prompts featuring grammar points (past tense, present tense and present perfect). I also proposed sketches which were an appealing activity for the students. I include the following entry of this student which reads :

> "...I was also practicing the activity of the sketches and I've learned some things and I'm exited to act and to interpret my character although I'm not very good acting and I also a little shy I hope to do it well"
> (S4, journal entry : April 12th to 16th)

Finally, the following entry from a female student illustrates that students also provided specific language difficulties related to the topics studied in class.

> "...I saw that the group had some confusions when we speak about adjectives, nouns, and verbs. We ought to have or have to be careful with some words because we can change the intention of the sentence."
> (S5, journal entry : March 1st to 5th)

This specific concern was taken into account and I decided to dedicate a class session to play a game of word categories and to carry out a practical exercise of word classification.

3. Students' experiences with language learning outside of school.

Students' entries were a rich source of information concerning the type of experiences with language they engaged in autonomously outside the classroom as an extension of class activities. As I read their journals during the semester, this type of data helped me make some instructional decisions. For instance, I included more songs, movies with closed caption and an authentic writing activity that consisted of e-mail exchange with a penpal from an ESL webpage. Below I include some extracts from 3 students that can help illustrate the type of autonomous language experiences that they execute outside the classroom.

1."In this week I was totally concentrated in English because I present a simulacrum of TOEFL. The curious thing of this it's that the topic of "count, non-count nouns" that we had seen it helped me in some of the points of the test and I didn't have idea about that. Although I didn't get an excellent score, I was one of the best of the group which I presented with, and I fell very proud for it."
(S4, journal entry : April 19ᵗʰ to 23ʳᵈ)

2."The work of this week was focused in past tense, and I have learned many, many things, because in this tense I have many doubts. However, the work have been very complete and very key for my own progress, besides, in this week I did something that is very (VERY) important for me. I wrote the lyrics of some songs. I sat in my bedroom and I listened the song two or three times and I just wrote. I was felt very happy and satisfied with my big progress until here."
(S2, journal entry :April 26ᵗʰ to 30ᵗʰ)

3."On Tuesday's class, I revised my e-mail, and I received a mail of Oswaldo, He is an engineering student. He comes from Mexico. In this mail he spoke me about his life. This experience was very nice for him and for me, 'cause I know a new friends while I practice English."
(S5, journal entry : March 29ᵗʰ to April 1ˢᵗ)

In this part I have discussed the major findings that helped me answer the questions for this small-scale project. I gathered students' feedback in three major categories : Valuing instructional activities, Identifying language skill strengths and weaknesses and Students experiences with language learning outside of school.

In the following paragraphs I discuss the implications of journals as a method for collecting information for evaluation purposes.

Implications

Earlier in this article I cited Genesse and Upshur (1999) who propose going beyond assessment of achievement and that decision-making in the classroom is not only about achievement but also about the processes and factors that affect student achievement. Using students' journal feedback information, I was able to transcend assessment of achievement and use assessment information to make decisions in the classroom.

Some of the decisions initiated by the students' feedback included more opportunities for speaking (sketches, 20-minute conversation/discussion sessions

and retelling stories from read-aloud events) and review sessions by means of games and practical activities. I also learnt about students' likes and interests and planned listening activities that involved music (the most popular genre was rock), movies (preferably cartoons) read-aloud from fairy tales and folktales such as *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Frog Prince*, *The Greatest of All*, among others.

There were implications beyond decision-making of instructional activities. Journals were an excellent vehicle for permanent communication and dialogue and an opportunity to get closer to students in more humanistic terms. However, there is a drawback implicit in this instrument of data collection that I particularly experienced: Students who have a higher level of writing skills can provide rich assessment information; conversely, students with a lower command of the language can only account for superficial information, mostly descriptive inventories of the activities done in class, making it difficult to discover students' specific difficulties in the learning process, attitudes and feelings about themselves, the class, the teacher and their expectations and goals. The former students were greater in number than the latter. Since journals account for individual perceptions, I relied more on the information provided from the more advanced ones. As a consequence, the tendency of all my decision-making process was to tackle the majority of the students' needs, perhaps leaving a sense of alienation in those who could not see their needs, expectations and interests represented in the instructional activities.

Conclusions

Because decision-making is the core of any evaluation process, journals are an excellent source of feedback that can help in this process and improve our teaching practices. The kinds of assessment information provided by the students included how they valued and experienced instructional activities, identifying language skill strengths and weaknesses and students' experiences with language learning outside of school. Such information informed my decisions in ongoing instructional planning as to what to teach and how to teach it and what needed to be incorporated as well as what was necessary to be reviewed. In sum, the assessment information provided by the students through their journals helped me make decisions that responded to students' current and changing needs.

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