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As can be guessed from my up till present focus on seminars, I do not believe that
lectures are very useful in legal education. I doubt their effectiveness for developing
the required skills in the students. However, since they are still part of legal education
as we know it, I decided to think about ways to make it more useful and relevant for
the nature of the profession. I came up with what I call the ‘TCS’ model that stands
for theory, case and story. It is a formula for constructing a more adequate law
lecture. I applied the scheme with both my Family law and Contract law lectures but
I found that its benefits were more significant in my Contract law lectures. I present
my findings in the form of a report.

Report

As said, the ‘TCS’ formula arose from the need to make lectures more useful
particularly with reference to the needs of legal education. It stands for a three-stage
process for structuring law lectures. The lecture begins with an exposition of the
theory, then a discussion of its application in case-law and then a real-life story
illustration of how the theory could arise and be applied by the courts. The system
fosters clarity, understanding and application. Application is an aspect that is
particular and fundamental to the nature of legal education. The third part of the
formula is therefore very significant for law teaching. The formula also works in a
cyclic way such that the process can begin again from the first stage in order to reinforce understanding. The law teacher can begin with the theory again to throw more light its application. The system also helps disentangle the usually complex nature of law topics. These complexities are endemic to the nature of law and therefore cannot be helped. But in lecture delivery, the formula can be used to reduce the appearance of the seeming tangles of the law. This is particular important for students who are still in the process of developing their legal reasoning skills and may be overwhelmed by the huge amount of information. My main aim for the formula is to achieve appropriate structure and clarity. For me these would be the evidence of the application of the formula.

With relation to clarity and structure, I was able to benefit from the feedback of my mentor Dr. Stephen Skinner, the then Director of Staff Development, Rose Lonsdale and a colleague from the English Department, Dr. Luke Thurston. I have included copies of their comments and my responses to them.
Teaching Observation Sheet

Name: NKIRIKA AHIAUZU
Observer: STEPHEN SKINNER
Date: 8/2/05
No. of students: LECTURE CLASS
Start time: 3:10
Finish time: 3:50
Group: FAMILY AND CHILD LAW
Topics: FAMILY LAW — COHABITATION
Aims: STRUCTURE

Learning Outcomes:
Grasping the policy problems and considerations with relation to cohabitation.

Any particular factors/problem taken into account when planning the session?
Clarity

Any changes made since similar previous sessions? (if applicable)

Any aspects of this session which are new to you?
No

How have you incorporated suggestions made previously? (if applicable)

Against which criteria do you wish this session to be considered?
DELIVERY OF LECTURE

Do you wish to be given advice on any particular aspect of your teaching in this session?
WAYS OF IMPROVING CLARITY OF LECTURES
4. **Student Responses:** General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.

The students paid attention.
With experience they will gain confidence in addressing large groups.

5. **General:** Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student – teacher rapport? Were the objectives achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.

Generally yes.
There was also a good balance between law, discussion and identification of areas of difficulty & concern.

6. **Future areas of focus:**

Pace - meaning delivery to fit 45/50 mns.
Confidence - will come with experience.

7. **Strengths:**

Command of subject, enthusiasm.
Course Member's Notes and Observation
(Please complete after your post-session discussion with your observer.)

1. How helpful were the comments about the observation?
   They were helpful in letting me know the areas that I need to improve on.

2. In the light of the comments made are you likely to make any changes?
   I intend to work on my assertiveness and confidence in lectures.

3. Any further comments about the session and observation?
Teaching Observation Sheet

Name: Nkiruka Ahiauzu  
Date: 22nd February 2005

Observer: Dr Luke Thurston  
No. of students: 115

Group: Family and Child Law  
Start time: 3.10 pm
Finish time: 4.00pm

Topics: Divorce

Aim/s: Lecture technique

Learning Outcomes: Appreciation of the legal issues relevant for divorce

Any particular factors/problem taken into account when planning the session?  
Clarity

Any changes made since similar previous sessions? (if applicable)

Any aspects of this session which are new to you?  
No

How have you incorporated suggestions made previously? (if applicable)

Against which criteria do you wish this session to be considered?  
Structure of lecture

Do you wish to be given advice on any particular aspect of your teaching in this session?  
How to improve lecture technique
Observer’s Comments


The lecture was well planned, its content effectively organized by its aim: to present and analyze Facts A and B in the current UK Divorce law. The aim of the lecture was clearly set out, and its teaching methods (spoken presentation/handout) were appropriate to that aim.

2. Presentation: Beginning class, introduction, continuity with other sessions, students’ prior knowledge. Clarity of presentation. Pace. Attitude to subject matter. Use of appropriate reinforcement. Ending the session – summary, future work etc.

The lecture was the second in a series of classes on the Divorce law, and will be followed by further lectures on the same theme. Ms Ahiauzu distributed handouts and then began briskly, taking up the theme where it had been left in the previous lecture. Her presentation was extremely clear, taking students through the points outlined on the handout, and moving at a steady pace so that they could take notes without rushing. She kept close to the structure of the handout, and I noted that although at various places the material was quite ridiculous, she was able to keep the students’ minds focused and prevent the outbreak of giggling. She closed the lecture with a good summary and some indications for reading and preparation for the next lecture.

3. Technique and Aids: General apparatus – board. OHP, use of handouts. Question and answer technique. Other evaluation procedures, class management, instructions to students.

Ms Ahiauzu had prepared an excellent handout, with points and references well-spaced and clearly legible. She avoided the use of any further visual aids in order to concentrate student attention on the material at hand.

4. Student Responses: General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.
All of the students took notes diligently, and seemed to be paying full attention.

5. **General**: Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student – teacher rapport? Were the objectives achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.

   Effective communication was certainly achieved. The technique and delivery of the lecture were entirely appropriate.

6. **Future areas of focus:**

7. **Strengths:**

   **Course Member’s Notes and Observation**

   (Please complete after your post-session discussion with your observer.)

   1. How helpful were the comments about the observation?

      The comments gave me a bit more confidence about my lecture technique.

   2. In the light of the comments made are you likely to make any changes?

      I hope to build on the strengths of the lecture technique.
3. Any further comments about the session and observation?
   No
Teaching Observation Sheet

Name: NKIRUKA AHIAUZU
Observer: DR STEPHEN SKINNER
Group: Law of Contract
Topics: Performance

Date: 21st February 2006
No. of students: 200
Start time: 11:00
Finish time: 2:00
Location: A12 Hugh Owen

Aim/s: Clarity

Learning Outcomes:
Understanding the dynamics of performance with relation to contracts

Any particular factors/problem taken into account when planning the session?
My main interest is how to make the topic as easy to grasp as possible

Any changes made since similar previous sessions? (if applicable)
Yes, with relation to hand-outs

Any aspects of this session which are new to you?
No

How have you incorporated suggestions made previously? (if applicable)
I have tried to incorporate as much as possible into the hand-out while making it clear and easy to follow

Do you wish to be given advice on any particular aspect of your teaching in this session?
I would like to get feedback on the clarity of the presentation was
Observer's Comments

1. **Teaching Characteristics:** Preparation, selection of aim/objectives, statement of aim and learning outcomes. Selection and organisation of content. Planning. Choice of teaching/learning methods

   Well prepared.

   Clear aims - well structured.

2. **Presentation:** Beginning class, introduction, continuity with other sessions, students' prior knowledge. Clarity of presentation. Pace. Attitude to subject matter. Use of appropriate reinforcement. Ending the session - summary, future work etc.

   Useful introduction situating lecture in relation to previous classes.

   Clear movement through points - structured.

   Confident manner.

   Presentation needs to be louder and pace more steady (slightly slower).

3. **Technique and Aids:** General apparatus - board, OHP, data projector, use of handouts. Question and answer technique. Other evaluation procedures, class management, instructions to students.

   Good use of clear handout containing essential information.

   Needs to interact with audience a little more - check whether they are following, call for questions, perhaps give a break half way for catching up/asking questions.
4. **Student Responses:** General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.

Most students were following — some signs of some students needing to look at others' notes for missed points (but this always happens!)

5. **General:** Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student – teacher rapport? Were the outcomes achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.

Main points covered — combination of handout and explanations quite effective — could be improved re volume/pace —

6. **Future areas of focus:**

7. **Strengths:**

Structure — relaxed style.

Useful, clear handout.
1. How helpful were the comments about the observation?

They were useful in letting me know my progress from the last observation on the 8th of February, 2005.

2. In the light of the comments made are you likely to make any changes?

I intend to look into ways of interacting more with the students during the lecture.

3. Any further comments about the session and observation?

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Personal Reflection on the Cycle and Implications for Future Practice

On reflection on the use of the formula I have realised that it not only helps me in the delivery of the lecture but also in the preparation. The TCS formula really begins from the way the lecture is prepared and structured to achieve the required aims. As said, the formula emphasizes that application is a vital aspect of legal education and the students get to appreciate this. Many of our students go on to take up careers as solicitors and barristers and this system better prepares them for the challenges they will face in the industry. It is the role of the law teacher to try as much as possible to prepare them for these challenges while still focusing on the more academic aspects of the profession. The profession is ultimately a practical one. It is one that requires skills in doing as well as in knowing. The system tries as much as possible to incorporate these two aspects of the law and present a more holistic picture of the dynamics of the profession. Even for students who do not go on to take up the wig, the system makes for clarity and ease of understanding. It brings home the reality of the theories that they are exposed. It makes them understand that law is ultimately about real events and this should therefore be the focus of their learning of the law.