

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this portfolio to the memory of my mother, Judith Griffiths Mattison, who passed away ten years ago this July. She is truly a lover of languages and her family; she has been my inspiration and support for pursuing an international teaching career. Judi and my father, Richard, had the courage to live abroad when I, my brother Craig, and my sister Jennifer were very young. I consider my five years' residence in Caracas, Venezuela to be a motivating influence on my career as a language teaching professional because, although I am a citizen of the USA, my first memories as a child were from another country. This perspective has given me an etic, or outsider's, point of view towards my own culture. I see myself as a citizen of the world. Thank you for this gift, mom and dad.

Acknowledgements

A project this colossal cannot be done by one person alone. I would like to thank the following people for their support, contribution, and feedback:

- My third cousin Jessica Griffiths, step-mother Eileen, and step-brother Justin for their support
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- Travis and Joy Long for the inspirational opportunity to demolish their home

Welcome to my portfolio! The past six months have been filled with humility, hard work, and reflection on my past four semesters of graduate work in the MA TESOL program at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS). As much as I have looked forward to this opportunity to display my knowledge, skills, awareness, and attitudes on language and educational linguistics, it has also been a time that has demanded self-discipline, time management, and focus. Certainly, something good must come out of a process that requires these strengths of character.

I hope that the reader of this portfolio will find my diversity of experiences to be one major theme that runs through this artifact. I did not enter the MATESOL program at MIIS because I was a specialist in Linguistics; I entered because I was a generalist in languages and international living experiences, and I wanted to build connections between those experiences with a graduate degree that was broad enough to span them all. Even though these experiences are a blessing, I am cursed with the decision of what to include in this portfolio when I have so many artifacts in my life from which to choose. I selected the documents located in this portfolio because I could answer, “yes” to all of the following questions:

1. Does the project reflect my core values as a teacher or language learner?
2. Can the project contribute to the depth and breadth of the four-strand coverage required in the portfolio?
3. Does the project represent a significant learning experience from my four semesters of study at MIIS?
4. Will the project be something that will still represent my core values as a teacher and language learner five years in the future?

What are my core values? Those can be seen explicitly in section A2: my position paper. Everything in this portfolio is in harmony with, and contributes to, my position on language, language teaching, and language learning. For example, one of my core values is to support students' learning with authentic materials that model language structure and use in a way that is a feasible goal for highly proficient users of English. My B1 product, a revised and expanded language test, includes these qualities because the content is from proficient users of English in Salinas who learned the language in the same environment that the students are being tested in.

My summaries in B2 include projects and papers that will support my professional practice with pedagogic, sociolinguistic, and linguistic awareness. What is significant about these summaries is that they all had the potential to be viable B1 revision projects, so they won the consolation prize of a summarized inclusion in my portfolio.

Despite my short career in teaching English, I feel like I have a substantial amount of material to include in my professional products area, section C. The reason for this is that I have been conscious of my opportunities for professional development and have capitalized on them during my time here at MIIS. As the reader will see in my CV, it has a long list of language program administration positions, all of which were started during my time here at MIIS. Other products, such as the curriculum outline and marketing plan executive summary, support my work in language program administration.

Finally, I think that the feedback I have given to others in section D reflects my ability as a tutor and teacher to support peers to express their ideas clearly. The section also includes feedback I have received. I hope that it is evident that I take feedback from

my peers and professors seriously and that I have incorporated their comments into subsequent versions of products that are located in this portfolio.

Looking back on the process of assembling this portfolio, I have learned that it requires less thought and more trust. If I think too long about a summary or revision, then I don't make progress. I need to trust that the work is already done; now is the time to polish, insert, and move on. Another thing I have learned is that freewriting and multiple drafts of ideas work much better than attempts at perfection in one sitting. Writing the position paper and polishing the other written works has required me to go to a completely new level of pre-writing. I don't know where I would be without Peter Elbow (1973, 1981)! I will be back with the reader in section D to give a brief self-evaluation of my portfolio. In the meantime, enjoy reading my portfolio's contents!

References

- Elbow, P. (1973). *Writing without teachers*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Elbow, P. (1981). *Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process*. New York: Oxford University Press.