

Irene Macías | i.macias@bath.ac.uk
University of Bath
Bath, England

The Fluidity of Teacher and Learner Roles: Taking the Concept of Authenticity Even Further

The aim of this presentation is to trace a personal journey encapsulated in my teaching for the first time a Latin American Cultural Studies course in the academic year 2006-07. I want to frame my experience within the concept of “authenticity” discussed in [Carolyn Kreber's essay in the inaugural issue of IJ-SoTL](#). My aim is to describe my experience designing and delivering a course in an area where I lack expertise and has therefore entailed taking on a sequence of roles: learner, teacher, followed by permeable receptor to students' own narratives of the content I had taught, and finally assessor of students' performances. Each role has been openly informed by the previous ones. I will argue that my teaching been very consciously informed by pedagogical considerations given that I had just approached the subject as a (discerning) learner, but also, and crucially, that I have sought to create a “community” between myself, the subject and the students through the sharing of my enthusiasm and personal perceptions, the receptiveness to students' own perceptions and past experiences, balanced at all times by “what is in the important interest of students”.

I will explain some of the classroom techniques used that have contributed to creating a safe environment in which to learn by, amongst other things, encouraging and celebrating diversity. I will also share students' responses to a specially designed end of semester questionnaire, as well as their formal and informal feedback.

In the session I will use a number of multisensorial communication strategies (power point, board, handouts) with the aims of recreating my teaching practice and encouraging attendees' participation.

My presentation aims to contribute to ongoing pedagogical lines of enquiry within Higher Education, and to demonstrate how one can arrive at a scholarship of teaching through the experience of learner and subsequently enhance that scholarship by keeping an ongoing dialogue with the students outside conventional power dynamics.