

## WEEK 7 READING – Carolyn Fairjones

**Task:** In his article *'What is the research evidence'* (2003), Hattie identifies five major dimensions of expert teachers (p6). The third of these is: Expert teachers - 'can monitor learning and provide feedback'. Hattie then outlines three attributes of this particular expertise - C8,C9,C10 (p8-9).  
Research question: Discuss Hattie's research findings. (Focus your discussion on the third dimension of expert teachers.) Does your experience as a teacher concur?

**C8** *Expert teachers are more adept at monitoring student problems and assessing their level of understanding and progress, and they provide much more relevant, useful feedback*

This attribute mentions that expert teachers are more responsive to students and better able to “detect when students lose interest and are not understanding”.

This attribute is contingent on teachers having a thorough understanding of each of their students. This includes their social, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds; knowledge of the typical stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development; and an understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements. In addition an expert teacher would need to apply a practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of different approaches to learning.

I feel it is essential that teachers share information with each other about students' learning needs. I do this for classroom teachers of my ESL students but I am uncertain as to whether the student information I share is retained by the relevant teachers and used to inform programming, to differentiate their curriculums.

I am fortunate to have small student numbers in my classes which, I feel, gives me more opportunity to know, understand and respond to each student's needs. I can imagine that larger class numbers would not offer the same opportunity.

**C9** *Expert teachers are more adept at developing and testing hypotheses about learning difficulties or instructional strategies*

This attribute infers that expert teachers must have a wide repertoire of strategies/hypotheses that they understand and are able to apply in a classroom. It is the application and the confidence to 'have a go' and test hypotheses that is key. An expert teacher therefore, needs reflect critically on teaching and learning practice; to extend and refine teaching and learning practices and work productively and openly with colleagues when reviewing teaching strategies.

Using student responses diagnostically provides me with opportunities to manipulate my knowledge of ESL teaching methodologies to suit. I use an eclectic mix of strategies so that my lessons are accessible for each member of the class. I provide a 'risk-free' learning environment for my students, and for myself.

**C10** *Expert teachers are more automatic*

This, to me, is a no-brainer. If you know what you are doing and how to do it, and have done it many times... the chances of the behaviour becoming automatic are great. It is a bit like learning how to drive a manual car.

This 'automaticity' is a precursor to being able to multi-task, to have the cognitive capacity to have a number of things being considered simultaneously, some consciously, others sub-consciously.

I often find that my mind is two steps ahead of my mouth and I automatically choose from 'proposed alternatives/options' in my mind in response to whatever else is going on. I sometimes think that I

know where something is headed but have to adapt my thoughts/strategies when it goes somewhere different. This is a common occurrence in an ESL classroom.