

## **The Danielson Framework and You**

*by Elke A. Savoy and Virginia Jama*

Late in the day on Friday of our annual conference, we did not expect many participants, nor could we gauge their enthusiasm. A full room materialized, however, and the attendees were hot! As we started to introduce the topic of teacher planning and evaluation using the framework designed by Charlotte Danielson (Danielson, 2013), teachers stepped right in. Some said, “I never heard of this at all.” Others cried, “We are in the middle of being judged and *tormented*” and “Our students are English learners, and how can they respond to all that is required?”

The purpose of the workshop was to introduce two of the four domains of the Danielson Framework: Planning and Preparation and then Instruction. These domains seemed the most relevant for an introductory workshop. New York City and other systems had adopted the framework, and teachers’ jobs were on the line if their planning and knowledge were somehow judged “Ineffective” or if their instructional capability did not reach the “Effective” level. These factors would be part of teachers’ annual job evaluation and that probability made them nervous and emotional.

At the beginning of the hour, we allowed some serious venting—and feared that negativity would spoil the day! This did not happen, as we encouraged outraged participants to express their feelings honestly and acknowledged how they felt and what they had experienced in schools using the Danielson Framework.

A good feeling settled in as the workshop design promoted a review of Planning and Preparation:

- Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy
- Identifying important concepts and understanding relationships
- Reflecting recent developments in content-related teaching

In the Instructional domain, we reviewed such items as:

- Promoting participation of all students in the class
- Setting clear expectations and having students express in their own words what they are learning and why it is important for their progress
- Adjusting to degrees of student learning to ensure student success

As the end of the hour neared, participants kept discussing the issues and exchanging names and emails. A brand-new professor from Columbia University, Teachers College stood up, introduced herself, said it was all new to her and thanked everybody for letting her in on the Danielson Framework issues. Isn’t that what NYS TESOL is all about, and why we keep going to conferences? For us, it was enlightening and encouraging that as our participants readily plunged into the topic, they increased our understanding of how the framework is affecting teachers of English learners statewide.

### References:

Danielson, C. 2013. The framework for Teaching: Evaluation Instrument. The Danielson Group.

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