

# CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO

Capstone Project: EFL Portfolio

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### **Abstract**

After I graduate from Peabody College, I expect myself to work as a EFL educator in China. Hence, the first part of this portfolio would be my visions working professionally as a EFL educator. There are three philosophies of teaching that I would want myself to prioritize: 1) identify learners identities, particularly in thinking how their community literacies might be helpful for L2 learning/acquisition; 2) bring learners existing knowledge to class; 3) train learners to think bi-/multilingually. The second part would be the artifact analyses in which I select my professional work from the learning trajectories in the past two years and conduct analysis via the lens of professional knowledge areas and TESOL domains. Last but not least, I would articulate the application to practice part. In this part, I connect my philosophies of teaching and artifact analyses to the implications in the field of education and make further considerations.

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## Teaching Philosophy

**High-Quality EFL Instruction.** My two-year professional study at Peabody College began with very limited knowledge in the field of education and educating English Language Learners. I studied applied translation as my undergraduate major and thus I spent a lot of time studying language, including how people speaking English or Chinese as their L1 might vary in oral/written language habits and/or thinking patterns. As time went by, I started to question myself in thinking how I might make the knowledge of language/studies of society and culture helpful for people who might struggle with learning them. I began embedding those thoughts into my coursework and challenging myself to find more connections between language and education. To introduce a bit more about my linguistic background, I am a native Mandarin speaker and I am also a bi-dialectal speaker in Sichuanese and Cantonese. I acquired Sichuanese as the native dialect and I could speak fluent Cantonese. I learned English as a foreign language in China.

The reason why I brought up my education and linguistic backgrounds is because they largely shape how I envision my EFL instruction to be high quality and helpful for learners. English education in China is taking reform and has already made great improvements, but compared with the U.S., where teachers and institutions are granted with more authentic opportunities to practice multiculturalism and multilingualism, my country still has many areas to reflect and improve upon. Specifically, I envision a high-quality EFL instruction to be encompassed with three aspects: 1) honor learners community literacies and gather and implement them into classroom practices; 2) build a constructivist classroom culture in promoting learning opportunities across disciplinaries; 3) train learners to think bi-/multilingually.

**Honor Learners Community Literacies.** Unlike the U.S., where multiethnic/immigrant communities are embedded within the concept of transnationalism that

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shape the social/cultural diversity of this country (Jiménez et al., 2009), China is comparably homogeneous in terms of its demographic structure; therefore, I argue that it is necessary to adapt the instructional practices of community literacy. “Our first instructional recommendation is for teachers and students to gather and sort examples of literacies from the above domains. Depending on the particulars of the teaching context, teachers and students alike could be involved in the collection process” (Jiménez et al., 2009, p. 22). I thought this quote would be particularly helpful for educators at the early stage of understanding and implementing community literacies, because it provides us with an additional option beyond teaching in the classroom and that is approaching another world where our students live outside the classroom/school. There are other illuminating community literacy practices could be implemented to facilitate language learning/acquisition, but I would want myself to start from identifying the number of communities in my class and locating the place where I could collect the literacy samples. Nevertheless, it is true in China that newly elementary graduates are granted with the opportunity to attend (public) middle schools located at the district(s) where their residences are registered. This enactment of educational policy could possibly construct communities alike of which appear in Jiménez et al.’s article: children’s multiple identities as daughters/sons, siblings, students, and peers, under this circumstance, are formulated and shared within a close-knit group. They speak the same language/dialect and they go to schools around the neighborhood. As a teacher, I am probably aware of how my students communicate with people at school, but often overlook her/his language use/other identities outside school. In other words, getting to know more about students’ communities provides the teacher another lens to understand their language backgrounds. Taking my past experience of tutoring an elementary learner as an example, he was having a strong resistance to English at the beginning, and I thought he would not be able to learn this well if he did not

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like it, but I was wrong. He told me later that he just felt overwhelmed when he had to learn a new language that was completely different from his L1. He basically had no idea what was the teacher/text talking about, so he wanted to escape. In the next few sessions, I prepared him with prompts in line with his identities (both inside and outside school)/experience and received positive feedbacks. The student's transition persuades me that how much potential a young learner could have in terms of L2 development if her/his identities are echoed/adapted in instruction. In other words, I think it would be necessary to identify learners linguistic and cultural identities (De Jong, 2011) when it comes to the implementation of community literacies. Instead of bringing those fragmentary pieces to class without explicitly discussing with learners in thinking how the literacy samples linguistically and/or culturally resonate with their language experience, the activities might not be able to achieve intended learning outcomes.

**Bring Learners Existing Knowledge to Class.** In envisioning my teaching to EFL learners, the establishment of constructivist culture would build upon learners knowledge (what they have already known) and thus promote learning and fulfill their expectations of learning (what they might have not known). In light of this, I found the constructivist classroom portrayed in Windschitl's article motivates me to think how I, as the language teacher, might want to facilitate learning across learners backgrounds/experience and disciplinaries: "During the next two weeks, these students will develop an understanding of how mammal species interact with one another, cope with the environment, and follow the natural cycles of reproduction. Concepts such as "competition for resources" and "reproductive capacity" – whose definitions in other classes might have been memorized – arise instead from a meaningful and multifaceted context. These concepts are built on the experiences of the student and are essential, interconnected considerations in the success of the habitat design. This is one of the many faces of the constructivist classroom" (Windschitl,

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1999, p. 751 – 752). I especially admire the idea of embedding the learning of technical terms/academic language within meaningful and multifaceted context, because it adds new pedagogical ideas onto my existing knowledge in thinking what the teacher could do to improve the processes by which learners acquire a new/additional language. I would consider consulting with teachers of other disciplines like mathematics and history to examine how academic language/terms vary across contexts and how that might affect learners linguistically and cognitively when it comes to language acquisition.

Furthermore, as I was envisioning specific moves to implement constructivism, Windschitl's work informs me how teachers might misunderstand constructivism theory: "Many educators, in their early stages of understanding, create for themselves a kind of naïve constructivism whereby they place an inordinate amount of faith in the ability of students to structure their own learning – a faith that interferes with the development of more sophisticated views of constructivist teaching" (Prawat, 1992, as cited in Windschitl, 2002). Since I am also at the beginning stage of applying/implementing the theories into classroom practices, I think this would be a helpful reminder for me to constantly reflect upon. That being said, aside from building instruction upon learners diverse backgrounds/experience, I might want to explicitly teach them why are we bringing those funds of knowledge to class and how they might connect back to our content learning/acquisition of language. To end this section, I look forward to seeing how the idea of constructivism would work in my class to optimize learning. There might be difficulties particularly at the beginning during which I might need to negotiate theories with real classroom practices, but I still have faith in achieving our final learning outcomes and thus promote students engagement to the learning processes.

**Train Learners to Think Bi-/Multilingually.** The idea of translanguaging could inform how I envision my language class in terms of its medium of instruction and ideology

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applied to support students learning. I believe my class should be the space of which promotes the use of different languages, dialects and thus drives students to notice/compare the nuance of languages. Students would eventually be able to think bi-/multilingually. Personally, I have been learning/working with two languages simultaneously for quite a long time. I studied applied translation as the undergraduate major. It informs me how two different languages could vary in terms of their grammar, oral/written form, and embedded culture/thinking patterns. More importantly, how I could value and embrace those differences. I started with very limited knowledge of how two languages could be examined simultaneously and scientifically, but prior to this, I had learned both from other EFL learners and myself that our habits of using L1 will to some extent proceed to the new/additional language learning. In a nutshell, these early observations and learning experience bring me to think the implementation of translanguaging and how teachers could promote students to think bi-/multilingually. Therefore, I personally resonate with this quote a lot: “It accents that two (or more) languages are not just the result of bilingual education but the very nature of how a bilingual thinks, understands, and achieves” (Lewis et al., 2012, p. 667), because it affirms my belief to promote translanguaging and train students how to think like a bi/multilingual.

Furthermore, García (2018) and Wiley and García (2016) provide me with insights on how the idea of translanguaging could be implemented into multilingual programs/classroom practices. I envision this would be one of the pedagogical trends in the near future and I would feel appreciated if I could become one of the contributors, particularly to those teaching contexts where monolingualism is still the norm or teachers have no clear idea in terms of how different languages could be used simultaneously to facilitate teaching. This quote helps me a lot in thinking learners linguistic repertoires as an asset: “Even when minority languages are not in need of revitalization, and community monolingual spaces

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exist, there is much value in translanguaging as a pedagogical practice. In classrooms all over the world, language minority children are often taught in a language they do not understand – usually a colonial language that has now increased in importance because of globalization. Educating children in a language they do not understand usually lead to educational failure. If the majority language space does not include the children’s languaging, and if the teacher does not maximize communication using the children’s language practices, failure in communication and education is sure to occur” (García, 2018, p. 152). I agree with the idea of treating learners L1 with importance a lot, particularly at the early stage where children start to learn a new/additional language. In my opinion, implementing translanguaging as a pedagogical ideology would connect L1 and 2 organically, encourage learners to think bi-/multilingually and shift between those two languages autonomously.

**Conclusion.** Carried with my visions of implementing a high-quality EFL instruction, I hope that I could have more opportunities working with young learners in my postgraduation career and find out ways to constantly negotiate these visions with learners needs. In the next part, I will also explain how I connect my visions back to the artifacts I have written in the past.

## Artifact Analysis

### Professional Knowledge Area 1: Learner

This professional knowledge area is about learner, whose linguistic and cultural identities could have positive impact on the teacher's instruction if the teacher develops adequate understanding on learner's backgrounds, including L1, communities, and/or heritages. In contrast, if the teacher went into the classroom without any prior knowledge of who her/is learners are and their learning goals/expectations, the instruction would therefore neither be targeted nor helpful. It comprises two TESOL domains, 1) Identity and Context; 2) Learning. Aside from recognizing the importance of affirming learner's identities in class, these two domains make me (as a future EFL teacher) feel curious about 1) how the learning context could have impact on learner's identity formation; 2) how might the teacher use her/is knowledge (of language and adult language learning) to understand learner's language learning process. To respond, I will use my **Community Literacy Paper** as **Artifact A** for further analysis in the first domain (Identity and Context), whereas in the second domain (Learning), I will use my **Linguistic Case Study** as **Artifact B**.

### *TESOL Domain 4: Identity and Context*

*Teachers understand the importance of who learners are and how their communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning. Teachers recognize the importance of how context contributed to identity formation and therefore influences learning. Teachers use this knowledge of identity and settings in planning, instructing, and assessing.*

Identity is learners L1 and/or culture that could shape learning and expectations of learning, whereas context is the learning environment that could contribute to learners identity formation. I think this domain is important because it continues introducing learners but discussing their identities in-depth to prepare teachers well in terms of developing

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appropriate learning contexts during the instruction. It might be useful for teachers if they envision their instruction to be identity-informed to gather and collect the literacy samples from learners communities. To demonstrate my ability of observing, recording, and analyzing/interpreting students' identities, which could encompass their L1, culture, and social norms, I chose my community literacy paper as the artifact (for this domain) in which I described my observation of Latino community literacies I found here in Nashville. As a future EFL teacher, I found this fieldtrip was illuminating because it informed me that students are not a piece of blank paper upon they walk into the classroom, whereas they have been empowered with their unique identities and background knowledge. It is therefore my responsibility to make them become valuable resources for the instruction.

**Artifact A.** Prior moving to Nashville, I was living in a comparably monocultural environment where people share many things in common: race, language, social norms, and traditional culture. Although many of us, including myself, have started to embrace different languages and types of culture, the context shaped for EFL learners was not diverse. In my opinion, language learning is a process of which approaching social/cultural diversity besides the language itself, but I did not observe much teacher's awareness of connecting those elements with English language learning. In my community literacy investigation, therefore, I chose the Latino community in Nashville. I thought it would be helpful for me, as a future EFL teacher, to 1) acquire a closer and deeper look at the background of which learners live outside the classroom; 2) provide my students with better support to engage in-class activities. Those two initial thoughts, from my perspective, connect back to several important ideas illustrated in the domain introduction that *teachers understand the importance of who learners are and how their communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning*. The paper could be divided into two parts. In the first part, I described my fieldtrip experience to the Latino community based in Nashville and thought

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how it stands out to me via the lens of community literacy; in the second part, I came up with specific teaching ideas in line with my prior observations to support their language learning in the classroom.

While I was reviewing the paper, the first part stands out to me as problematic in terms of how I applied the idea of community literacy (Jiménez et al., 2009) into the analysis. Although I accomplished an extensive analysis for my fieldtrip to the Latino community, there is a lack of literacy evidence presented in the paper to showcase how I built bonding with this minority group beyond classroom. The argument and analysis would rather be more convincing if there were more written samples/artifacts reflecting upon learner's culture, heritages, and/or community. To find out ways for me to improve upon right now and in the future, I would probably 1) learn the L1 of which my students speak other than English, particularly its written form, but this idea might not be feasible if there are multiple L1s spoken by learners. I was reminded by my capstone mentor that it might also work if I could form the relationship with translators so that they could help me with the language barriers; 2) collect more authentic language samples.

In the second part, I came up with specific ideas of how I might teach English/tweak my instruction, taking my observation towards the Latino community literacy into consideration. When I was preparing those teaching ideas, I kept reminding myself of learner's backgrounds/identities and tried my best to make them applicable in terms of teaching practices. Understanding their backgrounds/identities was particularly helpful for me to design activities, and moreover, build an inclusive learning context.

Gathering and collecting samples of community literacy and thus providing/envisioning how I might want to design the instruction could connect back to my vision of honoring learners cultural identities in the teaching philosophy. To end this part, I would like to give myself compliments for fulfilling the domain requirements by writing this

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paper: I understood the importance of students identities and how they might shape students learning and expectations of learning; I started to think how learning contexts could contribute to learners identity formation in and out of classroom settings; and how I might apply such knowledge into my postgraduation teaching. I feel thankful for being offered an opportunity to approach the Latino community (and its literacy as well) in Nashville and taken away with understandings of the importance of students identities, I will shift my focus to the processes by which students acquire a second language in the next TESOL domain with reference to a different artifact.

### ***TESOL Domain 6: Learning***

*Teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings. They use this knowledge to support adult language learning.*

Learning is the processes of which learners acquire a new/additional language in and out of classroom settings. It would be important for teachers to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new/additional language so that they might be able to better support language learning in and out of classroom settings. The artifact that I chose for this part is a case study I conducted for my Introduction to Linguistics course. To introduce a bit more about the context of this case study, the learner who participated in this case study is an adult EFL learner and she acquires English as a foreign language. The learner did not have many opportunities to practice English beyond academic settings and the environment where she lives in could be counted as monocultural and monolingualistic as it hardly would give her opportunities to orally practice foreign languages. It would thus be illuminating for me to collect her oral and written language samples and implement the language knowledge that I have acquired to examine her L2 learning and provide my thoughts on how teachers might want to better support her.

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**Artifact B.** Generally speaking, this paper could be divided into three parts: 1) in the first part, I wrote a brief introduction to the learners language learning backgrounds; 2) in the second part, I went back to the learners oral and language samples by using the language knowledge that I have acquired academically in the past; 3) last but not the least, in reflection of the case study completed in part 2, I provided my concluding thoughts on the learners overall L2 performances and instructional tasks/activities that I might want to implement to help the learner improve. I will delve deeper into the analysis part in the coming paragraphs.

While there was a large proportion analyzing how sociocultural factors might affect the learners L2 acquisition at the beginning, I brought up the idea of how the way she uses L1 might proceed to L2 acquisition. I discussed this thought more deeply as I was transitioning from the introduction to phonological analyses. In this part, I discussed how the learners English pronunciation might be operated under the dominance of L1 pronunciation, though the learner might have already developed phonemic awareness to some extent. Below is an excerpt showcasing how I demonstrate my thinking:

*I notice that she still kept the way of intonation as she was speaking Chinese; she did not have the consciousness of producing the end of sentences into a rising tone (when it was needed)...She produced all the sound of /ð/ into /z/, moreover, she generalized most of the voiced consonants, for example, /t/, /k/, and /d/ to the voiceless sounds. I think her native pronunciation in Chinese had a great effect on her ways to pronounce English, because unlike the flow of the sounds of English vocabularies, Chinese is a monosyllabic language, where each character has only one syllable and most of the sounds of Chinese characters begin with a consonant and end with a vowel. This phenomenon reminds me of one fact that few L2 learners can sound like 'a native speaker' because they lack "the early experience using the sounds and intonation of the L2" (Yule, 2017, p. 210).*

Consequently, this connects me back to the TESOL domain in which it supports the idea that *teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings*. In general, I thought implementing the discussion of L1 effect under SLA context might be particularly illuminating when it comes to adult language learning, as many of them start L2 learning late and their habits of using L1 could have a greater impact. Other than

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that, the excerpt of which I provided an overall assessment based on the learners language performances and how I might help her to improve L2 learning reflect how I grasped the idea that *they use this knowledge to support adult language learning* in this TESOL domain.

Furthermore, the learners level of proficiency varies as I was looking back to the oral and written samples she provided. Her oral language proficiency was comparably lower than the language she applied to the written sample, but this gap does not seem very explicit in the instructional tasks/activities that I recommended. I might want myself to modify the plan accordingly, since it would better support learning and learners expectations of learning.

By looking across the learners oral and written language samples, I developed stronger awareness in reflecting upon how I envision the idea of translanguaging to be implemented into classroom practices. Ideally, translanguaging is a pedagogical vision/ideology, but conducting this case study allows me to see the possibility of translanguaging-in-practice as the learners language samples displayed a flow of how her L1 habits might proceed to L2 learning/acquisition.

**Conclusion.** This professional knowledge area provides me with a critical lens to rethink how teachers might honor learners identities in and out of classroom settings and use the language knowledge to inform L2 learning/acquisition. Personally, those two TESOL domains inform me a student-centered classroom culture/ideology as learners identities, including identity formation processes and their language learning are prioritized to inform teachers planning and instruction. As I have just begun my writing, I envision this professional knowledge area to be connected with the next area that I will analyze soon, which is the learning contexts, because carried with the knowledge of learners identities, including the identity formation processes and their L2 learning/acquisition, it might be easier for teachers to build respectful and interactive learning contexts and thus promote learning and fulfill learners expectations of learning.

## **Professional Knowledge Area 2: The Learning Contexts**

This professional knowledge area concerns the learning contexts in which the teacher is supportive of students learning. The learning contexts is important as it could remind teachers of the necessities to apply/implement what they have acquired either from theoretical-based studies or authentic working experience into building the respectful and interactive learning contexts. Aside from teaching the knowledge of language, creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for learners motivates them to learn, talk, and interact with each other. This professional knowledge area has one TESOL domain, which is Instructing. To demonstrate my understanding in thinking how my professional work in the past could possibly showcase the ideas/principles embedded within both this professional knowledge area and the TESOL domain, I selected two artifacts: my **School Investigation Paper** as **Artifact A** and **Practicum Reflection** as **Artifact B**.

### ***TESOL Domain 2: Instructing***

*Teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions.*

Personally, I think instructing requires teachers hard work to prepare, teach, and create supportive classroom environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning contexts. This domain informs me, as a future EFL teacher, the importance of creating supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions. Aside from having the knowledge of language and processes by which learners acquire a second/additional language, learning contexts/supportive environments established by teachers are critical to the learning processes as they might alleviate learners anxiousness and motivate them to learn/interact with others.

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**Artifact A.** To give a bit more background knowledge about this paper, I went to McMurray Middle School for school/class observation. Upon the completion of this school investigation and the paper/reflection, I expect myself to build closer bonding with learners in and out of classroom settings and by observing the classroom environment built by other educators as well as nuances in their instruction, I could conclude with some further thoughts on how I might tweak my visions of teaching and plan constructive classroom tasks/activities accordingly. Based on the content, the paper could be divided into three parts: 1) in the first part, I gave a brief introduction to the school/learner context. According to the school staff, the ELL population at McMurray was large. It could be possible that their English language proficiency was limited and thus below the grade levels particularly in thinking reading and writing abilities; 2) in the second part, I described and reflected on my observations to the classroom and teachers instruction; 3) last but not the least, I came up with further thoughts on how I might support the learning when it comes to instruction.

What I think would be particularly relevant to this TESOL domain that have been explicitly mentioned in this paper are 1) the classroom environment that the teacher could build for learners to promote their critical thinking and learning; 2) how the teacher built bonding with learners and promote interactive learning contexts. In my paper, I wrote:

*Mr. Smith's teaching materials that he takes the most pride of is his word wall, where there are English vocabularies that his students are currently learning. When I asked him what if the students do not know the meanings, Mr. Smith smiled: "well, they have to find the meanings by themselves". He encourages students to interpret the meanings by themselves. Mr. Smith's words lead me back to reconsider the idea of "curriculum/pedagogical decisions" (De Jong, 2011, p. 192) during which he embraces various interpretations toward one vocabulary (as long as they make sense) rather than enforce students to remember what he perceives to be 'the correct answer'.*

This connects back to the idea of establishing a purposeful classroom environment/learning context where teachers could decorate the classroom by implementing meaningful language learning prompts like the word wall. I also wrote:

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*Coming back to their EL course content, the teacher was at that time handing out materials that have English vocabularies, and every group of 6 to 7 students would later come to the teacher for a more in-depth learning. For example, teacher led students recognize and pronounce the vocabulary by pointing to the jacket that she was wearing and said: "Now, follow me, j-a-c-k-e-t". The teacher was trying to explain/interpret the vocabularies that students do not understand by connecting it with their existing knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez, 1992).*

Personally, I really admire the way teachers were trying to have one-on-one time with each learner to check in with their learning progress and answer any question they might have during the instruction, because it creates opportunities for each learner to engage in the class and thus be responsive/interactive with teachers instruction.

I think this paper could connect back to my vision of bringing learners existing knowledge to class and thus fulfilling the goal of building a constructivist culture. On the other hands, trying to establish a classroom culture/ideology requires commitment. It could be an ongoing process and filled with hardship and challenges from time to time as learners might not be able/willing to participate the class actively/constructively, so teachers might need to tweak plans/instruction and get paused for a while. In the next artifact analysis, I will shift from observing and learning from other educators class to my own teaching practices in thinking how I would want to promote interactive and purposeful learning.

**Artifact B.** I wrote this reflection after one of my tutoring sessions with a young learner. It was a one-on-one virtual meeting recurring at least once each week during which I would meet with the learner and teach him how to read. In this paper, I reflected upon this teaching experience and the learners reaction and discussed what I thought would be my strengths and/or weaknesses for teaching. In my paper, I demonstrated how and in what way that I thought might make the tutoring processes differ from normal classroom instruction:

*Unlike the traditional instruction where it usually has much more students, the tutoring provides more individualized opportunities. Besides teaching, I would regularly check in with the student to see how he was doing at school and what question/concern he wanted to ask (during the lesson time).*

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Since this artifact was describing and reflecting upon a tutoring experience, the situation might vary from this TESOL domain that *teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions*. First of all, there was only one learner in my virtual classroom. In other words, I might feel easier to start conversation/build interactive environment and only have to be responsive to one and/or a few learners. Furthermore, I could have more flexibilities to implement the reading materials and types of conversation that I thought the learner might want/need to learn. On the other hands, it would always be helpful for both learners and teachers to honor the idea of interaction and create purposeful/meaningful learning environment, regardless of the teaching context.

In addition, this reflection could highlight how I envision the idea of translanguaging to be implemented into classroom practices as I genuinely had the opportunity to observe how the learners parents translated our conversation into his L1 and vice versa:

*I was also being explicit in telling him that “you are more than welcomed to use your native language during our time together” and he sometimes would have his parents be the translator. We could develop meaningful and rich conversation with the help of translation.*

By the time of our last tutoring, the learner who participated still displayed very limited proficiency particularly in his reading and writing abilities, whereas his oral language was comparably stronger. It might thus be helpful for us to think about how the idea of translanguaging could go beyond translation practices and genuinely implement learners L1 components into the language learning processes.

**Conclusion.** This professional knowledge area informs me the importance of having an interactive and purposeful classroom environment/learning context and how it might be able to promote learning. In my opinion, it ties closely back to the first professional knowledge area where learners identities and their processes by which acquire a

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new/additional language are honored and how they might help teachers build closer bonding with learners.

### **Professional Knowledge Area 3: Curriculum**

In my opinion, this professional knowledge area concerns curriculum of which 1) plans and sequences content, activity, and/or task accordingly; 2) engages learners of all levels of ELP and expects them to learn and grow throughout the process, not only in terms of the language development, but also the value they could find upon their linguistic/cultural identities. The area integrates TESOL domain 1 and 7, which are entitled planning and content respectively. From what I have read and observed, domain 1 – planning – informs me the necessities of aligning the teaching plan with learner’s goals and tweaking it to fulfill their learning and expectations of learning as they make progress. Domain 2 – content – specifies to me how and to what extent content learning is reflective of the language for genuine communicative purposes; for example, the content of the language courser is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area. Thus, to align the analysis of artifacts with these domains, I thought the **Curriculum Design Project** that my colleague and I developed might be an ideal option since it 1) incorporates specific teaching plans for each unit and how we might want to tweak/modify the plans throughout the process; 2) implements authentic materials that give learners snippets of the language used to negotiate with different meanings and functions.

#### ***TESOL Domain 1: Planning***

*Teachers plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals, and modify plans to assure learner engagement and achievement.*

Planning is a thoughtful process during which the teacher takes learner goals, engagement, and achievement into consideration, aside from fulfilling content/language objectives. I think this domain is important because it informs me the necessities of aligning the teaching plan with learner’s goals and tweaking it to fulfill their learning and expectations of learning as they make progress. Consequently, the curriculum design project that my

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colleague and I developed stands out as I was selecting artifact for this specific domain because I thought it incorporates specific teaching plans for each unit and how we might want to tweak/modify the plans throughout the process. To introduce a bit more about this project, we aimed to develop a curriculum that could train/improve learners reading repertoires and skills. Anticipated learners of this course are adult EFL learners, who seek educational opportunities at the institutions where English would be the medium of instruction. Upon the completion of this course, they are expected to gain more comprehensive understandings in the academic reading field and improve their reading skills as well. Learners will be individually assessed prior to the enrollment of this class.

**Artifact A.** The curriculum has three units. Under each unit, there are three lessons planned accordingly. Below is the excerpt illustrating how we structured the basic framework:

1. *Unit One: Title*
  - a. *Lesson One: Subtitle*
    - i. *Essential Questions*
    - ii. *Content/Language Objectives*
    - iii. *Lesson Schedule*
      1. *Advanced Preparations*
      2. *Pre-Assessment/Open-Up Activity*
      3. *Input of The Day*
        - a. *Content*
        - b. *Language*
        - c. *Debriefing*
    - iv. *Homework*

As illustrated in this framework, we structured clear framework for us to plan each session accordingly and refer back to from time to time. Generally speaking, I thought one thing stands out here is that under each unit, there are three lessons connecting back to the unit topic and their teaching plans are consistent in terms of the overall content. Having such design might equip learners with a comprehensive understanding towards each course unit and more time to practice their reading skills. Specifically, I thought each part (i.e. Essential Questions) we planned for each lesson takes not only learners level of language proficiency,

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but also their expectations of learning into consideration. In reflection upon our goals of developing this curriculum, we wanted to help as many international EFL students who would hope to seek education in the U.S. as we could to improve their reading skills and thus might find themselves feel more comfortable with the transition both in academics and culture. That being said, while we were designing unit topics and lesson content, we were driven by the goals and thus the curriculum has been incorporated with topics and content related to academics and culture in the U.S. (i.e. Academic Integrity and Higher Education). Furthermore, we prioritized learning and learners expectations of learning as we were planning, so we knew it would be important to have flexibilities for teaching and constantly tweak our plans to fulfill learners needs, besides achieving content/language objectives.

On the other hand, I thought this project exemplifies how I envision a high quality EFL instruction (teaching philosophy) specifically in thinking how teachers could build a constructivist culture by adding onto learners existing knowledge and bringing it to class. Apart from explicitly teaching reading strategies (i.e. using context clues to infer meanings), we were striving to select and implement as many authentic reading materials of which closely connect back to their learning and expectations of learning as we could to engage learners in a meaningful context. In the meantime, Windschitl's work reminds me of teacher's responsibilities to make the implementation of constructivist culture/ideologies an integral classroom practice: "Portraying the constructivist classroom as a culture is important because many challenges for the teacher emerge when new rituals take root or when familiar norms of behavior are transformed into new patterns of teacher/student interaction. By contrast, if discrete practices that have been associated with constructivism (cooperative learning, performance assessments, hands-on experiences) are simply inserted as special activities into the regular school day, then it remains business as usual for the students. Teachers and students do not question their vision of learning, no one takes risks, and hardly

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a ripple is felt” (Windschitl, 1999, p. 751 – 752). It also remains important for us to think how teachers could guide learners through materials across different contexts and disciplinaries, as we expect learners to make progress not only in terms of reading skills/strategies, but also their personal growth and interdisciplinary awareness.

To end this part, I would say that having a thoughtful planning is important to establish high quality teacher-student interaction and thus fulfill learning and learners expectations of learning. I will use the same artifact in the next TESOL domain.

### ***TESOL Domain 7: Content***

*Teachers understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. Teachers understand that the content of the language courser is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area. Teachers design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about.*

Content is the product designed and implemented by professionals for learners to practice, learn from, and improve upon. To prepare high quality content, teachers understand that language learning is mostly likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. That being said, learners might gain rewarding learning experience when content is embedded within/reflects upon their authentic language practices. I think this domain is important because it informs me the option to consider the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read, and write about a subject matter or content area when it comes to content preparation/teaching. I will reuse the curriculum design project to illustrate my understanding of this TESOL domain and at the end, reflect upon how I think those two domains could connect back to the Professional Knowledge Area.

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**Artifact A.** In this part, I reuse the curriculum design project because it incorporated a lot authentic reading materials of which are helpful for learners to understand the content. On the other hand, I thought using the same artifact for these two TESOL domains would remain my analysis consistent in terms of the overall content since I also found connection between those domains. While we were preparing this curriculum, we *understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes*, although it might be challenging to fulfill this expectation in a reading course from time to time as learners would normally spend much time reading the article silently instead of communicating with others. To negotiate with this difficulty that might have occurred when it comes to planning and teaching, we implemented sharing block each session for learners to talk about their understanding towards either the article or reading strategies. Below is an excerpt from unit one, lesson two of which illustrates the design to facilitate learners input of the day:

*“Language: Then the teacher will introduce two reading strategies – Using Context Clues and Rereading – based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of context clues and rereading in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a thinkaloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class”.*

One thing we might want to think more deeply in reflection upon those activities is to what extent does the article facilitate learners understanding towards reading strategies and how many evidences are there in the article to support our learning. In other words, the content might need tweaking or replacement as teachers feel more confident with the teaching and/or subject matter. Second of all, we *understand that the content of the language courser is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area*, though we would find the processes of prioritizing/sequencing the tasks and/or activities with authentic language samples embedded to be challenging from time to time, particularly for a course of which encompasses several

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consecutive units and/or lessons. In the early stages of teaching a course/subject matter, it might be helpful for teachers to set achievable goals without overwhelming themselves too much, yet to fulfill learning and learners expectations of learning. This would also be the problem that I wish myself to improve upon not only in thinking this specific project, but also my professional work in the future.

Last but not least, we *design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about*. Below is an excerpt of the homework we designed for unit one, lesson two and I thought it might be able to connect back to how we facilitate content learning by promoting learners agency. They could choose topics of their interest (what they wish to learn) to learn from and reflect upon.

1. *Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):*
  - a. *Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.*
  - b. *Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.*

This artifact aligns with my vision to build a constructivist culture with no doubt, but it also promotes me to think how I might tweak this vision in order to make my teaching plan realistic and achievable in the early stages of teaching.

**Conclusion.** It was an illuminating learning experience using the project to interpret and reflect upon both the professional knowledge area and TESOL domains. Personally, I found there was connection between these two domains because a well-rounded planning often takes content and learners needs into consideration. After a careful consideration to this professional knowledge area, including its TESOL domain, I thought it might be able to tie back to the first two areas as they could inform how teachers construct a high-quality curriculum. In the next part, I will introduce professional knowledge area 4 (Assessment) and

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illustrate my understanding towards TESOL domain 3 (Assessing) by referring to a different artifact.

### **Professional Knowledge Area 4: Assessment**

In my opinion, this professional knowledge area concerns assessment of which could evaluate learners level of language proficiency and thus inform teachers how they might better promote learning and meet learners expectations of learning upon the completion of assessments. Aside from examining assessments from the language perspective, it would be helpful for teachers to consider how learners social and cultural backgrounds could be exemplified and/or problematized via assessments. I originally planned myself using the interview paper that I wrote for my assessment course as the artifact, but the culture/identity piece seems overlapping with the ideas previously addressed in another TESOL domain (Identity and Context), so I replaced it with the **Evaluate Student's Level of SLA Paper** of this course. To introduce a bit more about this paper, I went through an authentic assessing experience by using the SOLOM rubric to evaluate a young learners language samples. In addition, I reflected on my assessing processes and provided further thoughts. Metacommentaries for the rubric are simultaneously provided as assessing procedures went on, in order to gain more experience with language assessment.

### ***TESOL Domain 3: Assessing***

*Teachers recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner. Teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction “on the spot” and for the future. Teachers involve learners in determining what will be assessed and provide constructive feedback to learners, based on assessments of their learning.*

Assessing is the processes of which the teacher evaluates learners levels of English language proficiency and provides constructive feedback to inform teaching and learning. Assessing is important because it provides teachers a critical lens to systematically examine

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learners language performance from time to time and thus inform the teaching plan. Types of assessments could vary as they might function different purposes when it comes to the assessing processes. As for the artifact specifically chosen for this part, it was the paper I wrote for the assessment course and the topic is evaluating learners level of SLA. To complete this goal, a young learner with her oral and written samples available was chosen by me in order to proceed the assessing processes. Upon the time she provided those samples, she just immigrated to the U.S. with very limited English language proficiency and her L1 is Spanish. Prior to my implementation of SOLOM rubric, the learner had already been assessed based on her oral, reading, and written performances. What I have accomplished in this paper was examining those samples with reference to the rubric and provide my own thoughts.

**Artifact A.** One difficulty that I had to negotiate with while I was writing this paper was that I had not had many opportunities developing personal connections with the learners I tutored/taught in the past. Most of them were living in China, so it made the collection processes even harder because of the time difference. That being said, it would be a bit difficult for me to acquire their language samples. I feel very thankful for the resource provided by Dr. Pray, the lecturer of this course, to grant me an option delving deeper into language assessment. Among all the profiles of ELLs, I chose one from the elementary group and conducted my analysis. Reflecting upon all these problems/difficulties, I *recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner.*

Second of all, this paper could be seen as four separate yet interconnected sections: 1) the first part is a brief introduction to the learners oral/reading/written language samples and their data collection processes; 2) the second and third parts are my analysis/evaluation

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towards learners oral/reading/written samples with the implementation of SOLOM rubric; 3) in the last part, I provided my further thoughts after a careful consideration towards learners language performance in how I might want to modify the assessing processes and language assessments. In my opinion, this fulfills the second guiding principle that *teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction “on the spot” and for the future*. In this paper, I adopted the SOLOM rubric, which might have been inappropriate for younger learners. The assessment outcomes might be more accurate if the rubric incorporates the context of how children acquire a second/foreign language and what would be considered as “normal/average” performances for them. What I take away from this experience is that how important could it be for educators to gain comprehensive assessment knowledge prior to the language assessments. Afterall, our goal is to help learners the best we could and see them grow from these learning experiences.

In my opinion, this artifact connects back to my vision to build the classroom environment where constructivist culture/ideologies are honored. In my paper, I wrote:

*To sum up, the overall SOLOM score of the learner’s oral language proficiency was 3, which might seem low in comparison with her native peers, but she still has much time and opportunities to improve. What matters is how. Rather than make a list of what the teacher “can” and/or “cannot” do to help the learner, I value the learner’s agency brought to either the language assessment or instructional activities. This would allow me, as the teacher, to take off my authoritative hat and listen: (as a language learner,) how I am feeling towards this oral language assessment? Do I think this genuinely reflect my ability? Am I feeling comfortable answering every question (any cultural/social bias)? And etc. In other words, asking for the learner’s feedback after completing the language assessment equals the same importance. Not only do we ask our students to improve, but we need to improve as well.*

The processes of assessing learners language performances and their outcomes would inform teachers strengths and/or weaknesses a learner might have as s/he make progress in language learning and acquisition and thus motivate them to tweak planning and/or instruction. Apart from this, it might be helpful if we allow for flexibilities while using rubrics to inform our teaching and learning and have the idea of learners agency in mind when we try to make intervention.

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**Conclusion.** I gained more understandings to the assessing processes and language assessments after carefully reviewing this professional knowledge area. In my opinion, the processes of assessing and language assessments could incorporate all the professional knowledge areas that have been discussed above as teachers mindset should be embracing and comprehensive while conducting language assessments. In other words, not only might we honor learners culture and L1 repertoire, but also we could constantly provide constructive feedbacks based on their language performances.

### **Applications to Practice: Implications and Future Considerations**

As for the application to practice part, there are two components: implications and future considerations. What I would expect myself to accomplish by demonstrating my understandings from those two aspects are 1) what is/are the implications in the field of education that I found could closely tie back to my philosophies of teaching and artifact analyses; 2) what are my future considerations as a EFL educator in thinking delivering a high-quality EFL instruction.

#### ***TESOL Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism***

*Teachers continue to grow in their understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning to the community of English language teaching professionals, the broader teaching community, and communities at large, and use these understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.*

Commitments and professionalism require teachers ongoing efforts to strive for learners successes through language learning processes. They are important ideas as teachers might constantly face ups-and-downs when it comes to instructing, during which they might also have to consider fulfilling learners expectations of learning (what learners wish to learn), so it could act like a motivation to teachers and thus promote supportive learning environments/TESOL communities as a whole. In the next part, I will respond to my first reflecting question: what is/are the implications in the field of education that I found could closely tie back to my philosophies of teaching and artifact analyses. Limitations of my work will also be explored in this part.

**Implications.** First of all, I would say being culturally responsive/caring is an important implication that I would want myself to carry away upon the completion of this project. As I was looking back to my visions of implementing a high-quality EFL instruction (philosophies of teaching), which are: 1) honoring and identifying learners culture and

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identities, particularly in envisioning the implementation of learners community literacies; 2) building a constructivist classroom culture; 3) train learners to think bi-/multilingually as I shift to think about how translanguaging work as a classroom culture/ideology where multiple languages/dialects that learners speak could be facilitated to promote learning and fulfill learners expectations of learning. Furthermore, Gay (2010) in his chapter of *The Power of Culturally Responsive Caring* highlights that “Culturally responsive caring is launched through teachers acquiring more knowledge about ethnic and cultural diversity, becoming more conscious of themselves as cultural beings and cultural actors in the process of teaching, and engaging in courageous conversations about issues fundamental to social justice in society and educational equity for ethnically diverse students (p. 69). It is therefore why I thought Culturally Responsive Caring would be an overarching goal/implication across the ideas that I have mentioned earlier in my visions for teaching.

On the other hands, I was thinking what would be the nuances existing in my philosophies of teaching as being culturally responsive/caring could be the overarching goal/implication. I thought it might be helpful if the professional knowledge areas could join the discussion as they might provide more authentic samples/insights on how those teaching practices and/or learning experience could connect back to my visions for teaching.

Taking the first professional knowledge area as an example, the artifacts/samples I incorporated are my community literacy paper and case study of an adult EFL learners oral and written samples. During the time when I was practicing the idea of community literacy and writing this paper, I would constantly refer back to the scholarly article written by Jiménez et al. (2009) in which the authors discussed community literacy in-depth. It informed me not only in thinking how to practice community literacy, but also the mindset of identifying learners linguistic/cultural identities and bring them to class. In my philosophies of teaching, I articulated how I would envision myself implementing the idea of community

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literacy with reference to the Jiménez et al. (2009) article as well. That being said, I could see the connection between my artifact analysis embedded within the TESOL domains and professional knowledge area and visions for teaching. On the other hands, there was nuanced transition specifically from identifying learners linguistic/cultural identities to classroom practices in my artifact analysis, so implementing community literacy and building constructivist culture could to some extent be connected in practices.

Whereas in my another paper in which I conducted a case study of an adult EFL learners oral and written language samples, I would say there was not much explicit connection back to the translanguaging piece, although one main focus of this study was examining how the learners habits of using L1 might proceed to her L2 learning/acquisition. In my opinion, this study might be able to inform teachers/parents the importance of cultivating learners metalinguistic awareness (Gutierrez, 2013), what matters is how. In addition, what I learned is that teachers might face challenges connecting the idea of translanguaging with other language education theories and classroom practices, so it would be helpful if we continue working on in this area.

**Future Considerations.** After I have completed reflecting upon my visions for teaching, artifacts that I have written in the past, and implications in the field of education, I started to think about 1) what is/are my current challenges and how I might want to address those problems; 2) future considerations as a EFL teacher.

Developing sustainable professional work/career trajectories would be my first challenge, as I am still at the early stages of learning to teach. It would thus be possible for me to meet with uncertainties and different kinds of challenges in the workplace. To address this challenge, I think it might be helpful if I 1) develop professional networks with colleagues and initiate meaningful/purposeful communication in order to get familiarized

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with the working environment and school context, 2) build bonding with learners and know when I should take off my teaching hat and act friendly.

The second challenge I might face is planning to negotiate the theories I have learned in the past with the actual classroom practices. To address this challenge, I think it would be important to 1) understand who your learners are, linguistically and culturally; 2) do more school/classroom observations in thinking how other experienced educators adapt the theories to facilitate the learning processes and thus fulfill learners expectations of learning.

As for the future considerations, I would keep myself updated with the researches and professional work that my professors and peers at Peabody conduct. Without their intelligent work and thoughtful planning, I would not be able to complete this capstone portfolio. It might also be helpful to reflect upon those teaching experience and language practices that I have included in this portfolio as I am about to start the professional work and think how they might provide me a critical lens to look at my working context and student body.

**Conclusion.** Upon the completion of this capstone, I grow from the processes of envisioning my high-quality EFL instruction informed by theories, reflecting upon the artifacts with professional work embedded that I have written in the past, and articulating application to practice and thus come out of my program as a qualified and thoughtful EFL educator.

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**Appendix A: Community Literacy Paper**

Latino community thrives in Nashville. In 2019, the total Latino population here in Nashville reaches 60,390, which occupies around 10% of the total Nashville population. Such a large minority group is constantly bringing diversity to the Nashville community: currently there are non-profit organization like Conexión Américas promoting integration of Latino families into this city, K&S World Market sending out Latino magazine and newspaper, and Plaza Mariachi served with traditional Latino cuisine. Besides, according to the program affiliate of conexión américas, every day Latinos are moving to Nashville from their home countries, seeking either for job opportunities, family reunion, or better education for their children, but some of them cannot even process basic English. For those who can speak, they still have problems with purchasing properties or lacking research to the U.S. educational system. In other words, they need professional support, otherwise it will be problematic for them even hoping to make a basic living in the United States.

For example, I noticed that there was a two-page advertisement in the Latino magazine that I have taken at the K&S World Market, *Revista Lazos*, it was a real estate company promoting the Spanish service prepared for Latino community. This kind of housing agency appears again on the Spanish newspaper, *Latino*, that I got at the same spot.



The Spanish real estate advertising on *Revista Lazos*, the Latino magazine.

school. The expectation they have for the future is

In the meantime, Conexión Américas is providing assistance for Latino parents to learn how to support children’s success in



Conexión Américas is providing guidance on parental support to Latino families.

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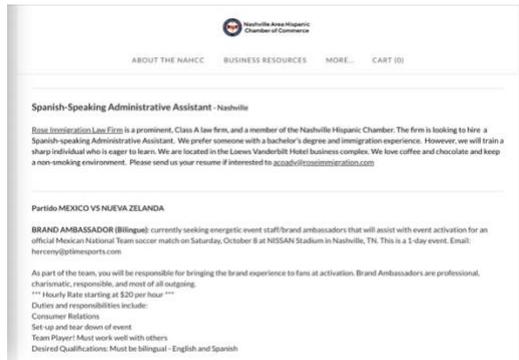
clearly hindered by language and the lack of knowledge to American society. All the information that I gathered makes me want to envision myself as an English language facilitator to the adult Spanish speakers from Latino community, with the goal of helping them improve English language in respect of their past constructivism of knowledge.

Speaking Spanish inside the Latino community remains the indigenous network with families and people of the same heritage. One example is while I was at plaza Mariachi, I had a short conversation with a young lady called Brenda of Mexican heritage at a coffee shop, where she told me that she had moved to the United States when she was four years old. Brenda speaks fabulous English, but she admits, although English is her pathway to get connected with her American fellows and she finds herself assimilate well into this country, she still speaks Spanish at home. Speaking Spanish in Brenda's case does not prevent her from acquiring English language as a second language learner, this idea holds true in Jimenez, Smith, and Teague's article, addressing that: "These (transnational and community) literacies could likewise be used to engage students more completely in their learning" (Jimenez, Smith, & Teague, 2009, p. 20). Then in thinking of those Latino adults who possess limited English proficiency, their Spanish language merits should therefore be considered as a linguistic strength instead of as a problem segregating them from efficiently learning English.

Aside from the Spanish language that can partially shape the prior knowledge of an English language learner with Latino heritage, I found the Latino community here are economically united via Nashville Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (NAHCC) to support the economic development of both Latino businesses and individuals. This goal can be justified by Latinos' motivation of seeking job opportunities or economic success in Nashville as previously mentioned, it shows a cooperation with the U.S. general business environment while remains its close connection within Latino community. Specifically,

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according to its membership categories listed on the website, small business owners and entrepreneurs embedded with many business categories (for example, technology, education, and financial services) have joined to make this organization rank in the top 20 largest chambers in Nashville. Corporations affiliated with this organization are also opening their positions to bilinguals who can speak English and Spanish or Spanish-only speakers. It



should play an influential role among Latinos in terms of its resources and people integrated to serve the Latino community.

From what I have observed, I think it is demanding for a foreign language teacher to recognize the indigenous merits that a minority

The open positions posted on the NAHCC website.

student can bring to the classroom unless he or she is a native from that group or grounded with rich experiences and great understandings coping with, for example, Latino community.

My time spent at Conexión Américas let me know that there are currently no professional bilingual trainers to support Latino immigrant families in helping them settle down and integrate. Moreover, I think there is generally a misunderstanding targeted towards minority language learners for blaming their usage of native language will deteriorate their efficacy in second language acquisition, and this idea of linguistic assimilation has been physically transferred into subtractive language programs for minority language speakers (De Jong, 2011, p. 115). With that being said, teachers are placed under a setting where, for example, Spanish is considered as a problem, then how could it be possible for them to realize the fact that students will feel more engaged if they apply more native language elements into the classroom?

Nashville is making a change, however. English language teachers with full Spanish proficiency from the Metro Nashville Public Schools are not only providing professional

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support to children, but also to their parents at the community English classes ranging from basic to intermediate level. With an area of expertise in both English and Spanish language, there are greater possibilities for teachers to make a better use of students' native language into English acquisition.

With the goal to facilitate Latino adults to learn English, my first instructional idea is fostering home language in particular between parents and children. Now that there are such great demands from Latino parents to support their children's educational success, I suggest parents with limited English language proficiency to initiate as many conversations as they can with their children using both Spanish and English, asking about their daily life at school. For those children who went to school outside of the U.S., parents can even try to have them compare the educational experiences at different places. Then when we meet in class, I will organize classroom sharing and invite those parents to present what are their ideas/methods to cooperate with children's academic success or how can they alleviate children's concerns in regard to uprooting experience. Other adults who do not share such commonality are also welcomed to listen and learn in my class, because this is an opportunity of reciprocal learning as I will ask them to prepare the sharing as well, choosing a perspective to introduce what they perceive to be the most impressive part in their countries' educational setting. This in-class sharing should be mainly in English, but they can feel free to use Spanish when it is necessary to do so.

After their sharing, I will give the evaluation form back, illustrating the unclear points they have made during the presentation. This instructional activity intends to scaffold their English language acquisition with their past constructivism of knowledge inside the family.

I am also hoping to connect my English language class with people's requests to find a job in the U.S., I consider my class in this sense as a door opened for them to create at least one more opportunity compared with the time they do not even have the basic language

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proficiency but want to have a job. I will open sessions for them introducing English that can be used both at the interview and workplace. Started with the basic vocabularies and phrases, then I will teach more complicated sentences and conversations once they can apply those terms into the mock interview that I organized in order to practice their speaking skills. The mock interview will certainly not be as difficult as a real one, during which my goal is to assess their general level of English speaking skills, and take a closer look at what are their expected positions to better make my language sessions tailored to their specific needs by providing correspondent information. Knowing that NAHCC is here to provide a strong economic support for the Latino community, I will also bring this information to the class during our sessions in case there are some students who still do not know. I want my students to feel more engaged not just linguistically, but socially they also get support from the teacher with a promising future.

Last but not least, I will collect Spanish magazines and newspapers that spread among the Latino community from time to time, and guide my students to find a piece of information that they find to be useful, after all, English language lessons are here to help them get accustomed to life in the U.S.: it can be a real estate advertisement as mentioned, or a news report about recent immigration policy. I will ask them to act as a leasing agent or journalist or someone else according to the information they choose to rephrase the information down to build up their English writing skills. This class activity can also be completed as a group project in the exchange of ideas about what they consider to be important and why.

To sum up, I think for those adult English language learners from Latino community, the priority we are discussing is integrating the foreign language instruction with their urgent demands to start a new life in the U.S., meanwhile, I believe teachers should make an efficient use of student's indigenous merits brought to the class to "build productive

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relationship with students” (Jimenez, Smith, & Teague, 2009, p. 16) and embrace them with an engaging classroom environment.

## Appendix B: Linguistic Case Study

### Introduction to the Learner

**Brief Participant Overview:** Siyu Chen, a native speaker of Chinese, is the recent graduate from a liberal arts college in Mainland China who majored in Applied Translation (Chinese and English) Studies. She was one of my cohorts and the medium of instruction back in our college was English, which means Siyu had a lot of opportunities to practice her English in the past four years. That is why when I asked her in the first place when/where/and with whom do you speak English, she told me she hardly ever speaks English outside the school although she has been learning English as a second language for over 10 years. Consequently, this makes her feel less confident in her English ability especially when talking to native speakers. To apply for the overseas master programs, she learned TOEFL and received the total score of 74/120 (reading: 23/30, listening: 13/30, speaking: 18/30, and writing: 20/30). Candidates of this exam are English language learners who wish to track their English language proficiency from reading, listening, speaking, and writing tasks. According to *a guide to understanding TOEFL iBT scores* (2014), Siyu demonstrated strong reading skills, yet her listening skills were comparably weaker; she might understand the main idea and some important details in conversations, but it would be challenging for her to process difficult vocabularies or complex grammatical structures. Her level of English speaking was ‘fair’, which means the inaccuracy and errors did not impede communication. Her writing skills were also considered as ‘fair’ because there were unclear ideas and grammatical mistakes. Based on her overall exam performances in TOEFL iBT, Siyu’s English language abilities were at the intermediate level. **Sociocultural Factors that May Influence Siyu’s ELP:** I think it was partially because Siyu lived in an environment where English is not the L1. Although English has been used as the medium of instruction for the educational purpose, which on the one hand pushed Siyu forward to listen/read/write/speak in

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English during the classes; all the enrolled students at university were native speakers of Chinese, whom would rather use Chinese to communicate with each other. In other words, the school demographics was homogenous and the time/opportunities for Siyu to use English were limited. Another influential factor that I could think of is a big proportion of her English practices were related to academic work/professional training, which might prevent her from choosing the contextually appropriate expressions when she was asked to perform a more diverse usage of English. Prior to the undergraduate education, Siyu had been learning English under the Gaokao (National College Entrance Examination) system where ‘teaching to the test’ was heavily addressed. She did not have much time to practice English beyond the realm of test preparation. Siyu’s hometown is Guiyang, the capital city of Guizhou province. Siyu speaks Guiyang dialect inside her families/communities, and she is her parents’ only kid. Technically speaking, her L1 should be Guiyang dialect and Mandarin is her L2. I assume that it would have been easier for her to understand the nuances between different languages based on her funds of knowledge as a bilingual speaker before she started to learn English. **Data Collection:** in order to complete the analysis of Siyu’s English language components, I collected the oral and written samples. Two interviews were both completed via the phone call under a private setting. Siyu was answering my questions during the first interview and the second oral task I prepared was a situational response conversation where I asked Siyu to pretend as she was the person in five situations. She read the situations first and responded as she would in actual conversations. There were two situations based on a professional/formal setting, whereas the rest three were casual/informal. The written sample that Siyu provided was an academic report she wrote. The title is *The Malformed Construction of Ideology behind High Suicide Rate’s Society —A Case Study of Japan under Marxism*.

### **Description of the Learner’s Oral and Written Language Abilities**

**Format Explanation:** I will look at Siyu's first oral task from the phonological perspective and evaluate the English pronunciation she produced under the dominance of the L1. Then the analysis will proceed to semantics as it will compare Siyu's choices of words, phrases, and sentences with what do these language components conventionally mean. In the grammatical analysis, Siyu's morphological and syntactical abilities will be visualized to discuss the number/complexity of morphemes/conjunctions she used in the oral and written language samples. Grounded with the theories and principles of pragmatics, the fourth part aims to unfold the context and Grice's Maxims based on the second oral language sample and find out how do Siyu's utterances reflect types of context in each situational response. There will be areas of strengths and attention to the weaknesses that Siyu may consider to improve in the future. **Phonological Analysis:** After looking across Siyu's responses to understand her specific phonological skills, she had an obvious accent but it did not prevent her from having an (overall) clear pronunciation. I notice that she still kept the way of intonation as she was speaking Chinese; she did not have the consciousness of producing the end of sentences into a rising tone (when it was needed). Interestingly, after I implemented the intonation, trying to set an example for her in thinking what does it look like during speaking English, she immediately recognized the differences and modified her pronunciation in the following interview. It was educible that Siyu had already developed a relatively strong phonemic awareness (P-Galloway, 2019), but she might be lacking immersive English speaking practices. She produced all the sound of /ð/ into /z/, moreover, she generalized most of the voiced consonants, for example, /t/, /k/, and /d/ to the voiceless sounds. I think her native pronunciation in Chinese had a great effect on her ways to pronounce English, because unlike the flow of the sounds of English vocabularies, Chinese is a monosyllabic language, where each character has only one syllable and most of the sounds of Chinese characters begin with a consonant and end with a vowel. This phenomenon reminds me of one fact that

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few L2 learners can sound like ‘a native speaker’ because they lack “the early experience using the sounds and intonation of the L2” (Yule, 2017, p. 210). Siyu herself mentioned in the interview that although she started learning English at a young age, teachers at school were seldom asking students to practice speaking English. The dominance of the L1, therefore, is particularly strong in terms of her pronunciation. One of Siyu’s phonological strengths was she knew how to link the sounds between vocabularies, for example, /wɛ naɪ/ (when I). I assume that she noticed this pattern when someone else was speaking and internalized it as her own habit of English pronunciation. Below is an excerpt from Siyu’s IPA transcript and the bolded letters were she failed to/pronounced them in a wrong way, but as I said, I can totally understand what she was trying to say despite these errors/inappropriate sounds she had made:

/ʌm...maɪ 'neɪtɪv 'læŋgwədʒ...ʌm...aɪ spɪk maɪ 'neɪtɪv 'læŋgwədʒ 'ɛvəri deɪ wɛn aɪ kəm'juːnə ,keɪtɪŋ wɪz maɪ fr(ɛ)nd ɔr 'ʌzər 'pɪp(ə)l... (æ)nd... 'neɪtɪv 'læŋgwədʒ ɪz 'vɛrɪ fə'mɪljər wɪz mi, sʊ aɪ kæn tɔk ,wʌ'tɛvər aɪ wʌnt, sʊ muːst ʌv taɪm aɪ tɔk maɪ 'neɪtɪv 'læŋgwədʒ/ (um...my native language...um...I speak my native language every day when I communicating with my friends or other people...and...native language is very familiar with me, so I can talk whatever I want, so most of time I talk my native language). Looking back at Siyu’s oral language sample motivates me to rethink the relationship between ‘accent’ and ‘poor pronunciation’ (Nair, Krishnasamy, and d-Mello, 2017), as long as the learner’s accent does not impede comprehension, I do not see there should be any reason for making ‘accent’ equivalent to ‘poor pronunciation’. Nevertheless, Siyu needs to be aware of that there was still a great proportion of her habit of producing the sounds of L1 proceeds to her English pronunciation. **Semantic Analysis:** in Siyu’s oral language sample, she was repeating the phrase ‘native language’ that I earlier mentioned in the question instead of replacing it with ‘Chinese’ and she said “native language is very familiar with me”, I am not saying that these

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syntactic structures were wrong, but I think “I speak my native language every day” and “native language is very familiar with me” made her expression semantically odd (Yule, 2017). I thus found Siyu’s semantic weakness was her oral language was (frequently) far from being conventionally acceptable. She might have already developed a strong awareness towards which vocabulary/collocations/sentences to choose in the writing task, but it is the fact that Siyu was not able to make her spoken English semantically appropriate from the samples that I collected. The lexical density of Siyu’s oral transcription was 37.77, which indicated that she needed to work on the richness in terms of different lexical/syntactic choices in her oral language, whereas in her written sample, the lexical density was 62.05. Looking at Siyu’s written sample, it was impressive to find that she chose the verb ‘contribute’ to modify ‘the paper’. She knew that besides using human beings as the agent, non-human entities can also cause actions. I genuinely want to celebrate for this achievement because one word would subsequently be fulfilled with different roles at different situations (Yule, 2017). Another strength that I found in her written sample was the usage of synonym, for example, she could organically connect ‘suicide’ with ‘death’ in one sentence. In addition, she was able to grasp the concept of hyponymy by mentioning ‘suicide’ at the beginning of her article and then narrowing down to ‘social mental problems’. All of these strengths that Siyu performed in the written language sample allowed me to see the great potential that she had on English writing. When it comes to the area that I suggest her to improve upon, I found some verbs that referred to the non-human entities were semantically odd (which is in line with the problem emerged in the oral language sample). Overall, she still delivered a much more complex lexical/syntactic choices in the written sample compared with her oral English language. To discuss about the influencing factors, I think there should still be an occupation of L1 causing an effect on the semantic choices of L2. In other words, as Yule mentioned in his second language acquisition/learning theory: “they also have

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developed an unconscious commitment to the sounds and structures of an already known language that has been in use for most of their daily communicative requirements for many years” (Yule, 2017, p. 210). The acquisition barriers were particularly apparent in the oral language sample where she used a lot of semantically odd expressions that were originally acceptable in the L1. **Grammatical Analysis:** Siyu was constantly making grammatical mistakes in her oral responses. She used the present progressive tense without ‘am’ and forgot to change the verb ‘consider’ into ‘considering’ after ‘instead of’. As our interview continued, Siyu significantly made less errors when she gradually accommodated herself into the English speaking context and she felt more confident with her expressions by using less fillers ‘um’. It is contradictory to think that how an adult learner with limited ELP could have such a strong metalinguistic awareness and I think the reason for that was because she started learning English (as a foreign language) when she was in the early teens as “a quicker and more effective L2 learners in the classroom” (Yule, 2017, p. 210), but I believe there was a lack of explicit intervention to develop her oral language that led to her current stage of being unable to fully express her thoughts/opinions. In Siyu’s written sample, no grammatical mistake had been made. Unlike the oral task during which she had to make instant response, writing gave her more time to organize her thoughts and it reveals the fact that she actually knew how the English grammars should be operated even the more complex principles were incorporated. **(Morphological Ability:)** The number of morphemes per word in the oral transcription was 1.095, which is lower compared with that of her written sample: 1.254. It is inferable from the calculated data that Siyu’s writing was morphologically more complex than her oral skills. In her oral transcription, Siyu has already had the awareness to amplify ‘-ing’ as a derivational suffix to nominalize ‘prepare’ at the end of her utterance. Other than that, she frequently used contractions, such as ‘I’m’, ‘you’d’, and ‘it’s’. She was also conscious of the pluralities by adding ‘-s’ to the words, for example, ‘grades’, ‘things’, and

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'details'. What I see the strengths from her based on the oral transcription that I have are 1) her strong grasp to inflectional suffix, which aims "to indicate the grammatical function of a word" (Yule, 2017, p. 75). She realized 'meeting' should be a variant form of 'meet' (without changing the part of speech) after the preposition 'for'. 2) She could accurately target some of the bound morphemes, for example, '-ly', as it marks the adverbial form of 'really', 're-' as in the word of 'return', and '-ment' as in the word of 'development'. Yet she might need to avoid overly using some of the free morphemes, such as 'think', 'should'. In Siyu's written sample, she displayed a more sophisticated and complex morphological usage. The number of morphemes in each line of her utterance became larger where she could exemplify bound morphemes (carried with different grammatical functions) in one sentence. For example, not only did she notify '-s' in 'reflects' as the third person singular form, she also used '-s' to make the meaning of plurality as in 'residents' and possessive as in 'its' as well; besides, she used '-al' to deliver the adjectives ('social', 'political'). Furthermore, she knew '-ment' was implemented to describe nouns. One of the strengths thus was her diversified yet accurate usage of morphemes. In addition, she used many bound morphemes in the form of adjectives to refer to nouns, such as, 'soci-al issue', 'feas-ible measures'. It seems that Siyu had already captured the nuances in terms of different meanings carried by various morphemes in her writing. **(Syntactic Ability:)** In Siyu's oral transcription, she used 'and' between her utterances to connect, for example, 'I 'm sorry' and 'I think you know this class is very important for you'. She usually produced short utterances when she used addition. It seems that she was familiar with the use of pronominal forms and could make the conscious choice of applying them into her own oral expression. For example, she used 'this presentation' to refer back to 'my presentation' in her former utterance, which made a lot of sense to me as her listener to further prevent herself from any ambiguity that might have caused. She also knew to use the anaphoric function of 'that' ('So I feel sorry about that') to replace her

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decline for not accepting the PhD offer. Nevertheless, some connectives that she used in her oral expression were under improper circumstances, where she used ‘but’ to connect ‘I think I can lend it for this time’ and ‘the next time I think you should attend this class’. Rather, I think these two utterances were not transition-based, whereas they should either be separated or bounded together with connectives of addition. In siyu’s written sample, she continued to use pronominal forms to refer back to her previous utterances, for example, ‘a’ as in ‘Suicide has become **a serious social issue**’ became ‘this’ as in ‘This paper contributes to find out the origin of suicide and set up some feasible measures to deal with **this social issue**’. I can thus see her great potential in connecting her ideas in both the speaking and writing task. She also used connective phrases, such as ‘in general’, ‘in fact’, to reformulate her utterances (‘In general, suicide is a problem that is downplayed in our society, experts say’). In one of the utterances that she wrote, she did not mention who the anaphoric target (should have been ‘suicide’ when I looked back) was by directly using ‘its’, which was an improper usage of linking device, because this might influence the coherence of her texts. (**Global Grammatical Ability:**) Generally speaking, Siyu showed a more well-rounded, complicated grasp of morphological knowledge when she was writing. She could identify even the nuances of similar morphemes in her academic paper, whereas it was more challenging for her to come up with different types of morphemes and notice their differences when she was talking to me in English. She hardly made mistakes in her writing in terms of the usage of morphemes, indicating that she should have known how to use them appropriately, but she still could not process those morphemes orally in the way that she earlier had mentioned in the written piece. From my perspective, Siyu knew the grammar, but she probably needed more time to switch the morphemes in Mandarin Chinese (which are generally considered as characters) into the L2 morphemes (P-Galloway, 2019) in the conversation. In thinking her syntactical performances, I found that she seldom made mistakes, both in her oral

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transcription and written sample, when she was using logical linking devices, such as ‘therefore’, ‘and’, ‘so’. Sometimes she was still unclear with under what circumstances will the usage of grammatical/linking devices be considered as proper/appropriate. Siyu was struggling more with her morphological usage when she spoke English. Other than that, her morphological/syntactical usage in writing, I think, has already achieved intermediate level. She was also able to produce syntactical knowledge in her oral language. **Pragmatic**

**Analysis:** in one of the situational response where I asked her what was her idea in thinking to pursue a PhD in a different city, she gave me this reply: “ok, um, um, sorry, professor, I’m..., today I’m very busy to do my...um...presentation preparing...um...you know this presentation is also very...um...important for my grades and for my...um...everything, so...um...I feel sorry about that”. Even though this reply was not relevant to the professor’s request, the point I am trying to make here is that Siyu’s awareness that this was a teacher-student relationship built upon respects could be justified by her frequent usage of fillers, because she did not know how to properly reject that invitation from the professor. So there should also be social context framed within this utterance, whereas in situation two, someone in the class asked for her notes to borrow, I noticed Siyu immediately became better organized (compared with her former interviewing performances) in terms of her response as follows: “Oh, um, I’m sorry, and I think, I think you know this class is very important for you, and you’d better attend the class, ok? Um, if you really arrange for meeting this class, I think I can lend it for this time, but the next time I think you should...um...attend this class”. Siyu this time goes beyond the answer of a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, in fact she made a request, “you’d better attend the class, ok?”, to the person who asked her for a favor, which she may not be willing to do so with her professor. Siyu’s usage of fillers, however, does not deteriorate her overall maxims of relevance where she made her answers in accordance with the questions in those five situations. She did not go off topic initiated from the speaker

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although I found she was frequently flouting the maxims on purpose. When she was bothered with Lijun coming over and her money being borrowed away in situation three, she said : “Um, You know I’m also a student, so I think...um...I also really need this money, and I have...um...less money to...um...do...um...other things, if you really want to borrow this money, I think I can lend it to you, but you have to...um...write something down about when you return it to me, and what thing you should to do, I think if you do that, it’s no problem”. Similarly in situation four, Siyu did not say “No, you can’t jump in the line because everyone here is waiting” in relevance with the elderly man’s request, she rather replied: “Ok, but you see this lone line, everyone is busy to buy this ticket. I think everyone are very feel difficult to...um...to get you go first, so I think everybody should get in line...should wait in line, and I think you can, we can wait together instead of making you...um...go first, and so, there is a rule I think you can understand”. I think the reason Siyu did this was because she had no idea about how to say ‘no’, although she definitely wanted to. This idea holds true when Dawson and Phelan (2016, p. 283) acknowledge that “we sometimes need to avoid saying something directly because doing so could hurt us or someone else”, and I agree with their credits given to the flouting of maxims addressing that: “It is an important part of everyday communication; it allows us to draw conclusions and can facilitate efficient communication” (Dawson and Phelan, 2016, p. 284). Based on what I have observed, Siyu overall had no difficulty making her utterances context appropriate, which led to efficient communication. To conclude, social contexts, such as interpersonal relationships, influence Siyu’s communication with different types of people: college professor, classmate, and elderly man. It is also important to reconsider the personal factors that influence Siyu’s responses; she did not have much experience to speak English except for the educational/academic purposes, so when she was making the situational responses, she had no idea of how the oral language should be organized and how to reply in a proper manner.

### **Assessment of the Learner's Current Stage of SLA**

**Overall Assessment with Evidences:** according to Common European Framework of Reference of Language (n.d.), I think Siyu was transitioning from the basic user (A2) to independent user (A1) in terms of her oral language components. She was able to communicate “in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information” (Common European Framework of Reference of Language – Self-assessment grid, n.d.) and she could deal with unfamiliar topics, but she was having trouble with producing long answers that asked for a higher demand on difficult words/phrases/sentences although it did not impede communication. Siyu generally knew how she wanted her oral responses to be flowed and organized, for example, she said “I think you are not wrong” to indicate that she was paying attention to others’ speaking and then she used ‘but’ to express her own viewpoints as opposed to the previous opinions. She was responsive to the conversations that she had participated and has developed a relatively strong pragmatic awareness in the oral language. Siyu was a proficient user (C2), which is the highest level of proficiency, in the writing tasks. She was able to unfold an abstract/complex topic related to a certain academic field and made her theses clear and easy to understand. There was no grammatical mistake in her writing sample and she has already achieved bilingual proficiency in the academic English. **Description of SLA Theoretical Framework:** in Li’s article, he mentions the concept of corrective feedback (CF) that was orally provided by EFL teachers in class. It is therefore intriguing to discuss given the fact that CF pedagogy “can facilitate L2 development” (Li, 2014, p. 196) that Siyu was able to modify her intonation after hearing my English speaking. I did not explicitly tell her how she was supposed to pronounce, but it was through our spoken interaction that made her realize the area to improve upon. Another theoretical issue that has been raised from this analysis is Krashen’s Monitor hypothesis as whether or not should EFL curriculum implement “explicit grammar

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teaching” (Krashen, as cited in Gutiérrez, 2013, p. 177). Although Siyu was learning English under the context where the grammatical knowledge had been heavily addressed, she was constantly making grammatical mistakes in the oral language tasks. I know this evidence was not strong enough to criticize that grammar teaching is useless, and Siyu knew how to internalize the grammatical knowledge in the written task. In light of Krashen’s ideas on the explicit grammar teaching in SLA format, I believe its applicable pedagogical practices are limited and therefore should not be treated as a universal technique to teach/evaluate students’ oral and written tasks/abilities.

### **Specific Instructional Plan**

**Phonological Abilities:** To improve Siyu’s phonological skills, she needs to speak more English with someone who can sound like a native speaker (or is a native speaker him/herself) to help her distinguish vocabulary with subtle differences in terms of the pronunciation. The teacher may wish to scaffold her metalinguistic awareness in ‘standard’ pronunciation by reading and answering the questions that Siyu perceives to have problems with in the first place. Reading aloud will provide Siyu with a clear example of how to pronounce vocabulary in a ‘correct’ way, and the teacher’s responses to the questions will provide an example of fluency in English speaking. Since transfer from the L1 in terms of the pronunciation is relatively strong in shaping Siyu’s English pronunciation, which sometimes sounds unclear and confused, I suggest integrating the L1 sources into her L2 acquisition by asking her to discover sound patterns that she does not pronounce in Chinese. She needs to polish her English pronunciation not to sound like a native speaker, but to make her ideas appropriately comprehensible and to develop better communications with others. My last recommendation is giving Siyu more opportunities to practice impromptu speech, where she can learn to connect her ideas with a given topic and thus improve her fluency in speaking English. To summarize, I think teacher is here to facilitate her active engagement with the

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phonological skills' development, especially under a context where she has little time for L2 speaking. **Semantic Abilities:** I suggest Siyu's teacher to implement intense training on her oral semantic abilities. Teacher should bring different speaking prompts into the class and ask her to deliver a speech (around 3-5 minutes) related to the topic. The learner should be given time to draw an outline of how her speech will flow and brainstorm the vocabularies/phrases that she plans to use during the speech. At the beginning, teacher can work with the student together if she does not know which lexical/syntactic items to include or needs extra help to check whether these items are semantically acceptable. As the student gets more intervention on how her oral language should be enriched, teacher can give less time for the student to prepare prior to the speech. Teacher should frequently let the student watch public speaking videos to scaffold her awareness of different lexical/syntactic choices and ask the student to take notes and share her take-away after watching the video. Siyu had a strong grasp of diversified semantic choices displayed in her written sample, teacher can therefore encourage her to rethink how to implement them into her oral practices. **Morphological Abilities:** To help Siyu improve her current morphological and syntactical usage in the oral language, I will adopt the idea of scaffolding her morphological awareness, which "can provide a bridge from native language to second language by highlighting similar units of meaning within both languages" (Goodwin, Lipsky and Ahn, 2012, p. 462). She will scaffold the consciousness of the differences between morphemes in Chinese and English by answering the same question in two different languages given the unfamiliarity she had towards English morphology. Teacher can also prepare Siyu with cards on which are different types of morphemes in English (with specific examples of vocabularies) and ask her to read aloud until she can really use them in her oral language. Additionally, I suggest teacher to prepare prompts (pictures or words) for storytelling in order to inform her the lack of syntactical knowledge when she was speaking English. She may have to practice orally to connect the

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prompts that she has been given into a story. Her written piece generally has less problems for me to discuss, but I still suggest her to read more articles written by native speakers and learn their authentic usage of morphemes and linking devices. **Pragmatic Abilities:** I suggest teacher to show her specific examples related to the maxims of manner in the utterances.

Because I noticed that there were some ambiguities occurred in Siyu's responses although it was good to promote the idea of flouting maxims. For example, in situation four, when I asked her, as that elderly man, to buy me a ticket, she began with: "Ok", but then she continued with a 'no': "but you see this lone line, everyone is busy to buy this ticket", and "so I think everybody should get in line...should wait in line". It sounds quite confused, and a response like this is possible to hinder an efficient and accurate communication.

Additionally, when she was declining the invitation from professor, she said: "you know this presentation is also very...um...important for my grades and for my...um...everything". I think it is important to let Siyu know how to "be brief" and "avoid ambiguity" (Dawson and Phelan, 2016, p. 282) while making the context of utterances appropriate.

### **Critical Reflection**

This project allows me to systematically look at the learner's oral and written language properties from phonological, semantic, morphological, and pragmatic perspectives. I was able to go beyond the theoretical framework in this study and incorporate my thoughts/interpretation based on the specific samples that I had collected. I consider this as an important achievement because I was also thinking the same problem before I started this project and that is how the linguistic knowledge will inform my teaching in the future. Moreover, I got the chance to explore different facets of linguistic knowledge that I had not noticed before. I hope this learning will help me identify and find interventions to facilitate my students' learning in the future. Although one size does not fit all, it has a general picture of how I plan to enact my EFL instruction in line with students' diversified linguistic

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repertoires. **Limitations:** the sample size of this study is small, the analysis only reveals Siyu's strengths/weaknesses in her oral/written language samples, but other learners' cases in China can be different from what I have found in this study.

### **Appendix C: School Investigation Paper**

**A Brief Introduction.** The school I went is McMurray Middle School, where it is located at the Southeastern part of Nashville. The Assistant Principal, Ms. Tiffany Battle, told us that there are currently 846 English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled at McMurray from grade 5 to 8, accounting for one of largest EL population at Metro Nashville Public Schools. I did not expect that McMurray could have such a large number of EL students until I went there and did not find any white kid, whereas most of them, according to Ms. Battle, come from Mexico, Central American countries like Guatemala and Honduras, and some African countries like Somalia. These kids show variabilities in terms of their English Language Proficiency (ELP). In the meantime, Ms. Battle told us the fact that there is currently a shortage of EL teachers at McMurray given the current EL population in total. Her words were in fact reflective of what I have observed from the EL classroom, which I am going to demonstrate later in the following section. Taking a further look at the school-wide support for those ELLs, I think McMurray generally provides a respectful academic environment by having teachers either coming from diversified cultural backgrounds or with an extensive immersion in students' indigenous culture and language. We were also taken to attend teacher's weekly meeting, which happens on every Tuesday. I found this is a time for EL and subject teachers to sit at one place and brainstorm/reflect their teaching methods/progress in order to better support the students, especially for whom needs special assistance with regards to his or her school performance. In addition, there were translators simultaneously working for those students and families who possess limited ELP at different schools including McMurray, although I am not sure which language(s) are in service at this moment. McMurray also host parent-teacher conference on a regular basis, which from my perspective is to strive for an efficient cooperation between parents and teachers and thus students will be empowered with a better learning environment both inside and outside

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school. In the next section, I am going to ask three questions in thinking how ELLs are served at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade EL classrooms. The questions are as follow: 1) Were students' native cultural/linguistic identities affirmed by teachers? 2) The 7<sup>th</sup> grade EL teacher told me that some of his students were still at level 1 or 2 (there are 4 levels in total) in terms of the ELP, so what can teachers do to keep them up with the content/subject learning? Is there any special instruction other than EL classes delivered to support their study? 3) How was the teacher-student interaction in class? Were students responsive? Were they learning?

**Inside the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade EL Classrooms.** De Jong (2011, p. 192) mentions "curriculum decisions", "pedagogical decisions", "classroom organization" and "assessment decisions" to follow up the principle of affirming identities at the classroom level. At first, we were led to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade EL classroom, finding out that the students were about to leave for other classes. Mr. Jason Smith, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade EL teacher, thus had time to guide us through his teaching experience at his classroom. One of Mr. Smith's teaching materials that he takes the most pride of is his word wall how it informed the teacher's instruction?, where there are English vocabularies that his students are currently learning. When I asked him what if the students do not know the meanings, Mr. Smith smiled: "well, they have to find the meanings by themselves". He encourages students to interpret the meanings by themselves. Mr. Smith's words lead me back to reconsider the idea of "curriculum/pedagogical decisions" (De Jong, 2011, p. 192) during which he embraces various interpretations toward one vocabulary (as long as they make sense) rather than enforce students to remember what he perceives to be 'the correct answer'. His vocabulary instruction makes a lot sense to me as it visualizes EL students' indigenous language indigenous language, because students has the autonomy to learn L2 through the lense of L1 (De Jong, 2011). Subsequently, students are making contribution to the class not only because of their L2 progress, but their native cultural/linguistic identities as well. Then I shifted my focus to the classroom organization as

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I stepped into the 8<sup>th</sup> grade EL classroom, when the two teachers, one of them is a Mexican American, were each having their tutoring session at the opposite corner of the classroom. Although the textbook was written in English, that Mexican American lady was expecting an active engagement by speaking Spanish to her students. It is obvious that students are granted with the option to communicate using their native language, which is in line with the idea that teachers should invite students to share their background knowledge, more importantly, “create opportunities for students to raise questions and initiate topics of their interest” (De Jong, 2011, p. 193). No evidence was shared in referred to background knowledge/topics of their interest. While I was listening to the EL session in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, the teacher also showed us a paper board where it kept the record of every student’s current ELP level. I noticed that most of the students’ names have been under the level 2 or 3 track, and she admitted that the majority of her EL students were at the intermediate level. Coming back to their EL course content, the teacher was at that time handing out materials that have English vocabularies, and every group of 6 to 7 students would later come to the teacher for a more in-depth learning. For example, teacher led students recognize and pronounce the vocabulary by pointing to the jacket that she was wearing and said: “Now, follow me, j-a-c-k-e-t”. The teacher was trying to explain/interpret the vocabularies that students do not understand by connecting it with their existing knowledge not sure if it was appropriate to mention “existing knowledge” here (Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., and Gonzalez, N., 1992). After that, students were asked to write the vocabulary on their own board for teacher to assess their learning outcomes. Additionally, teacher would ask the students to write the vocabulary several more times if they spell it wrong.

As I have already mentioned in the introduction, students at McMurray are showing a great variability in their ELP even though they might have been placed in the same classroom. Moreover, Mr. Smith told me that some of his 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were still at the

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level 1 or 2 EL classes, indicating their ELP was inadequate for the content learning.

Interestingly, teachers at McMurray do not keep those students up with the content/subject learning, but there are a large amount of strategies to help scaffold the materials, and from Mr. Smith have observed, students show growth and become more proficient. To be more specific, he introduced the Personalized Learning Time (PLT) intervention class to me aside from the EL classes at McMurray, “during which students can receive extra supports based on their individual needs, including...English language and enrichment” (Metro Nashville Public School, n.d.). Mr. Smith said there were activities – word walks, writing practices, and speaking tasks (academic conversations) – focusing on students’ vocabulary input, and that block with their content block in which teachers use comprehensible input, mind maps, anchor charts, and other tasks provide support and encouragement for the EL students’ fluency, growth, and proficiency.

In conclusion, I think there is an active yet academically demanding teacher-student interaction here at McMurray. It further reminds me of the value of implementing culturally responsive caring (Gay, G., 2010) into the foreign language classroom, where students are carrying different cultural/linguistic backgrounds. I was impressed with the students’ active engagement with their teacher during the EL class, most of them were willing to think/talk, and therefore shaping a responsive classroom context for everyone to listen and learn.

**Recommendations.** One problem I think should be raised with awareness is one teacher was facing too many students during the EL class. Although both teachers and students were contributing efforts in creating an efficient session, I realized from this observation that there are still some students who are in high needs but there is a lack of academic support from the school and teachers. What is more, even students of the same grade were displaying great variabilities in terms of their ELP, which from my perspective will be challenging for teachers to mediate among different demands given different levels of

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proficiency. In thinking the first problem, it will certainly be the best solution if the school can have more professional EL teachers, my suggestion is, however, developing some of the (current) content area teachers, especially for those who teach arts and social science subjects, into EL lecturers. I think there will be teachers who are willing to take this responsibility given the interdisciplinary attribute of language and education, furthermore, these teachers may have already been aware of the cultural diversity that an EL student can bring to the classroom, they are an ideal group of people who I see a great potential from their teaching experience and funds of knowledge. Yet considering the fact that some teachers may not be familiar with the EL educational setting, school should host EL teacher training session to develop more qualified EL teachers. My second recommendation for school is to recruit more part-time EL teachers, I think they will give our kids who have not yet received much academic support with a promising future in helping them learn and grow. Schools can work with these teachers to open more EL classes that are tailored to students' different levels of proficiency, and thus encourage as many students as possible to actively engage in the class and witness their own improvement in listening, speaking, writing, and reading English.

**Appendix D: Practicum Reflection**

**What were some strengths of my lesson?** When I was preparing/delivering the lesson, I had the student's level of proficiency in mind and made it as my priority in thinking specifically what text I should choose and how I am going to talk with him. Unlike the traditional instruction where it usually has much more students, the tutoring provides more individualized opportunities. Besides teaching, I would regularly check in with the student to see how he was doing at school and what question/concern he wanted to ask (during the lesson time). We were reading (aloud) books together and to assist/guide the reading, I would select key vocabularies/phrases and pull them out on PowerPoint slides. According to his reading level, the book does not contain long and/or complex sentences, but I would still guide the student through vocabularies/phrase by teaching him how to pronounce. It seems like an efficient activity from my perspective, because I observed that the student was trying his best to improve his reading skills and pronunciation particularly if the teacher actively participated and worked with him through this whole process together. I was also being explicit in telling him that "you are more than welcomed to use your native language during our time together" and he sometimes would have his parents be the translator. We could develop meaningful and rich conversation with the help of translation.

**What were some challenges you faced in this lesson, and how did you address these challenges?** The flexibility of having after-class tutoring under certain circumstances may also trigger disadvantages and challenges both for the teacher and student. Sometimes I noticed that the student was having hard time staying focused. I guess it was particularly because he had already spent a whole day at school. The student was still at the very beginning level in terms of reading proficiency, it was quite a challenging process to select appropriate books. To address those issues, I always keep in mind of not trying to

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boring/overwhelming him with the materials I provided. I also modeled and guided him to read.

**If you were to give this lesson again, what might you change based on the challenges you faced or the feedback you received?** As for my vocabulary instruction, I would try to implement more picture clues versus only having those words on slides.

**Appendix E: Curriculum Design Project**

**Unit One: Academic Integrity in the United States**

**Lesson One: Higher Education in the United States**

**Essential Questions:**

1. Why do you want to come to the U.S. to pursue your college degrees?
2. How can the article help us achieve better understanding towards the development of U.S. higher education?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

**Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the developmental trajectories of the U.S. higher education.
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation: Leveraging Prior Knowledge and Inferring Meaning.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

**Lesson Schedule:**

**1. Advanced Preparation**

- a. Reading: *What's the Value of Higher Education* by Dr. Johnnetta Cole
- b. Students will have to find one fact about the U.S. higher education that they think is interesting and bring it to class.

2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Activity:** Students can move around and share this fun fact with their peers and the teacher can join their discussion to pre-assess what

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knowledge they have already gained from the U.S. higher education. Blank posters will be provided for students to write down the fun facts that they have collected and shared.

3. **Input of the Day:** Students will have access to the online article *What's the Value of Higher Education* (Cole, 2018).
  - a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they can discuss in small groups why they chose America to be the place for them to pursue college degrees.
  - b. **Language:** Then the teacher will introduce two reading strategies - **Leveraging Prior Knowledge** and **Inferring Meaning** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of prior knowledge and inferring meaning in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
  - c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):
  - a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
  - b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

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2. Reading article(s) for next week.

### **Lesson Two: Academic Dishonesty**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. What kind of actions are classified as academic dishonesty?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards academic dishonesty occurred in universities?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

#### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the importance of Academic Dishonesty in the U.S.
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation:  
**Using Context Clues and Rereading.**
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

#### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** Students will have to read *Academic Dishonesty: An International Student Perspective* prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) after finishing the reading.
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Prior to the instruction, students will watch several PowerPoint slides that display cases affiliated with academic dishonesty in the U.S. universities, and the teacher will give students 3-5 minutes to discuss in small groups whether they consider each case as a violation of academic honesty. After coming back as a whole class, students can express their own thoughts and ideas and the teacher will tell students how those cases were finally

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judged/remained as unresolved. The big idea is to understand how much knowledge in terms of academic dishonesty does students have in looking forward to pursuing a successful academic life in the U.S.

### 3. **Input of the Day:** *Academic Dishonesty: An International Student*

*Perspective* (Simpson, 2016). Students will have access to this journal article about academic dishonesty from the specific perspective of an international student.

- a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of how academic honesty, the key concepts of which may be different from their home countries, is valued and generated in the U.S.
- b. **Language:** Then the teacher will introduce two reading strategies - **Using Context Clues** and **Rereading** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of context clues and rereading in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
- c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

#### 2. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):

- a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.

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- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

3. Reading article(s) for next week.

### **Lesson Three: An Introduction to Referencing Systems**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. How the appropriate use of referencing systems will help us avoid the potential violation of academic integrity?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards academic referencing systems?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

#### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Scaffold students' awareness of appropriately implementing referencing systems into their academic work.
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation: Visualization and Summarization+Prediction.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

#### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** Students will have to write a short APA/MLA/Chicago Manual of Style/IEEE/AMA style paper with cover page and at least one reference cited both in text and reference page (there is no limit on the chosen of topics), they will submit the articles for me to individually make further comments and suggestions.
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Before this session begins, the teacher will give

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back students their short referencing style papers. Students will then share their papers within the breakout groups about the mistakes they have made and they can make joint efforts to correct the mistakes and meanwhile learn from them.

3. **Input of the Day:** Students will have access to the journal article: *Spanish Achievement in a Maintenance Bilingual Education Program: Language Proficiency, Grade and Gender Comparisons* (Medina, 1993).
  - a. **Content:** Based on the article, the teacher will explicitly tell students how in-text and regular citations are differently formatted and how academic referencing can upgrade the level of credibility of the author's work.
  - b. **Language:** Then the teacher will introduce two reading strategies - **Visualization** and **Summarization+Prediction** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of visualization and summarization/prediction in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
  - c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):
  - a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
  - b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the

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challenges you marked in part a.

2. Reading article(s) for next week.

### **Unit Two: Multiculturalism in the United States**

#### **Lesson One: Racial Segregation**

##### **Essential Questions:**

1. What impact does the abolition of racial segregation have on consequent U.S. history in terms of cultural diversity?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards the abolition of racial segregation in the U.S.?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

##### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the incomparable influence of the abolition of racial segregation in U.S. history.
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation: Leveraging Prior Knowledge and Inferring Meaning.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

##### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** students will have to watch *History of the Civil Rights Movement* (available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URxwe6LPvkM>) and read *Plessy Nears Its End* (The New York Times, 1956) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) from the video and the article.

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2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Students will be shown a brief timeline regarding segregation and consequent Civil Rights Movement. They will share their own takeaways from the video (also a brief history of the Civil Rights Movement) they watched and discuss in groups of the potential impact of the abolition of racial segregation. The big idea is to have students understand that the abolition of racial segregation precludes the Civil Rights Movement that inaugurates an era of social upheavals striving for equality and cultural diversity.
3. **Input of the Day:** *Plessy Nears Its End* (The New York Times, 1956). Students will have access to an article that recounts the societal status 6 years after the abolition of racial segregation in the U.S..
  - a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of several court rulings and important events in the era of racial segregation in the 1950s.
  - b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies - **Leveraging Prior Knowledge** and **Inferring Meaning** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of Leveraging Prior Knowledge and Inferring Meaning in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
  - c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

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### 1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):

- a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

### 2. Reading article(s) for next week.

## **Lesson Two: Immigration I: Melting Pot**

### **Essential Questions:**

1. Is immigration detrimental or beneficial in the case of the U.S.?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards the U.S. as a Big Melting Pot?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of immigration as a continuous heated topic throughout U.S. history.
2. Develop understanding of both advantages and disadvantages brought by immigration in the U.S.
3. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation:

### **Using Context Clues and Rereading.**

4. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
5. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:**

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- a. students will have to read *The Great Melting Pot* (Kevin et al., 2017) and *No Salad Bowl: America is Still a Melting Pot* (Auerback, 2019) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) after finishing the reading.
  - b. Students will prepare a list of arguments on both sides of the question “Is immigration detrimental or beneficial in the case of the U.S.?” and bring it to class
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Students will be randomly divided into two groups and have a short debate on the question “Is immigration detrimental or beneficial in the case of the U.S.?” They have 5-10 minutes to prepare their arguments in their groups through sharing their thoughts and lists prepared in advance. Then the teacher will host the debate including a 2-minute opening statement for each team, 5-10-minute free debate and a 2-minute closing statement for each team (there will be no winning side). The big idea is to have students think about pros and cons of immigration in the U.S. context and stimulate their critical thinking skills.
3. **Input of the Day:** *The Great Melting Pot* (Kevin et al., 2017) and *No Salad Bowl: America is Still a Melting Pot* (Auerback, 2019). Students will have access to two articles that approach the concept of the U.S. as a Melting pot from slightly different angles.
- a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of the complex situation of immigration and the diversified racial/cultural composition in U.S. society.

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- b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies - **Using Context Clues** and **Rereading** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of context clues and rereading in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
- c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

#### 1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):

- a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

#### 2. Reading article(s) for next week.

### **Lesson Three: Immigration II: Refugees**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. Is Refugee influx detrimental or beneficial in the case of the U.S.?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards the refugee resettlement situation in the U.S.?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

#### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of refugees as another enormous fraction of

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immigration population in the U.S..

2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation:  
Visualization and Summarization+Prediction.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** Students will have to read *The Wretched and the Beautiful* (Yu, 2017) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) after finishing the reading.
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Students will be shown a U.S. refugee resettlement fact sheet (available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/resettlement-in-the-united-states.html>). They will discuss in their groups the potential beneficial or detrimental impact of refugee influx for 3-5 minutes and share their thoughts with the whole class. Then the teacher will lead a discussion on “from which perspective will refugee resettlement reshape the U.S. society?” (For example, how the public k-12 educational system should react to this phenomenon and how can this country facilitate them to accommodate/assimilate as soon as possible)
3. **Input of the Day:** *The Wretched and the Beautiful* (Yu, 2017). Students will have access to a science fiction that is a metaphorical tale on the topic of accepting or devaluing refugees regarding their intentions (intentional asylum seeking or facing a situation with no other option).
  - a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the

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meantime, by comparing the fictional story to the real society, they will deepen their understanding of the refugee resettlement situation in the U.S. even worldwide.

- b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies - **Visualization** and **Summarization+Prediction** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of Visualization and Summarization+Prediction in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
- c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):
  - a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
  - b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.
2. Reading article(s) for next week.

### **Unit Three: Embracing Equality**

#### **Lesson One: Equality of Educational Opportunities**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. In your opinion, what does it mean to have true equality of educational opportunities for all citizens?

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2. How can the article help us think critically towards equality of educational opportunities in the U.S.?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the importance of equality of educational opportunities in the U.S..
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation: Leveraging Prior Knowledge and Inferring Meaning.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** students will have to read *In Public Education, U.S. Needs to Pursue Equality* (Fan, 2018) and *Your Right to Equality in Education* (ACLU Department of Public Education, n.d.) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) after finishing the reading.
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Invite students to notice the different perspectives offered by the two articles and ask students to discuss in groups which aspects of educational equality they think should be prioritized in their own country or generally in the world. After discussing for 5-7 minutes, the teacher invites several students to share the arguments and ideas that came up in the previous discussion. The big idea is to have students expand their focus away from the U.S. context and to their own country, which is a stimulating activity for

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them to leverage their prior knowledge.

3. **Input of the Day:** *In Public Education, U.S. Needs to Pursue Equality* (Fan, 2018) and *Your Right to Equality in Education* (ACLU Department of Public Education, n.d.). Students will have access to these two articles based on two perspectives on the same topic of equality of educational opportunities in the U.S..
  - a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of what people in the U.S expect to get from educational equality, which might be slightly different from their own countries.
  - b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies - **Leveraging Prior Knowledge** and **Inferring Meaning** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of Leveraging Prior Knowledge and Inferring Meaning in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.
  - c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):
  - a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down

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unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.

- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

2. Reading article(s) for next week

### **Lesson Two: Gender Equality (Women Rights)**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. How do you envision the idea of gender equality being implemented in modern days (workplace, etc.)?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards gender equality in the U.S.?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

#### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the importance of equality of educational opportunities in the U.S..
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation:  
**Using Context Clues and Rereading.**
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

#### **Lesson Schedule:**

1. **Advanced Preparation:** students will have to watch *Know your worth, and then ask for it* (Casey Brown, 2017) and read the transcript of the whole TED talk (both available on [https://www.ted.com/talks/casey\\_brown\\_know\\_your\\_worth\\_and\\_then\\_ask\\_for\\_it?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/casey_brown_know_your_worth_and_then_ask_for_it?language=en)) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what

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is/are their takeaway(s) from the video.

2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Students will watch an excerpt from a famous speech *Women's Rights Are Human Rights* by Hillary Clinton. Then the students should talk in small groups to share their own knowledge of a representative female figure that makes a huge contribution to mankind. Then when students come back as a whole, they will briefly share who these remarkable women are. Meanwhile, the teacher will lead a discussion of some of the discriminations, challenges and struggles these women faced that derived from their gender. The big idea is to have students think about the evident

discrimination women suffered throughout the human history even till today and reflect on how we could do better next time.

3. **Input of the Day:** *Know your worth, and then ask for it* (Casey Brown, 2017).

Students will have access to a TED talk that condemns the wage inequality derived from gender discrimination in the U.S..

- a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of the situation that a lot of women encountered in the modern day and the urge to promote gender equality.
- b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies - **Using Context Clues** and **Rereading** - based on this article. Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of context clues and rereading in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.

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- c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

#### 1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):

- a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

#### 2. Reading article(s) for next week

### **Lesson Three: LGBTQ Rights**

#### **Essential Questions:**

1. How can we work together to promote LGBTQ equality not only in the U.S. but also in the whole world?
2. How can the article help us think critically towards LGBTQ equality in the U.S.?
3. How you plan to use the reading strategies we have addressed in this class in your future reading practices?

#### **Content/Language Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of the importance of LGBTQ equality in the U.S..
2. Be able to use two reading strategies in class and future implementation:  
Visualization and Summarization+Prediction.
3. Develop the ability to summarize materials and link prior knowledge to facilitate reading comprehension.
4. Develop fluency and critical thinking skills through active peer discussion

#### **Lesson Schedule:**

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1. **Advanced Preparation:** Students will have to read *Same-Sex Marriage and Other Moral Taboos: Cultural Acceptances, Change in American Public Opinion and the Evidence from the Opinion Polls* (Morini, 2017, p.3-6) prior to class. Meanwhile, they are welcomed to think about what is/are their takeaway(s) after finishing the reading.
2. **Pre-Assessment/Open-up Game:** Students will read a simple graphic in *A global snapshot of same-sex marriage* (Masci & DeSilver, 2019) Then the students should share in small groups their own knowledge of how LGBTQ rights have been valued/devalued in their own country. Meanwhile, they are also encouraged to discuss their own thoughts on LGBTQ rights generally. Then when students come back as a whole, they will briefly share the group discussion and all students could compare and contrast the status of LGBTQ rights in various countries. The big idea is to have students think about a big and relevant picture of LGBTQ rights worldwide and then they could dive into the U.S. situation.
3. **Input of the Day:** *Same-Sex Marriage and Other Moral Taboos: Cultural Acceptances, Change in American Public Opinion and the Evidence from the Opinion Polls* (Morini, 2017, p.3-6). Students will have access to a journal article that elaborates on the ordeal of the passing of nationwide same-sex marriage in the U.S..
  - a. **Content:** Students can share their major takeaway(s) from this reading with the whole class, this will approximately take about 8-10 minutes. In the meantime, they will grasp the basic understanding of the progresses and outcomes achieved in U.S. history regarding LGBTQ rights.
  - b. **Language:** Then the teacher will review two reading strategies -

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**Visualization and Summarization+Prediction** - based on this article.

Students will have to find unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures to practice their use of Visualization and Summarization+Prediction in reading comprehension. Notice that here it will be a think-aloud process for students to conveniently share their reading comprehension processes with the rest of the class.

- c. **Debriefing:** future implementation of both content and language objectives of the day.

### **Homework:**

1. Journal Reflection (Collected after a whole unit):

- a. Choose one piece of reading material (articles, speech transcript, segments of novels/short stories) (topic of your choosing) and mark down unknown vocabularies/confusing parts and structures.
- b. Briefly record how you use the two strategies learned in class to overcome the challenges you marked in part a.

2. Reading article(s) for next week

**Appendix F: Evaluate student's level of SLA**

**A Brief Introduction to Language Prompts.** I chose one of the elementary ELLs whose language samples were posted on Purdue College of Education website, her name is Brittany. She participated in oral language, reading, and writing tasks. **1) Oral Language Samples:** to elicit the samples, there were two prompts/pictures, each of which was guided through by the teacher/examiner with clear instruction. By this I mean the teacher would raise a question given the portraits/information described in the pictures and then the learner would answer that question. What is more, the teacher would ask follow-up questions in each conversation based on how the learner responded; **2) Reading Sample:** to collect the learner's reading sample, the teacher gave her a picture book called *I Gotta Draw*. Basically what the learner did was reading the first two pages aloud. There were four reading comprehension questions as well; **3) Writing Samples:** two prompts/topics were given for the learner to write. Based on those three components of language samples that I could access, I hope to discuss more deeply with regards to the inquiries as follow: a. what do I notice by observing each language sample; b. (and) how does it relate to the rubric I chose; c. which stage of ELP does the learner operate from (based on the assessment).

**Respond to Question I.** What do I notice by observing each language sample? **1) Oral.** Questions that the teacher asked were collected as follow. The learner replied to all of them (also listed below).

(the first prompt – parade)

- 1) What is happening in this picture? “The girl is doing (playing) a trumpet and she is holding a flag.”
- 2) What colors are they wearing? “white and blue and red”
- 3) [Now that you have noticed that the girl was playing the trumpet, then] do you know what type of instrument this is? “no”

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- 4) Where do you think they are? “outside”
- 5) Why do you think they are holding flags and wearing red, white, and blue?  
“They are celebrating....” (I could not hear her last word very clearly)
- 6) Do you think they are having a great time? “yes”
- 7) Is it cold or hot outside? “Hot, because they are not wearing coat(s).”
- 8) Do you have flags in your school? “Yes, in a classroom we do (have flags).”
- 9) Why we have flags? (The learner said she knew, but I could not recognize what she said)

(the second prompt – school rooms)

- 1) What type of room is this? “basketball (room)”
- 2) Do they play any other thing in this room? “They play soccer.”
- 3) What do people usually do in the library/this room? “read”
- 4) What is your favorite book to read? “I like to read Barbies.”
- 5) Who do you think is in this office? “chairs” / Is there someone usually sits in this office? “no”
- 6) What is your favorite type of food to eat in the lunchroom? “macaroni and cheese”
- 7) Out of all these rooms, what is your favorite room? And why? “This one, because I like to play.”
- 8) If you could work in any of these rooms, which one would you work in? “This room, because I want to show people how to see.”

**2) Reading and Writing.** Below is her read-aloud sample uploaded to the website prior answering the reading comprehension questions. The learner was asked to read the first two pages of the book and answer a series of questions regarding to the content she read. Correct

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answers were provided besides the learner’s replies. She answered one question correctly out of four in total.

“Hi, I am Charlie (I assume here the learner did not know how to pronounce the last name, which is Muttnik), everyone on the block knows me. I am the pup with the pencil, the mutt with the marker, the dog with the drawing bad (pad), the chef (chap) with the ilk (chalk). I am drawing all the time and as soon I finish one drawing, I got to draw the third. Why am I drawing all the time? I don’t know but it is all I want to do. (for the rest part of the learner’s read-aloud, I could not hear her clearly. I noticed that there were some vocabularies she was having difficulties to pronounce).”

As for the writing task, she wrote several short sentences assigned with the topic of “dear baby” and another with “I like”. Below are her two writing samples.

“Dear baby, your mommy is nice, your mommy is sweet. You baby will be nice. I will think she will make your hair pretty.”

“I like to go to music. I like my teacher. I like wen we do math. I like wen we go to field trip. I like wen we read. I like wen the las day of school. I like speilling.”

**Respond to Question II.** How does it relate to the rubric I chose? To understand the learner’s oral language performances, I chose SOLOM rubric. The sections highlighted in the table below generally illustrate her level of oral language proficiency.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Comprehension (3.5)	Cannot be said to understand even simple conversation.	Has great difficulty following what is said. Can comprehend	Understands most of what is said at slower-than-normal speed with repetitions.	Understands nearly everything at normal speech, although	Understands everyday conversation and normal classroom discussions

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		only “social conversation” spoken slowly and with frequent repetitions.		occasional repetition may be necessary.	without difficulty.
Fluency (1.5)	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible	Usually hesitant: Often forced into silence by language limitations.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion frequently disrupted by the student’s search for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion fluent and effortless, approximating that of a native speaker.

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<p>Vocabulary (2.5)</p>	<p>Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversations n virtually impossible.</p>	<p>Misuses words and very limited vocabulary; comprehensi ve quite difficult.</p>	<p>Student frequently uses the wrong words; conver- sation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.</p>	<p>Student occasionally y uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies.</p>	<p>Use of vocabulary and idioms approximate that of a native speaker.</p>
<p>Pronunciation (4.5)</p>	<p>Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.</p>	<p>Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat in order to make him/herself understood.</p>	<p>Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener and occasionally lead to misunderstanding.</p>	<p>Always intelligible, though one is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate</p>	<p>Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker.</p>

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				intonation patterns.	
Grammar (2.5)	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligibl e.	Grammar and word- order errors make comprehensi on difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict him/herself to basic patterns.	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word-order which occasionally obscure meaning.	Occasionall y makes grammatica l and/or word- order errors which do not obscure meaning.	Grammatica l usage and word order approximate that of a native speaker.

In thinking to what extent this rubric genuinely reflects the learner’s oral language proficiency, I come up with further thoughts. Firstly, I really appreciate how this rubric compartmentalizes oral language proficiency into five measurable/relatively concrete parameters, which are clear and comprehensible. In the meantime, I found the comprehension rubric was useful to assess the learner’s receptive language use. Most of the time, the learner’s receptive language performance could possibly be overlooked in oral language assessment, whereas the rubric tends to address the importance of having a perfect grammar and/or pronunciation. Productive language is absolutely important from my perspective, but I think 1) cultivating great comprehension skills/abilities is the bedrock for expecting the same or higher level of productive language use; 2) we cannot place too much stress especially on

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those young learners and/or beginners to perform flawless grammar and/or pronunciation.

Although Brittany had stayed in the U.S. for less than a year when she received this task, she finished it quite well and could understand most of the conversation.

**Respond to Question III: Conclusion.** To sum up, the overall SOLOM score of the learner's oral language proficiency was 3, which might seem low in comparison with her native peers, but she still has much time and opportunities to improve. What matters is how. Rather than make a list of what the teacher "can" and/or "cannot" do to help the learner, I value the learner's agency brought to either the language assessment or instructional activities. This would allow me, as the teacher, to take off my authoritative hat and listen: (as a language learner,) how I am feeling towards this oral language assessment? Do I think this genuinely reflect my ability? Am I feeling comfortable answering every question (any cultural/social bias)? And etc. In other words, asking for the learner's feedback after completing the language assessment equals the same importance. Not only do we ask our students to improve, but we need to improve as well.

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