

Reflection

My ideal future classroom instruction would be student-centered, and teacher-mediated model, in which students will take charge of their learning, and be responsible for their academic decisions. Teachers will provide the engaging and practical materials to warm students up, and give them lots of opportunities to explore and enjoy the fun of learning. I also will adopt the communicative and culturally- responsive teaching approach, where there are more interactions between teachers and students, as well as students and their peers, in which students could learn immensely from each other, and construct the meaning deeply and collaboratively. In addition, I will also help students develop the higher-order thinking skills, design the questions that could engage students in deep thinking and help them find the root causes behind the language and culture differences, and model students how to solve the problems. But when students met difficulties or feel confused in learning, teachers could provide the prompt scaffolding and feedback to help them out, and further their learning.

The perfect classroom setting will feature the healthy and good relationship between the teachers and students, where teachers care about students and do the best for the students' holistic development both in their academic and social lives. Teachers will make the effort to incorporate students' first language, and cultural background into the curriculum and instruction to better engage students' learning, likewise,

students will feel familiar and valued in the school. Their learning motivation and confidence will be heightened tremendously. In addition, allowing students to draw on their first language and culture background could facilitate their English and content learning, meanwhile, letting them communicate in their first languages with their peers to negotiate meanings and differences, will make students feel more empowered and valued in school, which in turn will make them more willing to open up to teachers and take the initiatives to learn.

Teachers also need to expose students to authentic language learning environment and lots of comprehensible input, to help them learn the language in a more natural and context-rich setting. Besides that, teachers' attitudes are also very crucial in this learning environment, they should be friendly and considerate, prohibit the bully and teasing to the ESL students from different language and culture background, and create a more equal and friendly ambience in the classroom. In the long run, the students will feel more valued and affirmed by the school and the classroom teaching, they will become more willing to cooperate with teachers and peers to further their learning.

Also the teacher will involve students' family and community into classroom teaching and students learning. Teachers could model parents and community members how to help students with their learning at home. They could also invite family and community members to the school for curriculum making, family-literacy projects, cultural events, and parents'

school to better equip parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to help their children in learning. Parents and community members will feel valued about their own culture and background, and would be more willing to support their children' language and content learning.

As a future ESL teacher in a Chinese university, I will face multiple challenges to my ideal teaching and optimal students' learning. The class size will be larger (between 40- 60 students), and I will have 12-18 classes each week, which means that I may not have enough time to get to know my students' specific learning needs, not to mention getting to know them as individuals and build good relationship with over 300 students each semester. Although students are sorted into appropriate classes based on their placement test results, however, the placement test merit further attention in terms of reliability and validity, therefore, the differentiated instruction will be impossible for a large class size. What's worse, the Chinese government stipulates that all Chinese undergrad students need to pass the College English Test band-4 to be eligible for the conferral of bachelor's degree. So teachers are under the pressure to help students pass the test, therefore, many teachers have to turn to unified textbook as reference and teach to the test, which mainly focus on the test-taking strategies and drills. While the higher-ordering thinking skills and content learning will totally be downplayed under this context. If I want to implement the communicative language teaching, I need to either persuade the school to have more small-size class, hire more teachers and allocate

more funds to the small-class teaching, which I think is impossible financially. Or I could convince my boss about the importance of communicative and culturally responsive teaching by showing them the latest research findings on the CLT. I am very confident that they may take my advice, and adopt CLT in the test-oriented classroom. The only concern for me is that how could I manage the CLT in an oversized and test-driven class. My solution would be: first, be careful with student groupings, and model to students how to work collaboratively with each other. I think it might take a couple of years for teachers and students to get used to the student-centered class mode and collaborative learning. But it will worth the efforts. Second, I will team up with my colleagues to design and adapt the practical and interesting language materials, in the meantime, align the newly-designed instruction content with the College English Test Standard, so when students are learning these materials, they are preparing for the test, also improve their language skills. Last, I will explicitly instruct and model to my students' the real meaning of learning a foreign language, which is more about communication instead of just repetition and memorization. Since it is a known fact that English skills become a more and more important asset, teachers and students in China won't just teach to the test, they will fully appreciate the importance of CLT.

Another challenge would be students would come from different parts of China, teachers may never get the chance to meet the students'

parents and community members, and may not have the help from parents and community to engage students in better language learning. For this concern, I will seek help from the school and my colleagues to help students from different parts of China or ethnic groups hold cultural events, for instance, the food and cultural festival of certain part of China or ethnic minorities, to let more students learn about the different culture and dialects of China, in the mean time, students will appreciate more about the importance of different subcultures. For instance, how certain subculture' influence on English language, how the English language borrowed some words from Cantonese, like “dim sum”, “congee”, “kongfu”. I will also inform students that the authentic “hotpot” and other spicy dishes, which originate from southwest China, are very popular in America. Through these events, students will feel proud of their cultures. As a teacher, I will help them to find the connection between different language and cultures, furthermore, build on their language and content learning in a meaningful way.

Conclusion

English, as the language with largest population of speakers in the world, has become more and more important and popular around the world. More and more people are learning English to keep up with the pace of the world. English education has also become one of the competitiveness criterion no country want to lag behind. The English

education in China has always been on the media spotlight, however, the English class has always been dominated by traditional grammar and translation approach, with the teacher-centered and test-oriented focus.

As a future teacher of ESL students, I will make my bid to change the outdated teaching approach in Chinese English education, since it won't help students develop communicative and higher-order thinking skills, which are very crucial for students language learning and future career development. In my future instruction, I will adopt the culturally responsive teaching, incorporate the transnational community literacy and funds of knowledge into my instruction, arrange students to visit their own communities to learn about their first languages and cultures first hand. Organize project-based activities to let them brainstorm the ideas on how to draw on their first language and culture to facilitate their learning, and assist them making the connections between different languages and cultures. I will instruct students how to make the connections between their first languages and cultures, and draw the comparison to figure out the better ways to engage their English learning.

In addition, involving parents and communities into my instruction and students' learning. I would be an external resource and mediator in support of parents and community participation in students' learning. For example, I will include the students' family literacy and cultural knowledge into my curriculum, invite parents to the class to give presentations about their own cultures and languages, hold the culture and cuisine nights for students of different backgrounds. Meanwhile, I will create a comfortable and friendly environment for parents and community members as well. Hold weekend parent school to help parents familiarize with the school routines, and inform them how to help

students with language and content learning effectively. It would make my students, parents and communities know how to use the connections between English and their own languages, so that they could learn with their children and help them attain their learning objectives in supportive and meaningful setting.

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