CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO

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**Abstract**

This capstone paper introduces my teaching philosophy based on my experience of two-year learning and practicing at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University. Under the guidance of TESOL standards, I critically analyze what theories and methods I have applied to real-life teaching and what to be more explored, from four professional knowledge areas of learners, the learning contexts, curriculum and assessment based on students’ funds of knowledge, Communicative Language Teaching, and building caring relations. Moreover, I discuss my future consideration and some lingering questions of teaching as they are crucial to broadening my horizon and enhancing my professional knowledge.

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**Teaching Philosophy**

Languages serve as tools for communication in the life of most people. From ancient time to nowadays, people have been speaking different languages to exchange information and knowledge from different cultures. Speaking different languages is such an important skill, and English being the most widespread language across the world, great English language instruction is needed by a lot of people around the world. The purpose of English language instruction, in my opinion, is to cultivate communication skills in both basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 2008). For example, I myself in the United States need communicative skills for different aspects of my life: on one hand, I have to negotiate solutions with customer service and friends in my choir; on the other hand, I have to talk appropriately with colleagues and professors as a graduate student at Vanderbilt University. During the process of accomplishing the purpose, students’ prior knowledge should be valued and ideally, well-utilized; in the meantime, students’ affects should be cared for under the guidance of related theory, both in an effort to promote the efficiency of language acquisition.

**Basic Information of Learners and Their English Proficiency**

In this capstone paper, my targeted students are non-English major college students in Beijing, China; as a teacher candidate, I will develop my teaching philosophy specifically for my targeted students’ needs of language communication, considering their prior knowledge and affects.

English is a part of the curriculum of Chinese students from third grade of elementary school and on (Ma & Kelly, 2009). While that is perceived to be a young age, over 70 percent of Chinese students' parents want their kids to learn English well merely to score high in all kinds of standardized tests (China Daily, 2013). It would be beneficial to students if the tests were designed to assess students’ English proficiency comprehensively, reliably, and validly; the truth is, however, the tests taken by most Chinese students hardly meet these criteria. Taking the tests in Beijing for example, the listening portion of the Zhongkao (the High School Entrance Examinations, held once a year), takes up 25% of the total grades, while the listening portion of the Gaokao (the College Entrance Examination, held once a year) only takes up 20%; and the speaking tests for both examinations are currently done on computers and do not count for the final scores (Beijing Education Examinations Authority, 2018). Beijing is considered one of the most educationally prosperous areas in China, which means the standardized tests held in less prosperous areas could be even worse. Hence, given the exams do not test the speaking domain at all, the exam-oriented English learning prepares students before college with abundant vocabulary and fundamental writing and listening skills but also leads to the phenomenon called "Mute English"—students can read and understand English as a second language, but their speaking skills fail to prepare them for communication (Mao & Min, 2004).

Most college students in Beijing are top 10% students in Gaokao in the provinces they come from, which in most cases guarantees their competence in vocabulary and grammar. But when I recall my freshman year in Beijing as an engineering student—when the teacher proposed a question to the whole class—only one or two students, offered to answer. My fellow students in freshman year, whom my future students would probably resemble academically, worked hard preparing for the college entrance exams, which resulted in their abundant knowledge in English grammar and other subjects. When it came to delivering the knowledge they had already mastered, however, they tended to be at a loss for words, having great difficulty in communicating their information. Although students still have to pass English exams highly focused on grammar and vocabulary after college, the opportunity and requirements to communicate with international students, scholars, and future colleagues immediately call for their communicating skills.

Another area for improvement is the curriculum of English classes. Currently in most college English classrooms, each section has 30 students with mostly similar proficiency levels. Students take college English from the first to the third semester and another selective English course in the fourth semester, meaning they do not take English courses during junior or senior year. This kind of class arrangement leaves most students with a breach in their English learning during the latter two years of their college life, which will not prepare them for the language requirements after graduation. For students studying in graduate schools, requirements for higher English proficiency, especially in academic speaking, are added into the academic requirements; for students going straight to work, the requirements also increase with globalization.

To find solutions to the issues explained above and the urgent need of English-speaking skills for my future students, my teaching philosophy will focus on the students’ “Funds of Knowledge” (Moll et al., 1992), Communicative Language Teaching (Nunan, 1991), and caring. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss how these concrete methods have inspired my practicum experiences during these semesters and how I will promote my future students’ English-speaking skills.

**Student’s Funds of Knowledge**

Students’ funds of knowledge are collections of knowledge based on cultural practices that are a part of students’ families’ inner culture, work experience, and their daily routine (Moll et al., 1992). I believe that applying students’ funds of knowledge to my teaching will be beneficial and efficient. When I first learned about this theory in the EDUC 6520 Foundations class, I spontaneously linked this theory to my own learning experience: in my junior year of undergraduate I did a presentation on the history of classical music in a European history class using my funds of knowledge; as an elementary school student, I used to learn piano from an excellent teacher who also told me stories about how classical musicians wrote their masterpieces; during the presentation, I drew upon the music I had played growing up and shared those stories to illustrate different musical styles. Although I learned the stories in Mandarin Chinese, it was still joyous to tell them in English. In the end, the presentation turned out successful both in linguistics and in content. All my fellow students in the classroom were engaged in sharing stories of their personal experience and hobbies—from how they learned some Italian reading music script to how they learned English words playing video games.

Nevertheless, not all students know about classical music, neither will all of them take a European history class; the premise of crafting students’ funds of knowledge is to collect information and learn it. For this purpose, I would like to learn some basic information about my students and their families, their lives, and language use at home (Chiswick et al., 2005). I would like to learn about their educational history, because students can learn by reflecting upon the knowledge and strategies from their prior education (Dominicé, 2000). I would also like to learn about their expectations and goals, because compared to younger students, adult students tend to have more specific and urgent goals in their life that language learning can help them to achieve.

**Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means of and the ultimate goal of study (Nunan, 1991). CLT is important for language development because, as mentioned above, communication is where most people have to use a foreign language. Therefore, to emphasize interaction as the means is the most direct way to embody the use of language in people’s daily work and life and in their language learning. Another aspect of CLT is body language—when people listen and talk to each other, they do not really just listen and talk; naturally, they also use body language when communicating. Therefore, to add body language to the teaching of listening and speaking skills will create a more natural, real-life learning environment for students.

CLT is important not only for language development, but also for comprehension. Like my experiences before college, many of my targeted students have worked a lot with interactive dialogues in their textbooks—but the primary way they use these exercises is recitation, which is not interactive at all. In fact, the texts are great materials to develop comprehension, as communication does not happen only in listening and speaking—it also happens in reading and writing where the process of comprehension is embodied more clearly (Alvermann et al., 2013). Communication and comprehension are required to understand the written dialogue between the reader and the author’s text. From a macro view, comprehension is the prerequisite for any type of communication, which makes it important for language learning. If CLT is implemented in teaching the text, students’ skills of comprehension will be greatly promoted.

**Caring**

Caring is always a big topic in the field of education. Many teachers claim they care because they try their best to get students to score as high as possible in exams – something I would try to avoid in my future teaching context that I have discussed above. Some students would agree that their teachers make them work hard, but still would complain, “nobody cares!” (Eaker-Rich & Van Galen, 1996). An infant would smile at their parents’ caregiving; and just like infants, it is in the nature of students to acknowledge whether the teacher cares of not.

In my teaching philosophy specifically, I care for both my students and myself as a teacher by building up caring relations with them (Noddings, 2005). First, I would gain students’ trust by listening to them to help them accept me and what I would be trying to teach. In this way, students would not feel controlled; rather, they would feel supported because I care for their ideas. Second, as I encourage my students in conversations, I would learn about their interests and expectations, from which I would gain important ideas about building lessons. Finally, as I know what to add to the standard curriculum, I would be inspired to increase my own competence as a teacher (Noddings, 1999).

One important way to care for students is to make use of the “Affective Filter” theory, according to which anxiety, self-doubt, and mere boredom interfere with the process of acquiring a second language (Krashen, 1982). More recent empirical studies also supported that when students have high anxiety, their performance won’t be ideal (Op’t Eynde & Turner, 2006; Pekrun et al., 2006). From my point of view, to lower the affective filter is to lower the negative emotional responses, which requires listening to them a lot and making adjustments to curriculum to care for students’ needs and expectations; hence, boosting students’ self-confidence and making content more interesting are my goals. To lower students’ anxiety and self-doubt, Krashen suggests to allow for enough wait time, expecting them to speak after they have received an adequate amount of comprehensible input, and to not correct their errors too early on in the learning process. For the former, I will allow for wait time of at least 30 seconds depending on the question and students’ knowledge, which might create a seemingly embarrassing silence in the classroom but will be a perfect time for thinking to take place. For the latter suggestion, I will correct students’ error only after they finish their answer and only when the error is related to the objects of the lesson, and will pay special attention to the way in which I correct them. According to Lyster (1998), corrective feedbacks are classified as negotiation of form, recasts, and explicit correction; negotiation of form proved to be more effective particularly in the case of lexical and grammatical errors, while phonological errors clearly benefitted from recasts. Therefore, explicit correction is rarely ideal for whatever errors students make.

To make content more interesting and lower students’ boredom, not only would I make use of students’ funds of knowledge and CLT, I would also adopt the following activities to implement them both: role-play, interviews, information gap, etc. Additionally, I define myself as a “facilitator” in these activities, which means I will neither constantly provide all the information my students need for exams nor answer all their questions about objective facts like traditional, super-authoritative teachers do. Instead, I will equip them with the abilities they need and encourage them to search for the information themselves. I will guide them to analyze, to question, and even to rebut each other’s words, instead of giving a round of applause to someone just because she/he speaks fluently while other students don’t.

**Epilogue**

To conclude the ideas above, I regard engaging my students in the interaction, making use of their prior knowledge, and caring for them as the essence of my teaching philosophy, during which I would also develop my own competence as a teacher. These concepts would put my students in the center of the classroom because a lesson built on the concepts would be about what my students already know, what they want to know, and what they learned (KWL) (Ogle, 1986), rather than me being the only authority in the classroom. At the end of the day, students are the ones to create miracles in their own lives, and I serve as a facilitator. I won’t arrange everything for my students, but will definitely support them in the process by structuring activities with reasonable difficulty where they need to use their communicative skills.

**Artifact Analysis**

In this part, I will illustrate the areas of professional knowledge of the TESOL Domains that I practiced in real teaching and designing and critically analyze how these experiences align with my teaching philosophy.

**Professional Knowledge Area: Learner (TESOL Domain 4 and Domain 6)**

Learner refers to English language learners (ELLs) in this capstone paper. ELL implies that the student is currently in the process of improving their English language proficiency (ELP) (Harder & Varga, 2019). The learner is important because they are not only the subject of every action the teacher takes in the teaching, but also the participant in every learning activity. In other words, the learner is the core of teaching. The learner’s identity, the learning process within the learner themselves, and the context surrounding the learner will be discussed to analyze the learner.

TESOL Domain 4: Identity and Context.Learners’ identity defines who they are, and the context includes their communities, heritages and goals which shape learning and expectations of learning. The knowledge of learners’ identity and context is important because teachers can use it in planning, instructing, and assessing (EDUC 7992-04 Capstone Seminar, 2019). In this section, I’ll introduce how I acquire the knowledge of students’ identity and their learning contexts.

To collect the information above, I have conducted three interviews dating from fall 2018 with learners who are educationally close to my targeted students. Previously I had focused on English language proficiency and socio cultural information respectively in different interviews; to understand my participant more comprehensively, covering both linguistic and sociocultural aspects, my colleagues and I came up with the Adult ESL Student Biography questions in the EDUC 6550 Assessment Class in fall 2019 (see Appendix A) which includes information about students’ family, their socioeconomic status, past schooling, functions of Mandarin and English use within the community, attitudes toward these two languages (which might suggest cross cultural conflict), and social & psychological differences between speakers of these two languages. For the practicum in fall 2019, I interviewed Jean, a student, (pseudonym) in her first language (Mandarin) to allow her to get her point across more easily (for translation of transcript, see Appendix B).

Drawing on my theoretical framework, I believe the information collected demonstrates her identity and context. Her experience in original and current family and work contributes to who she is: being compared to her more academically and economically successful sister has developed Jean’s self-consciousness; switching vocation from the psychology field to language education field has reflected Jean’s courage; living with a supportive husband and her own efforts in recent years has boosted her confidence. Her language use with different people provides information on her communities and heritage: she still talks to her parents frequently after moving to the United States, which I regard as reinforcement of her heritage; the people in her social life are still a dominantly Mandarin-speaking community while learning English has broadened the community with more English speakers. Jean has also told me her academic and professional goals of gaining a master’s degree in the United States and becoming a Mandarin teacher here, and I believe learning English will help her achieve those goals.

I have also used the information in planning, instructing, and assessing. For example, based on her previous work experience as a high school Mandarin Chinese teacher, I have decided to make use of the experience and add some translangauging activities to the classroom. In addition, she shared that she started to make stronger efforts academically only after her ex-boyfriend broke up with her for not making enough efforts. This has made me decide to encourage her more frequently and to assign more challenging and demanding tasks to her. To put the idea into practice, I sometimes assigned her to lead discussion in group as a challenge because she had been afraid of talking. Jean struggled at first in catching up with other members in the group, but gradually she could follow them and even throw out new ideas in a conversation. At the end of the semester, when asked how it felt to be the leader, she said that she was nervous when first assigned, but then she talked more out of school in preparation for leading. It is quite apparent that Jean made more efforts herself when receiving more challenging tasks, as expected.

The experience of interviewing Jean also connects to my teaching philosophy. First, the interview covers information about Jean’s family’s inner culture, work experience, and her daily routine, which are all aspects of Student’s funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). While merely acquiring the information alone is not guaranteed to contribute to Jean’s learning, it is an step important in leveraging her funds of knowledge. I believe the previous examples demonstrate this leveraging of information in planning, instructing, and assessing. Second, during the interview, I built up caring relations (Noddings, 2005) with Jean by listening to her carefully and learning her expectations and interests, which aligns with the idea of caring in my teaching philosophy. Finally, to engage her in discussions implements CLT (Nunan, 1991). During their discussion, I saw Jean sharing ideas with other students in a conversation that would possibly happen in real life. For example, in a class when students did jigsaw reading of different pieces of news, the discussion they had was exactly how people talk about news in real life.

TESOL Domain 6: Learning.The definition of LEARNING is that teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the process by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings. For my targeted students, the new language is English (EDUC 7992-04 Capstone Seminar, 2019). Although most of my targeted students are already adults, their previous English learning experience has all taken place before their adulthood, and the content and usages are not commonly used in conversations among adults, which requires me to draw upon additional knowledge to support adult language learning.

Eventually, students will use the language out of classroom settings. Therefore, I always plan lessons with language they can use in their real life, which aligns with the idea of CLT (Nunan, 1991); students learn the language systematically in classroom settings and continue to learn and practice out of the classroom. For example, I have planned a lesson on Greetings around the World for my students in General Communicative English for Spouses and Partners at Vanderbilt (GES) (for lesson plan, see Appendix C). Students acquire information about greetings from around the world: they learn the oral and body language when greeting others in different ways and when they want to reject certain ways of greetings.

Linguistically, students also learn the usage of conditional adverbial clauses through guided practice in the form of sentence starters that I provide for them to create their own sentences using conditional adverbial clauses. This part did not work for all of the students since they were at varied stages of language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). While students at the early production stage found the guided practice helpful, students at the intermediate fluency stage showed boredom on their faces. If I were to do it again, I would use more ways of scaffolding than just guided practice; I would set different linguistic objectives for students at different stages of language acquisition, and would encourage more peer-scaffolding in order to engage all students in activities that were meaningful to every one of them, and to create more communication among them.

In addition, the content and activities that I have planned for this class connect to the domain of learning. Due to sociocultural reasons, greetings exist at the beginning of most conversations in students’ lives. In the classroom, students learn what to say and what to do systematically; out of classroom settings, students continue to learn by reflecting on what they have learned in the classroom and applying it in practice. On the topic of greetings, my students would like to learn more about how to reject certain greetings because they come from 10 different countries around the world. For example, many of them would probably like to learn how to politely reject a hug from someone of the opposite gender because it is uncommon in the culture where they grow up. In addition, the usage of conditional adverbial clauses shows logic in students language use, which I believe demonstrates adult language in this lesson. Students, naturally, use this grammatical structure out of the classroom as well due to the needs of such logic in communication. The lesson, unfortunately, did not meet all learners’ needs. For example, in some of their cultures, hugging is also considered as an appropriate way of greeting and they do not need to refuse it. If I were to do it again, I would add more content on cultural differences, but I would not focus merely on hugging; instead, I would call for all of my students to share their ways of greeting and discuss if they were appropriate in each other’s countries, so as to encourage all of them to experience cultural differences.

Connections to my teaching philosophy. The lesson plan in general also reflects ideas of CLT (Nunan, 1991) in my teaching philosophy. The “greeting with small talk” scenarios are real-life scenarios. Learning about new greetings or how to avoid certain greetings is considered a meaningful purpose, and the language engaged is considered pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language. To prioritize fluency, the teacher will not interrupt students during the activity. Learning how to politely avoid a hug because of cultural differences is typically an unrehearsed context, and this class will equip students with the skills necessary for it. Therefore, the lesson aligns with Brown’s description of CLT (Brown, 2007, p. 43). Some parts of the lesson leverage students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). For example, students answer the question “What ways of greetings not mentioned in this video do you know?” out of willingness to share, through which they learn the language to talk about certain ways of greetings.

**Professional Knowledge Area: The Learning Contexts (TESOL Domain 2)**

The learning contexts are defined as the situations in which something is learned or understood, a situation that can impact how something is learned or what is taught (“Learning context”, 2019). In this EFL capstone paper, the Learning Contexts refer to the situation where ELLs learn English which would influence their process, efficiency, as well as outcomes of their learning.

TESOL Domain 2: Instructing. Instructing here happens when teachers create supportive environments, or in other words learning contexts, that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions. To understand the definition of instructing here, several considerations should be noted: 1) instructing should focus on all learners, which means the utilitarianism view to focus on the “Maximum Happiness” of most students—where only most but not all of the students are given enough support—would not be acceptable; 2) students should learn with clear purposes, meaning both the teacher and students should be sure about their goals in the classroom; 3) the interactions happening in the classroom should be given enough support and respect. In the following paragraph, I will introduce the experience of instructing in an untraditional context.

In summer 2019, I did my independent study based on an internship teaching English literature online. The contexts in this experience were extraordinarily untraditional—it was not even a classroom online. Rather, students listened to the tutorial audio that I had recorded for them, making it impossible to engage them in any interactions as they were only by themselves in front of their laptops. At first, I tried to negotiate with the company I worked for that I would like to have live classes for my students in an online classroom, which was rejected because of the cost. Several days after the live class suggestion was rejected, I asked the program if we could invite students to a WeChat group (a social media that a lot of people use in China) for communication. As this method cost nearly nothing, they agreed, and I created a group of 180 students. The second step was to divide students into small groups of 5 (therefore, 36 groups in total) and assign interactive groupwork in the form of translating sentences in the literature text I recorded in the tutorial. About two hours after each tutorial was released, I encouraged all small groups to share their discussion and translation in the big group of 180 students. The number of the groups participating grew from 12 on the first day to 32 on the last day of class.

To reflect on this online WeChat group discussion: 1) I expected all students to engage in the activity, but not all of them participated in the large or small group discussions; 2) both my students’ goals and my additional expectations for them in the classroom were very clear—to understand the literature text and to promote interactive skills, which I believe translanguaging certainly helped; 3) for every translation and discussion, I gave feedback and encouraged students to give peer reviews for each other, showing the interactions were given enough support and respect.

Although the context is entirely different from my future ideal teaching context (in other words, a classroom), it is still referenceable. As mentioned previously in the professional knowledge area (PKA) of learning, learning happens everywhere in students’ life, so it is natural for college students to learn online in the age of the internet; hence, it should be possible for the teacher to instruct in different contexts as well. I liked the idea of having online groups serve as a second classroom for students to discuss and was proud of the WeChat groups I organized in my summer internship. Nevertheless, I would be very careful about organizing WeChat groups for my future students because they are very different from my students in the summer internship. The students in my summer internship program who worked in different places across China did not know each other in real life, neither would the outcome of their learning influence the competition among them because there was no competition at all. For my future students whose grades would become part of their GPA, being in WeChat groups where they could see their peers studying at any time on the most common social media—like Instagram here in the United States—could possibly raise peer pressure.

Connection to Teaching Philosophy. In my opinion, to create supportive and respected environments for all students is to care for them by substantially lowering their affective filter (Krashen, 1982). In the practicum, the mode of online small groups allowed a wait time long enough for all students participating in the activity. Students could submit their answers and discussion when they had enough time for thinking without any sense of pressure or hurry. Within the small groups, students shifted from checking if their answer was the same as their peer to negotiating the meaning of the translations; in the large group students changed from simply sharing their answers to giving their opinions of the work of each other’s group. Both in small groups and the big group, the trend of students’ chat history moved toward real-life communication, which aligned with the idea of CLT (Nunan, 1991). Because of both benefits listed in this paragraph, I would advocate for small groups in my future teaching.

Nevertheless, I would think twice about using WeChat as the platform of online groups for my future students because it would possibly raise their affective filter. As mentioned above, peer pressure exists among college students, and to feel the pressures of social media anytime they need to complete group work could lead to anxiety and self-doubt—thereby raising students’ affective filter. To care for my students and lower their affective filter, I would create an online discussion board where all students would still be divided in small groups, required to post their opinions and reply to each other’s opinion as part of their final grades. In this way, not only would all students participate in the classroom in the form of small groups, but they would also possibly feel less pressured.

**Professional Knowledge Area: Curriculum (TESOL Domain 1 and Domain 7)**

Curriculum in this capstone paper covers students’ total experiences that occur in their English learning process. From a macro view, the curriculum of one semester, one year, to even students’ whole educational time offers a clear outline of learning; from a micro view, the instruction sequence during one class provides a detailed process of how students learn in every part of the class. In the following paragraphs, I will illustrate more about curriculum through a discussion on the TESOL Domains, planning and content, respectively.

TESOL Domain 1: Planning. To promote learning and meet learner goals, the teacher should plan instruction before entering the classroom. Moreover, to assure learner engagement and achievement, the teacher also has to make adjustments to the plans. From my personal experience, the lesson plans I wrote for my practicum in fall 2019 have reflected exactly how I planned and modified plans (see Appendix D). In fall 2019, I did my practicum internship in General Communicative English for Spouses and Partners (GES) of international students and scholars with Vanderbilt University English Language Center. The goal of the course was for students to learn English for social settings. The class was significantly diverse; of the 16 students, 10 different countries were represented. Additionally, the English language proficiency (ELP) of the students varied from low to intermediate. The lesson plans I will discuss in the next paragraphs were created and implemented for this particular group of students.

I picked 3 lesson plans written at the end of respectively September, October, and November. To look into one lesson more detailed, specifically, I am most satisfied with lesson plan #3. First of all, I clearly understood the content objectives in this class that students use the language they’ve learned in class to show how annoyed they are when reporting problems/ making complaints to customer service. Usually an ESL/EFL class would have both content and language objectives; but in this setting, the language objectives and content objectives were combined. To promote learning, I designed all the activities around the objective. The class started with an authentic conversation from my friend’s experience with a flight service, and ended with conversations for which students working in pairs, discussing about how their conversation to be presented in front of the class, both of which served as the Communicative Language Teaching (Nunan, 1991) in this class.

Taking an overall look at my 3 lesson plans and reflecting on using each of them to teach, I also perceived the progress I made through modifying my plans. First, lesson plan #1 being for only 25 minutes and Lesson plan #2 & #3 for 45 minutes, it can be easily found that I plan fewer activities for same duration of time; from another perspective, I plan longer time for one material, trying to promote deeper understanding. For example, I planned a warm-up activity of 6 minutes and a jigsaw activity of 18 minutes in lesson plan #1, which did not work well because those two activities actually took the class 10 minutes and 25 minutes respectively; therefore, when I was planning for lesson plan #3, I set aside 10 minutes for warm-up and more time for every activity that students would participate in. Secondly, I planned for a longer wait time to encourage and wait for questions and answers from students, which I did not consider when planning the first class.

Connection to Teaching Philosophy. The two modifications listed above both lowered students’ affective filter (Krashen, 1982): the first one did it with more steps in one activity for comprehensible input, and the second one allowed more wait time during the class. Another modification I would make if I were to teach the lessons again would be to add differentiation to the lessons. For example, in lesson plan 1, instead of playing the video which was made in multiple languages, I would add English subtitles so students who do not understand other languages would make clearer meaning of the video, and they could also ask questions about words/expressions in the subtitles. In lesson plan 3, instead of giving all the students the same text, I would provide the original text and a simplified version for students to choose from. I think this modification aligns with building caring relations (Noddings, 2005) with students by listening to them and adding more to the standard curriculum. Furthermore, this modification would link to both the professional area knowledge of learning and that of assessment, since students at different stages of language acquisition need different linguistic goals as I mentioned earlier in the PKA: learning part, and they need to be assessed before I could differentiate my teaching.

TESOL Domain 7: Content.As a teacher, I understand that language learning is most likely to occur when ELLs are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes, which means the content in the curriculum should be the language that ELLs need in order to communicate verbally, as well as to read and write. Therefore, as a teacher, I should design lessons to help ELLs with the language they need to practice in certain content areas or subject matters that they need to learn about.

For the practicum in fall 2019, mentioned in the last domain, which focused mainly on oral communication, the content areas were all topics that occur in students’ daily lives. After collecting expectations our students had for the class, my mentor teacher, my co-teacher and I decided the topics for each class of the semester (Small talk, Cooking, Traveling, Movies, News, Hospital, etc.). Students might have known about the language to report problems and complaints during class time, it is in their lives where they have to use the language for meaningful purposes that they will finally acquire the language. This experience is also related to the PKA of learner: during this process, I learned about my students’ identities as different roles in life, such as foreigners, parents, spouses/partners, etc., as well as their varied stages of English language acquisition as the collection of information was made through conversations during the first class.

An example for students learning language through real life content can be traced from the class that I taught with the lesson plan #3 that has been mentioned above (see Appendix D). Among all the activities in lesson plan #3, collecting students’ experiences with customer service and using those stories as prompts for the last activity were the highlights of my planning. The stories collected turned out to be interesting and diverse. For example, right after I introduced the story of my friend asking for a refund from a flight company, a student told the class her story with the same airline. Once she flew to Europe and got her checked luggage, a decorative sword that had been in her bags was missing. She called the customer service and found out the sword had been taken away because it was considered a “weapon”. She struggled significantly to convince the customer service that the sword was not a weapon and she wanted it back. After she shared the story, the students had a heated discussion on how to use the language I introduced in previous conversation to deal with this particular situation.

Connection to Teaching Philosophy. After the discussion served as a model, it was easy for students to work in pairs and develop a hypothetical conversation using their own customer service experience as prompts. In the meantime, students were eager to solve the problems in the stories of their peers because everyone possibly encountered similar problems in their own life, and the best way to solve them was to use the language they have known about in class. In this part, all the stories are from their collection of cultural practice, in other words, from their Funds of Knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). For example, some language I taught during the class was to express anger. In their hypothetical conversations, students practiced the language and knew if they were to report problem or complaints to customer service next time, they could use the language they learned from the lesson.

Nevertheless, I have not had much experience in helping students write in any subject matter or content area. The first practicum I interned in focused on reading, and the second focused more on listening and speaking. Still, a lot of language activity requiring writing skills exists in adult learners’ lives. For example, once I read an email at the beginning of fall 2019 from a Japanese student who showed great politeness by directly translating all polite expressions from Japanese. Although the email revealed awesome ethnic traits, some expressions were not commonly considered appropriate in emails written in English. For example, the student wrote, “Please take good care of me” right after “nice to meet you” (a sign of humility), and “I hope you keep in good health” at the end of the email to send good wishes to the reader, both of which were considered appropriate and polite in Japanese language. In today’s society, communication does not always occur verbally; in many cases, communication in the form of writing, from letters to emails, to text messages. To keep Communicative Language Teaching (Nunan, 1991) with the pace of time, I personally would agree that contents of communicating by writing should also be added into the curriculum. For example, I would divide my students different chat groups and encourage them to text each other in English and to submit screenshots as a weekly assignment.

**Professional Knowledge Area: Assessment (TESOL Domain 3)**

The definition of assessment is the evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality, or ability of someone or something (“Assessment”, 2019). Traditionally, teachers would focus mainly on students’ learning by interpreting the results of standardized tests; in this capstone paper, nevertheless, both ELL students’ backgrounds and their learning are the objects to assess as students the center of my teaching philosophy. In this way, the teacher provides constructive feedback to learners based on their sociocultural backgrounds and of their learning.

TESOL Domain 3: Assessing. As the influence on the teaching of ASSESSING both learners and their learning has been illustrated in the previous paragraph, the assessment the teacher should use must be determined before assessing. More specifically, the reliability and the validity (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004) of the assessment itself should be evaluated prior to applying them to assessing the subjects.

Unfortunately, not all assessments, even those considered popular, are agreed to be both reliable and valid. In fall 2019 EDUC 6550 Language Assessment, one of the midterm questions was to evaluate both validity and reliability of the oral language sections of the Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (the BVAT). evidence showed that neither the reliability nor the validity of the test was satisfactory. For example, in terms of reliability, the BVAT assumed that students should know the word in their L1 if they knew it in their L2 (English. The test failed to consider the possibility that a student from the central part of China who had never had pancakes before coming to Nashville might know “pancakes” in English, but not in Chinese, similar situations not rare among ELLs. In terms of validity, inauthentic translation and bias lowered that of the BVAT. For example, test takers simply did not know what an igloo was because they had never seen it rather than lacking the verbal ability to name it (see Appendix E). The bias led the assessment to measure test takers’ broad knowledge, rather than verbal proficiency of the language.

Therefore, to use assessments such as the BVAT, the teacher should at least make adaptions according to the assessments on students themselves. In other words, knowing about my future students would be ideally the first step to conduct more assessments on their learning. The Adult ESL Student Biography questions that I have mentioned in PKA: Learner would be one way to learn about my students comprehensively; yet it would be difficult to interview possibly all 40 students in my future class. My plan is to invite my students to write about their backgrounds, guided by the biography questions at the beginning of the year. After reading the compositions, I would still interview every student, but only to gain more information about the 1-2 questions they want to share the most or the information that could be related to my teaching objectives. This assessment would also serve as a pre-assessment of students’ writing and speaking skills.

Back to the reliability and validity of the assessments, usually colleges and universities in China give students’ a pretest to decide the ELP level of the class they will enter; therefore, I would be lucky to have a classroom of students whose overall ELP were about the same. Still, students’ ELP may vary at different skills. Some students might be good at listening comprehension while others at reading comprehension, which may lead to the same score on their overall grades. Hence, I would read every students’ pretest carefully and make adjustments to plans and instructions accordingly.

Formative assessments also deserve more attention in my future classroom. One way that I have only observed in a high school classroom in Beijing is students’ portfolios, which is a compilation of academic work and other forms of educational evidence assembled (see Appendix F). In other words, it is an academic version of students’ prior knowledge. From my point of view, the portfolio not only provides assistance for the students and their current teachers, but their future teachers as well. By creating the portfolio together, the students and their current teacher have a clear overview of their achievements and goals. By going through the students’ portfolio, the teacher uncovers students’ academic achievements as well as areas for improvement, which could aid in revising their future instruction. For example, the portfolio pages that I attached in the appendix created by a high school student who aspired to attend an art school showed her knowledge of art—or more specifically, not only her knowledge of art, but also the English language about art that she knew. In the page I picked here, she showed her knowledge of the vocabulary of human/animal body which is not commonly taught before college (e.g. the words “spine”, “ribs”, “vertebrae”, etc.). For herself and her high school teachers, the portfolio marks those milestones on her way to success as an artist and more realistically proves to be a helpful addition to her college application. Her future English professor could make use of the information in the portfolio to design curriculum for her and other students.

Connection to Teaching Philosophy. To sum up the PKA of assessment, many aspects of assessing align with students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Learning about students’ backgrounds would serve as a pre-test of their English language proficiency; formative assessments would help the current teacher, and hopefully, all future teachers of the students comprehensively know about their academic achievements. Prior to using an assessment, it should be evaluated in terms of its validity and reliability. If those aspects are not satisfactory, certain contents or forms should be modified.

**Applications to Practice: Implications and Future Consideration**

TESOL Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism suggests teachers continue to explore the teaching field and use their understandings to “inform and change themselves and these communities.” In this section, I will critically analyze what I have learned in class and applied in practicum and what I need to improve in future teaching.

**Implications from My Learning and Practice (TESOL Domain 8)**

The main idea of my Teaching Philosophy is to support my students from different aspects: to make use of their prior knowledge, to engage them in interaction, and to care for them while building up my own competence as a teacher. The three aspects of my philosophy do not stand isolated; rather, they can be intertwined through practice. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss what I have learned at Peabody and applied in my practicum experiences, as well as what I need to improve to accomplish these three aspects.

What I have learned and applied. As TESOL Domain 8 suggests, teachers should explore more possibilities in the teaching field; in other words, a qualified teacher should always be open to adaption and adjusting. To achieve the three aspects listed above, I have adjusted my teaching style to better support my students.

For example, my instruction style has improved to becoming much more learner-friendly during my practicum experience which I mentioned in the Artifact Analysis section. On one hand, after I learned that careful enunciation and teacher awareness of speed of speech were observed to be supportive (Long, 2002), I slowed down my speech and tried my best to eliminate wordiness. However, when I taught the class for the first time, I was talking so fast that almost all the students could not understand me. I tried slowing down significantly, then I slowed down a lot, only to find that half the class looked bored—I went to the other extreme. During the first half of the semester, I adjusted my talking speed every time, gradually getting into a speed suitable for most students in the classroom.

To be supportive to all students, not just most of them, as mentioned in Artifacts Analysis Part, on the other hand, I encourage students to ask questions after every activity so I can listen to their needs and expectations, and make adaptions to curriculum accordingly. This is how I care for them and myself as a teacher who wants to gain competence.

Another aspect I have improved is preparing materials. Because of my own language learning experience in the classroom, I had not had the idea to prepare materials other than textbooks; when I read that bringing out-of-school literacy into classroom would assist students better in learning the language in contexts (Hull & Schultz, 2001), I think it was an innovative idea. Especially for my practicum in fall 2019, it was a wonderful chance for me to bring out-of-school literacy because the curriculum did not require any textbooks. Learning from my mentor teacher, I developed all the materials using authentic resources and experiences. For example, I prepared a customer service phone conversation based on my friend’s real life experience to teach the language of reporting complaints and requirements, an online video that introduced greetings around the world to teach the language for greetings, and news articles simply for students to carry small talk conversations—both original and adapted for differentiated teaching in order to set different goals and expectations for all students.

By being allowed to share viewpoints and perspectives in a given situation based on their own cultural and social experience, students become more active participants in their learning (Nieto, 1996). When I was preparing the key vocabulary introduction of a class about traveling around the world, I introduced every word in a context that could happen in my students’ hometown since they were from different parts of the world. For example, when introducing the word “adventure”, I put a picture of Hallasan, a famous volcano in South Korea, on a slide with the sentence “Hiking in Hallasan is an adventure.” (see Appendix G). As it turned out, students were very proud and eager to share more information when their hometowns were shown on the slides. This activity/exercise accomplished all three aspects, to engage students in interaction, create links to their prior knowledge, and care for them emotionally in the classroom”

What I need to improve for future teaching. I would like to connect this part back to my teaching philosophy.

Throughout the majority of my instruction, CLT (Nunan, 1991) came to life in the way I hoped, except for when teaching vocabulary When teaching vocabulary, I tried to assist the students in building connections to the words by putting the vocabulary in contexts students are familiar with, but students still found it hard to use those words when participating in authentic conversations. To do so in a more efficient way, more scaffolding was needed. For example, I will model using the vocabulary in a conversation with a student first, and will encourage more peer scaffolding when students have their own conversations. For example, if a lower level student asked me about a word, I would ask a lower level student if they knew the meaning of the word, and encourage them to help the lower level student.

Secondly, there are richer ways for me to leverage students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). During my practicum, I mostly leveraged students’ prior knowledge about their ethnic cultural backgrounds, because the students in my practicum came from 10 different countries. In my future teaching context, I will teach students mostly coming from the same country and I will leverage their prior knowledge of their hometown as well as different aspects of their funds of knowledge. For example, I will leverage their knowledge in the subject they major in. I will encourage my students exchange the knowledge through different methods of communication, such as conversation, letters, and texting.

Finally, I tended to be an authority rather than a facilitator with students at beginning stages of language acquisition. Sometimes I was so afraid that the rest of the class would be bored because I made the class pace slow for students at beginning stages that I simply told them the answers. Every time I reflect on doing this, I regret it a lot that I did not care for those lower level students. I was, and always will be, committed to building caring relations (Noddings, 2005) with all students by talking with them, listening to their needs, and adjusting my teaching. In the future, I will facilitate conversation among students when faced with similar situations. For example, I will encourage peer scaffolding by encouraging students at higher stages to scaffold those at lower stages, in which way students at lower stages will be cared for and the rest of the class will get reinforcement of the knowledge they have already acquired.

**Future Considerations**

As illustrated above, I have succeeded in putting some theories I learned to practice; nevertheless, there are still some questions that I need to explore more to grow in my understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning, as TESOL Domain 8 requires.

How to make use of all student’s funds of knowledge when I have a big class volume?The interview would be, however, very time-consuming if I interviewed every student in detail like I did with Jean, which was mentioned in the PKA of learner. My targeted students are all non-English major college students; their busy schedules for other classes will make it difficult to schedule an interview with them. Hence, for a 30-student classroom, I would invite my students to write a self-introduction paragraph based on some guiding questions asking for the information I need. On one hand, compared to the interview, a written self-introduction makes it more efficient and convenient for me to learn about my students from time to time; students, on the other hand, regard the writing as an opportunity to reflect on themselves in an English context. After reading the compositions, I would still interview every student, but only to gain more information about the 1-2 questions they want to share the most or the information that could be related to my teaching objectives, which could be recognized in their written answers.

How to teach writing? In this capstone paper, I have focused on teaching oral communication skills and reading, based on my practicum experiences; however, writing is also an important skill for college students. Unfortunately, the writing teaching in China, especially academic writing, has always been dominated by memorizing templates, even for some internationally acknowledged assessments such as TOEFL and IELTS.

Writing, in my opinion, is the communication between the author and the readers, which can be taught in communicative ways. Like any other academic communications, academic writing needs logic and facts; and like any other forms or writing, academic writing needs appropriate language. My idea of teaching academic writing would be to get students to orally communicate with logic and facts first, and to put their thoughts into written language. In this way, the classroom would still be communicative, and the students would be able to weave the facts they knew into proper writing with logic, which would be considered successful academic writing.

How to stick to my teaching philosophy and to gain competence as a teacher? In my future teaching context, it is not rare that some teachers start their career ambitiously as language instructors but gradually become test trainers who focus on getting students to score as high as possible in tests. As important as tests are to students, languages serve as tools for communication in the life of most people, as I mentioned at the very beginning of my teaching philosophy. Hence, it is being able to teach students to communicate in English that makes a good EFL teacher, rather than merely preparing students for tests.

In the future, I will always stay humble as a learner and to continue to do what I have done at Peabody in order to gain competence as a teacher. First, I will learn from scholars. I will keep an eye on academia and keep in touch with professors and colleagues that I’ve known from Peabody to discuss theories and application of them. Second, I will learn from my future colleagues by visiting their classes, video recording my teaching, and discussing with them about strengths and weaknesses in terms of leveraging students’ funds of knowledge and teaching communicative skills. Finally, I will learn from my students by reflecting on whether what I do is building caring relations with them, and whether what they learn is helping them gain communicative skills.

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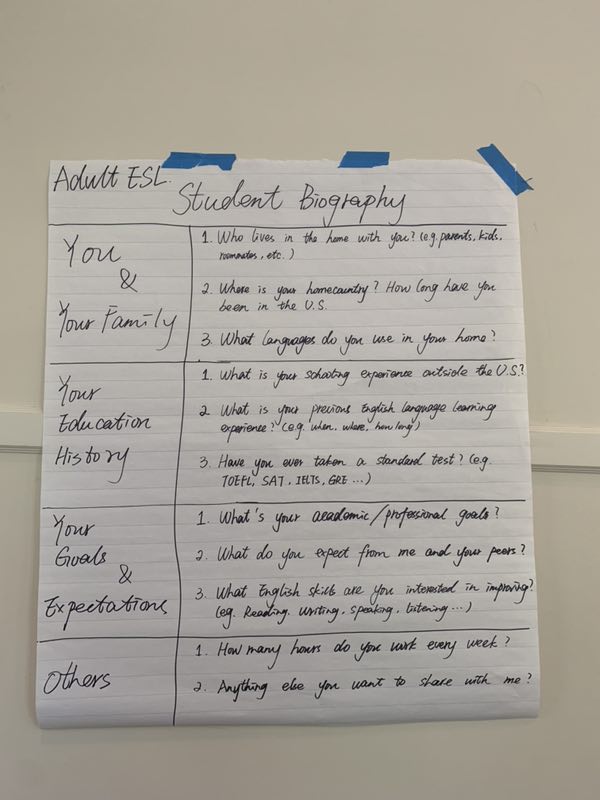
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**Appendix A**

Student Biography Questions



**Appendix B**

Participant’s Biography Interview Notes Translated from Mandarin Chinese

Interviewer: Ling

Interviewee: Participant Jean (pseudonym)

***You and Your Family***

Ling: Who lives in the home with you?

Jean: I live with my husband now.

Ling: Where is your hometown? How long have you been in the U.S.? (acculturation level 1) (Culture and Language 2)

Jean: Henan, China. I’ve been here for about 2 months.

Ling: What languages do you use in your home? (Culture and Language 1)

Jean: Mandarin Chinese all the time.

Ling: Doesn’t your husband help you with your English?

Jean: No, he doesn’t. He doesn’t have the patient. He’s just too lazy to teach me any English. He thinks it’s fine to communicate in Mandarin.

***Your Education History***

Ling: Tell me about your schools and work before you came here. (Experiential Background 2, 4, 6, 7)

Jean: Anything? Should I start from elementary school or kindergarten?

Ling: Anything you consider as educational experience.

Jean: I just played at home when I was a little kid, and attended school a year later than most of my peers.

Ling: So that was when you were 7 years old?

Jean: Yeah. I was about 7 when I started elementary school. At that time I think it’s a torture for me to go to school because everyone around was younger than me, while everyone at my age was in second grade. It just made me feel that they knew so much that I didn’t know, about which I was sad. I didn’t like studying and it continued to middle school. In middle school, actually I was aware of the pressure that I should work hard to get into a good high school, and then a good college. But I was also rebellious at that time; you know, teenagers thought skipping classes or something was really cool. So, I didn’t really work hard, and as a result, I didn’t get into a good high school in my hometown. I only made it to an average high school.

During high school years, I was always regretting my stupidity in middle school, thinking, “why on earth was I so stupid? I chose to play and to relax all the time when I was supposed to work hard.” And in high school, all my peers seemed to be mature all of a sudden, because Henan Province is the most populated province and the we had much pressure. High school is tough for students in Henan. We had classes 7 days almost every week, and only had 2 days off every month. At that time, we didn’t study for gaining knowledge; instead, we only studied for a good college. We tended to work on those subjects which we could get more scores with same amount of efforts. For those subjects that were not easy to get more grades, we’d just ignore them. For example, Chinese Language is a subject that requires long-term accumulation to get good grades, so we thought it didn’t matter whether we work hard on it or not; even if we worked hard on Chinese, we’d gain less than 10 more points (150 was the full score). And if we didn’t review Chinese Language subject contents at all, the test scores would not be too bad, either.

Ling: That’s true.

Jean: So, we just ignored it. Occasionally we recited some example compositions because composition took up 50 points in the exam. For other subjects, like English or Math, if someone worked hard on those, she/he would make significant progress in a short time. So we just focused on these subjects. I didn’t even think about what my interests were or what my dreams were at that time; I just wanted to attend a good college. I didn’t think of my future major or job. The only thing on my mind was to attend a good college through Gaokao (College Entrance Examination in China, held once a year).

Ling: What did college left you the deepest impression?

Jean: Before college, students only focused on scores. And we tended to judge someone only by her/his scores—if she/he got good grades, she/he would be an awesome person. People with poor scores were considered losers. But in college, no one cared about your scores any more. People gave more attention to someone’s personality charm, their look, hobbies. We were jealous about talented people, like crosstalk comedy actors, singers, dancers, etc. They became everyone’s idol not because of their scores. For those who only liked to study, college students thought she/he was boring. They valued good personality, social skills, and anything that was not academic.

Ling: I am curious about your major.

Jean: I majored in Applied Psychology.

Ling: Applied Psychology?

Jean: Yes.

Ling: But then you became a Chinese teacher.

Jean: Yes, I did.

Ling: Why did you choose Applied Psychology?

Jean: I was reallocated because my Gaokao scores wasn’t so good.

Ling: What was your first choice?

Jean: English Language and Literature. Because I was a liberal arts student (文科) in high school, I thought English majors could find a more lucrative job. There was too many people choosing English, and I was reallocated to this not-so-popular major.

Ling: Were you good at English in High School?

Jean: Not really. I was just average at English. To be honest, Chinese Language was my best subject… I always scored over 120/150, while I was really average at all other subjects. But in high school I think Chinese was boring and I didn’t want to major in it—which I did regret years later. Finally, I minored in Chinese Language and Literature.

Ling: So, your major was Applied Psychology and your minor…

Jean: Actually, I switched my major to Educational Psychology.

Ling: When did you started learning English? How long have you been learning English? Have there been any time when you stopped learning?

Jean: My hometown was not educationally prosperous. Kids in many other places started to learn English in elementary school, while we started at seventh Grade in Middle School.

Middle School and High School, that counted for 6 years. And in college I only learned English for a year in preparation for CET-4 and CET-6 (College English Test). And I had not been exposed to any English since then, because I didn’t use it in work. It’s only these two years… since last year when I realized I might be living in the U.S. someday, I tried to pick English up again. But it was so difficult. I had already forgot much of what I’d learned. Now I might be like middle school level.

Ling: You’re better than that! We’ve done the assessment and I know you’re better than that.

Jean: Well maybe my vocabulary is richer than a middle school student, but it’s still hard for me to speak English. I’m just so unfamiliar with this language.

Ling: Tell me about the English tests/exams you’ve taken.

Jean: I’ve only taken Gaokao and CET.

***Your Goals and Expectations:***

Ling: Do you have any academic/professional goals?

Jean: Professionally I’m not considering anything yet. I just moved and I’m still a bit lost. I don’t know what I can do. I taught high school Chinese classes in China instead of fundamental Chinese language—I mean, I taught ancient classic Chinese and stuff. It’s just of no use when I’m here. I’m just so lost right now that I don’t know what to do. Now I only wanted to learn English, if only to carry a daily conversation. If I ever get the opportunity to go back to school again, I’d like to be a Chinese teacher here or back in China teaching Chinese as a Second Language.

Ling: There is a Chinese Language School in Nashville.

Jean: Well, my English sucks.

Ling: What do you expect from Carrie, me and your classmates?

Jean: I expect to learn some authentic conversation, expressions and vocabulary. I learned English for so many years, and I get the meaning when I read English. But I don’t really get it when hearing people talk. And the expressions people use here are a bit different from what I learned from textbooks in China.

Ling: Totally.

Jean: Yes! I want to learn authentic English.

Ling: Got it. Do you mean their accent or lexical choice by “expressions”?

Jean: Lexical choice. I remember in my very first textbook, there was a conversation. “Good morning! How are you?” “I’m fine, thank you! And you?” But here nobody says that.

Ling: Right, fine means not bad here.

Jean: And from my peers… I hardly had chance to talk to foreigners in China, so now I’m happy to do some cultural communication with my peers, like the sceneries and foods in their countries.

Ling: What English skills are you interested in improving? Reading, writing, listening or speaking?

Jean: Listening and speaking.

***Others***

Ling: Do you work here? How many hours? If not, what’s your role in your family?

Jean: I don’t work here. I just found that there are very limited number of Chinese restaurants here in Nashville, so I cook a lot these days. I’m learning to make some Ramens as well, and if I succeed, I’ll bring you some.

Ling: Thank you so much! I only know how to cook meat. I know nothing about flour.

Jean: Well you have a school to go to, and I’m just being boring at home.

Ling: I recall from our first class that you said you didn’t feel good about speaking English in the hospital.

Jean: Yes, I’m pregnant and have a lot of checks to do. Doctors say too many terms, like some chronical disease or organs I’ve never learned from textbooks. Like, what is ‘diabetes’? I feel so unfamiliar, and afraid of not having enough communication with my doctor. So, I got a translator. But it’s so weird to have the translator there when I’m talking about my health with my doctor. I don’t feel at ease.

Ling: Next time if you don’t want a translator, just ask the doctor to spell the term for you and look up in a dictionary. I don’t know terms either, and that’s how I do. Maybe it’s not efficient, but it’ll protect your privacy.

Jean: Yeah, I’ll do that too. Thanks.

Ling: I read through all the written self-introductions in our class, and you wrote “my mom is my hero”. Why did you write that?

Jean: I think many kids look up on their moms. My dad was always busy, and I spend more time with my mom growing up. I think she’s a hero.

Ling: I was actually moved to tears by that simple sentence.

Jean: Subconsciously, many people regard their parents as their heroes. We girls spending more time with moms spontaneous regard moms as our heroes, because other heroes are way too far from us. But moms, they’re always there for us.

Ling: Anything else you want to share with me?

Jean: I wasn’t a hard-working student growing up. I didn’t even do my homework. The teachers scolded me, and my mom beat me because of that. I never cared about college either. I had hated school for a long time until I met a boy in high school who was a straight-A student. I started to work hard because I wanted to be with him. Finally, I got into an average university, and he got into one of the top universities in China. And he told me he liked me in high school because his Chinese teacher read my compositions in their class as examples and he really liked those. We started a relationship which was also pressure for me—I always thought that I wasn’t good enough for him. But I didn’t change too much. I kept on watching Korean dramas instead of studying hard until he dumped me because I didn’t work hard. I got heartbroken and again regretted my own stupidity. Later I met a man who is now my husband. He’s also a hard-working person, and he encourages me a lot. Now I have a habit of reading. I only minored in Chinese Language and Literature so compared with my Chinese major colleagues, I had much more to learn for my job. My first job was to teach Educational Psychology in a technical college (similar to community college in the U.S.), and I didn’t really like that. With my husband’s encouragement, I passed the teaching certificate test and realized my dream of becoming a Chinese teacher.

**Appendix C**

Lesson Plan for Greetings around the world

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Teacher:**  **Ling Liu** | | **Date:**  **Sept. 30, 2019** | | **Grade/Class/Subject:**  **Adult General Communicative English** | |
| **Unit/Theme:**  **Greeting around the World** | | | **Standards:** | | |
| **Content Objective(s):**  **After this class, student will be able to greet friends from different countries/cultures while engaging in small talks, and to avoid certain ways of greetings in appropriate ways.** | | | **Language Objective(s):**  **After this class, student will be able to:**  **Understand and use vocabulary of different ways of greetings;**  **Understand conditional adverbial clause.** | | |
| **KEY VOCABULARY:**  **If… someone will…**  **Ways of greeting** | | | **SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS:**  **Visual materials: PowerPoint, video links** | | |
| **SIOP FEATURES** | | | | | |
| **PREPARATION**  3D box **Adaptation of content**  **✅Links to background**  3D box **Links to past learning**  **✅ Strategies incorporated**  **INTEGRATION OF PROCESSES**  3D box **Reading**  3D box **Writing**  **✅ Speaking**  **✅ Listening** | **SCAFFOLDING**  3D box **Modeling**  **✅ Guided practice**  3D box **Independent practice**  3D box **Comprehensible input**  **APPLICATION**  **✅ Hands-on**  **✅ Meaningful**  **✅ Linked to objectives**  **✅ Promotes engagement** | | | | **GROUP OPTIONS**  3D box **Whole class**  3D box **Small groups**  **✅ Partners**  **✅ Independent**  **ASSESSMENT**  3D box **Individual**  3D box **Group**  3D box **Written**  3D box **Oral** |
| LESSON SEQUENCE:  My mentor teacher Carrie gave a class about small talk before this class, and she wants me to make my teaching content “different ways of greeting” connected to “small talk”—this class will be still about small talk.  **Opening: (1 min in total)**  Give opening instruction connected to “small talk”, introducing content and linguistic objectives to the students(1min)  **Activity 1: (13 mins in total)**  Play the “Greetings Around the World” video (3 min each time)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tlNJibk234>  After first time, ask students, “What does this video tell us about?” (pick 2-3 students who volunteer to answer, 2min)  Before Second time: ask students to take down all ways of greeting from the video.  After second time:  What ways of greetings have you seen from the video? (5 min for 2 questions)  What ways of greetings not mentioned in this video do you know?  (If the students don’t know how to say those in English, encourage them to greet me with the gesture and L1)  **Activity 2: (11 mins in total)**  For people don’t like certain ways of instruction: how will you avoid these ways of greetings?  Play the “How to Avoid a Hug” video (00:20 - 00:50) (1min)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnLFSRjG2M8>  After playing: What will you do if someone wants greet you with a hug?  Default answer provided by the teacher as an example of conditional adverbial clause: (1min)  If someone wants to hug me, I will admit that I’m not a hugger, and will shake hands with her or him. (write on the white board)  Ask 2-3 volunteers to answer the question and encourage them to use conditional adverbial clause when answering the question. (2 mins)  Conclude students’ creative ways using conditional adverbial clauses. (2 mins)  Get students “Hands up, Pair up” to do small talks with greeting gestures. Suggest them to avoid if they don’t want certain ways of greeting. (5 mins)  **Conclude** the class in terms of content and linguistics objectives (1-2 mins).  REFLECTIONS: | | | | | |

**Appendix D**

Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan #1

**Content Objective(s):**

After this class, student will acquire the knowledge of different greetings in different countries/cultures.

**Language Objective(s):**

After this class, student will be able to use the language forms they’ve learned for small talks in other types of communication.

**Opening: (6 min in total)**

Give opening instruction connected to “small talk”, introducing content and linguistic objectives to the students(1min)

Play the “Greetings Around the World” video (3 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tlNJibk234>

After first time, ask students, “What does this video tell us about?” (pick 2-3 students who volunteer to answer, 2min)

**Jigsaw activity: (18 mins in total)**

Before Second time:

The teacher will give activity sheets to students,

The teacher will ask each table to focus on a certain content later when they watch the video for the second time: (2 mins to make sure that students understand the questions) (3 mins for the video)

(The teacher will invite co-teacher(s) to join the tables to make the number of students on each table even if it’s not)

Table 1: **Gestures:** What gestures do people in different cultures give when they greet others?

Table 2: **Expressions:** What do people say in different cultures when they greet others?

Table 3: **Intimate** **Greetings (hugs and kisses):** What traditions do different cultures have for greeting their close friends and family?

Table 4: **Power:** How do different cultures change their greetings for someone with more power (a teacher, an older person)?

After playing the video:

The teacher re-group the students into new groups A, B, C, D, making sure that each new group include at least one student from the previous tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and assign them to different tables for the new groups. (2 min)

The teacher will ask students at each table to share the information they’ve got from the video, and each table to complete the four questions on the activity sheet together. This way if groups wrap up at different times, they can start discussing a final question, such as “What do greetings look like in your home country? How is this different than the U.S.?”

Before students start to talk, the teacher will also encourage students to use language forms from Carrie’s teaching content (7-8 mins)

After the group discussion, the teacher will invite one student as the speaker from each table to share with the whole class about their working sheets. (4 mins)

**Conclude** the class in terms of content and linguistics objectives (1-2 mins).

Lesson Plan #2

**Basic Information:**

Topic: Talk about Traveling

Class: GES 2019

Teacher: Ling Liu

Date: Oct. 28, 2019

Content Objective: Students will be able to talk about traveling in their home countries.

Language Objective: Students will be able to use past tense and present perfect tense correctly.

**Activities Sequence:**

warm-up (5 mins):

“Today we’re going to talk about travel which is an exciting topic! Hands up if you like traveling — (wait for the hands up) Great! Many of you like traveling, I do too! So, to talk about traveling, we need certain vocabulary. Now we’re going to do some matching about the words we need.”

Before the activity: The teacher will give instructions and model one matching to the students, then will give out the cut outs to each table.

During the activity: The teacher will float around tables to help if students have questions.

*Destination* a place people travel to go see

*Breathtaking* so beautiful I could stop breathing for a moment

*Adventure* an exciting or different experience

*Scenic* impressive or beautiful views

*Landmark* a place that is easy to see; you can’t miss it

*Home of* where something famous is located

*Famous for* what a place is known for

*Popular attraction* a place many people come to see

Introducing key vocabulary: (10 mins)

“The matching might have been a bit difficult for y’all, but we will get deeper understanding of the vocabulary as we go through some examples that you might be familiar.”

The teacher will introduce the words and definitions in sentences with pictures of sights in student’s home countries on PPT. Students will read each sentence together.

Introducing Past vs. Present Perfect: (13-15 mins)

14th Slide (3 min): The teacher will ask students what’s the difference? It will be ideal if students offer to answer; if not, the teachers will point out two differences: has been to/ was in; vague time/ specific time.

15th-17th Slides (10 mins): The teacher will lead the class to go through slide 15-17. For 15th, students will take turn to read the sentences, and after they finish the sentences of each tense, the teacher will emphasize vague time/ specific time again. Then the teacher will give 16th and 17th as resource for later on activities.

Evaluation I: (5 min)

Students will do a short quiz on kahoot (4 questions about past vs. present perfect tense). The teacher will explain the answer after every question.

Travel interview: (14-15 mins)

(I’m not sure if I should give directions and model first or pair them up first)

Give directions and model: (3 mins) “Now we will do a travel interview with each other using the vocabulary and grammar we’ve just learned. We will ask each other about traveling in our home countries about these questions,” (show the 18th slide) “and take notes on this sheet,” (show the interview activity sheet). “For example,” (call on a higher proficiency level student to do the example on the sheet with me), “Thank you for interviewing me. And after this, everyone, I will also interview (the student’s name) about those questions. So, you will also interview each other.”

Pair up students (3 mins): The teacher will get the class stand in a circle with students from the same continent standing next to each other. Students will pair up with whoever facing them; the teacher will join if the number of the students is odd.

Students will do the interview in pairs. (8 mins)

Evaluation II: (flexible: 0-10 minutes)

If some students finish the interview earlier than others, they will complete the passage on the back side of the interview sheet and share with the class after everyone has finished the interview. For students finishing later, the passage will be an optional homework.

Lesson Plan 3

**Basic Information:**

Topic: Problems and Complaints with Customer Service

Class: GES 2019

Teacher: Ling Liu

Date: Nov. 11, 2019

Content Objective: Students use the language they’ve learned in class to show how annoyed they are when they are reporting problems/ making complaints to customer service.

**Activities Sequence:**

Warm up: (10 min)

“Good morning class. I have a question for you. Hands up if you ever had a problem and talked to customer service on the phone.”

If students respond: “Who did you talk to? What did you talk about?” (Write the situation on the white board)

If no students respond: “My friend and I have talked to a lot of customer services since we came here. For example, once my Sephora order got canceled because I used a credit card not issued in United States. Once I could not get gas for heating because I didn’t have a social security number back then. Does anyone have similar experience?” (Write the situation on the white board)

“Okay, thank everyone for sharing. My best friend Ruby also had a phone call with Delta last semester, and let’s listen to their conversation. When you listen, please put the strips in order.”

Students will listen to the conversation two times in different speeds (\*0.5, \*1) and put the cut outs of the conversation in order.

After listening, the teacher will hand out the texts for students to check if they have got the order right.

Vocabulary Introduction: (5 min)

The teacher will introduce important words in the conversation with the PPT slides.

After that, the teacher will ask if students have other words that they don’t know in the text. The teacher will invite other students to explain the words.

“Does anyone know what xxx means here?”

Group Discussion: (15 min)

Student will discuss about the conversation and about their personal experience with problems and complaints. Slide of guiding questions will be shown on the screen.

After the discussion, the teacher will check with the class about the questions of information from the conversation, and invite students to share their stories they’ve just listened to in the group. The teacher will add the situations of students experience to the list on the white board.

Language Introduction: (5 min)

Hand out the worksheet to students and show the slide of “annoyance level”. Model the marking of the second 8th line, and let students finish the rest.

After students have done the task, check the marks and summarize the language to describe level of being annoyed in the following slide.

Pair work (possible evaluation): (10-15 min)

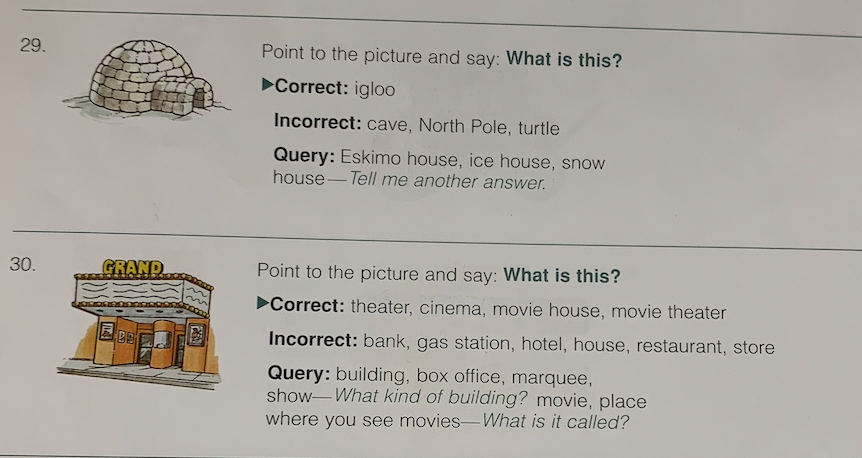
The teacher will pair students up with a Partner A and a Partner B in the group.

The students will create a telephone conversation in pairs using any of the prompts on the white board and the language on the slide. The teacher will model one for students before students start.

After that, if time allows, students will share the conversation with the group.

**Appendix E**

The picture and the word “igloo” in the assessment



**Appendix F**

Student’s Portfolio pages



**Appendix G**

