

Module 1 Portfolio

SHIHO NONIE BOWEN

- 2-3 Statement on Teaching and Learning
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- 14-20 Reflective report of a teaching intervention cycle
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A statement on teaching and learning

Current education is thought to be ideologically driven and advocates an old fashioned style of teaching and learning which emphasises acquiring knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global market, rather than for individual improvement and achievement, mentioned Aubrey, K. (2016). From my learning, working, and teaching experiences in Asia, North America, and Europe over the last 40 years, this is evidently historically true for the majority of the world population. Before the age of five, many children already commute to several schools promoting talents such as language, music, dance, and painting. Some private schools make parents believe if their children are not equipped with talents or skills as well as having good grades overall, they are not good enough to enrol in their schools, not to mention the ivy league colleges and universities. It is an unfortunate fact that many children do not have the luxury of being children having a lot of play time. However, they seem to be smarter and know more than kids used to. Their way of learning has also changed.

Many people assume that the longer a person teaches, the better teacher he/she is. To my belief, this is not always true. The world does not stand still, there is a new idea or invention every single day. In olden times, people might not have had the chance to be exposed to so many different opportunities and stimuli as people in the modern world today. In ancient times, people learned by following the footsteps of their teachers/masters and doing as they were told. It was a matter of “practice makes perfect”. Accompanying the development and improvement of technology, learners today can acquire all sorts of information online, learning new things with a simple app readily downloaded in one click. That means a teacher does not have to be a physical person; so what makes a teacher relevant?

Korthagen (2001b) suggests that pedagogy is more than issues related with teaching and learning and emphasises the importance of self-development, of self-identity and the manner in which that influences pedagogy. William (2004:5) also argues that education in practice is a much more complicated matter, with numerous dimensions to consider which need a reflective and professional approach, involving more than just knowing what you do and how to do it, but why you do it.

As a language teacher, I have a great passion for learning languages. I have travelled as much as I can and learned several languages along the way. I learned that if you can communicate with someone in his/her own language, it can bring you closer. Similarly, if you know their culture, it can help you communicate and learn their language better. Why do I like to be a language teacher? Because I learn the joy and love experienced through communication. These are the most important things that I would like to share with my learners. Being able to speak another language would certainly be beneficial to a career path, but it is the joy that you are able to understand each other that counts the most. This mutual understanding is one of the reasons that people strive to learn a language, especially when they feel frustrated or defeated from time to time.

As a language teacher, I need to identify who my learners are, their age, background (what languages they speak and their culture) and learning experience. Age variations could affect their understanding of certain topics, the language they speak could influence the way they try to use the language they are learning and highlight the common mistakes made by

same nationality learners, and their past learning experience may have impacts on their learning speed. If the learner has any learning difficulty, it certainly would influence the approach of teaching.

As a language teacher, I could easily be replaced by a machine if I could only speak the language but could not provide interactive activities to help students become engaged and interested. Nevertheless, teachers these days all have to learn to use apps to enhance the learning and be able to utilise the resources online and adapt other teachers' teaching techniques from CPD. Furthermore, online lessons are the mainstream under COVID circumstances. Luckily, I started teaching online a year before COVID happened so it didn't bother my methodology at all but helped me become even more competent teaching group lessons online.

Apart from self-development, it is also vital to self-reflect on every lesson, getting feedback from peers and students. Students in particular can tell me what they don't understand and what they need help with which I might not notice in my reflection. By learning from the feedback from the students, I can improve my teaching techniques as well.

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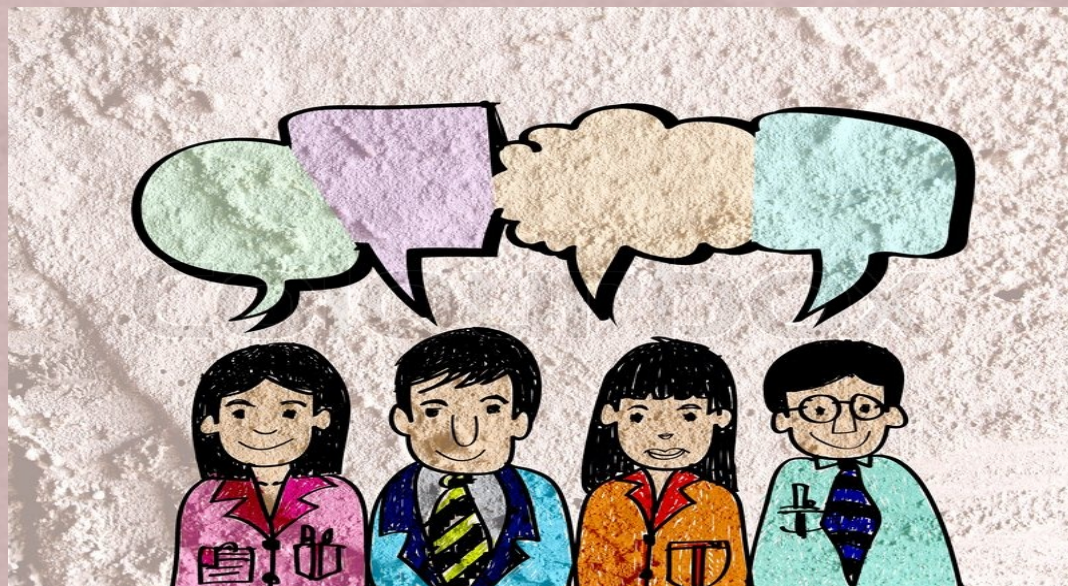
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中文很难学吗?

Is Mandarin difficult to learn?

YES



NO

WHAT IS DIFFICULT?

1. Pronunciation
2. Intonation
3. Writing/Characters
4. Grammar

LET'S GIVE IT A TRY:



人

ré^én

LET'S GIVE IT A TRY:



dà

LET'S GIVE IT A TRY:



天

tiān

TEST:

大

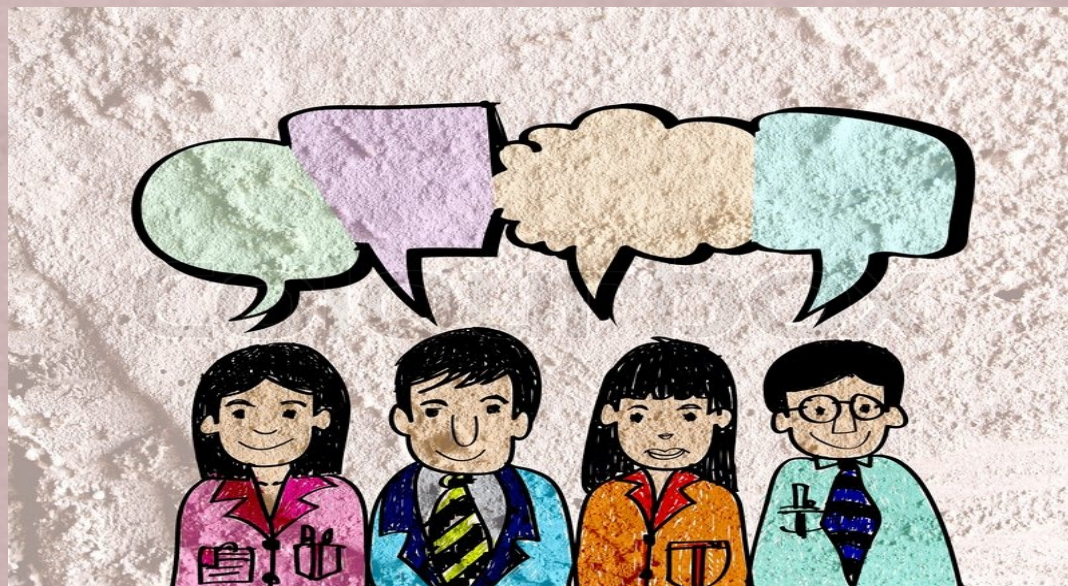
人

天

中文很难学吗?

Is Mandarin difficult to learn?

YES



NO

CONCLUSION

1. Our perception could be wrong sometimes.
2. There are stories behind the characters.
3. Practise makes improvement.
4. Give it a try before any judgement.

A reflection of 10 min micro teaching to colleagues

“Is Mandarin difficult to learn?” was the topic. This presentation is always my first lesson to introduce the language to the learner. My first slide, the warm-up activity is a picture with “hello” in multiple languages. There I asked my colleagues to pick out Chinese hello. It is a short and simple activity that I have not encountered anyone picked the wrong one. They could also identify it in different colours. Even though they could pick out Chinese character, they still felt it’s hard to learn. They explained why. That helps me to identify the fear the learners may have and start introducing the language with a fun game. The game runs in 3 stages. First identify a picture at each stage and I’d provide the meaning of the picture. Then they are asked to write/draw something could resemble the word in Chinese base on the picture. Some right some wrong. When I reveal the answer and explain one formation of Chinese words is based on the shape of animals or objects, they all agreed. I proceed to say the word before showing them the spelling, so they learn how to say and connect the sound with the word instead of the pronunciation spelling. At the same time, they learned about the tones. The last task is a quiz, to assess their understanding. They all could read the three words in a random order and say their meanings.

My colleague enjoyed the activity. However it was a short teaching, I didn’t receive any critical feedback. I was confident, used some body language and prompt feedback. The best feedback would be that some of them felt Chinese differently after the exercise and not so afraid to give it a try anymore.

Reflective report of a teaching intervention cycle (3,250 words) - aligned to the UKPSF throughout

Based on Gibbs' reflective model, 6 stages of reflective cycle need to be taken:

1. Description of the experience in detail
2. Feelings before and throughout the experience, and the reaction to it
3. Evaluation of the experience, telling the good and bad of the experience.
4. Analysis of the experience with critical thinking in detail
5. Conclusion of the experience and anything else could have been done.
6. Action plan for improvements

Description

A 60-minute ESL lesson with 7 learners of various nationalities, ages, and slightly different level of English abilities. The aim of the lesson is for students to practise using first conditional form and improve their accuracy and fluency in speaking. Not all students came on time.

I started the lesson on time with the following lesson stages:

STAGES & AIMS	FOCUS	TIME	
Lead-in	Pair-T	13:00 13:05	2 min discussion, what subjects they like at school, that they are good or not good at, and they are still interested in. 2min feedback
Vocabulary understanding confirmation with Stage of education	Group Ss-T	13:05 13:10	3 min, group vocab blank filling task 1 min, feedback the answer
Listening for gist	Individuals Gr Ss-T	13:10 13:18	3 min, individual work, listen to three conversations about school/university to answer 4 questions. 2 min table discuss answers 2 min answer check
Listening for detail	Individuals Gr Ss-T	13:18 13:24	3 min, listen again for details and fill in blanks to complete questions. 1 min group answer check 1 min Answer check
Grammar- rules First conditional	Pair Ss-T	13:24 13:32	3 min, pair discussion, then table answer check 4 min feedback and elicit grammar structure from Ss
Grammar- exercise 1	Gr-T	13:32 13:37	2 min, group work, matching two parts of sentences. 2 min answer check
Grammar- exercise 2	Pair Ss-T	13:37 13:43	3 min pair work, error correction exercise 1 min table answer check

			• 1 min feedback
Grammar – exercise 3	Pair-T	13:43 13:50	• 3 min pair work, complete sentences with correct form of verbs • 1 min table check • 2 min feedback
Speaking exercise	Group-T	13:50 14:00	• 4 min group work, think of the most correct endings to complete sentences. • 2 min, have Ss write on the board and everyone evaluate the sentences. • 2 min, peer answer check

Feelings

Before the lesson I felt prepared, but I knew I had a tight schedule to keep up. The plan went more or less smoothly. Even though I felt students have achieved what I asked them to do, based on the tutor's observation feedback, there are some approaches that I could have improved.

Evaluation

Good:

1. rapport
2. monitoring
3. explanation to students' questions
4. PPT
5. Grouping

Bad:

1. Time control
2. The order of the teaching stage
3. The approach of introducing the vocabulary
4. Have a listening gist task as receptive skill practice
5. Have a different speaking practice as productive skill practice
6. Clear Instruction and Concept Check Questions

Analysis

David, 1999 defined "Time management" as making the most out of the time. Green and Skinner (2005) suggest that time management shows a high inconsistency between individual's estimation of time usage and output results. It is also pointed out that time management is a vital element for effective teaching and school's results (Horng, 2010)(Master, 2013). To complete every lesson stage, it is important for the teacher to keep an eye on the time for each task. Also, it is necessary to set an appropriate time frame for each task. As the tutor mentioned; I could have shortened the starter task because it works as a lead-in, same as the vocabulary task. Even though I have always tried to keep control of the time, sometimes students would be having a good discussion or having questions that needed to be cleared, running overtime, or had to skip or cut short some sections. This still happens now and again. I believe as long as it is a good and relevant topic or questions to discuss, it is

not a bad decision to extend it a little bit longer and skip some less important tasks in the process.

As for the vocabulary task, if I had known my students better, I would have known that not all the vocabulary was new to them. The task could have been too easy for some of them. Instead of having a filling in vocabulary task, I could have only briefly introduced the new ones to them and done another gist listening task after introducing the new words, or could have skipped the task, put the new ones on the board and added another speaking practice so they could produce a conversation using the new learned target language. The reason that I did not plan the lesson well enough was because the learners were new to me. It was a teaching training practice, therefore, there was not a chance for me to spend a lot of time to get to assess the students, to know more of their background, their individual English language level or their learning situation.

The dimensions of the UK Professional Standards Framework are areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values. They are closely linked together and affect the quality of the teaching and learning process. In particular the nature of higher education has changed since 2000, there has been higher rate of people attending universities, the diversity of the student population has also increased, teachers ought to be able to engage all types of learners with various aims to education to achieve a better result in teaching and learning, suggests Biggs, J. and Tang, C. (2011). Moreover, even though some students attend a higher education just for a diploma or a certificate, many of them nowadays also expect to learn from the best and utilise the learned knowledge and the skills in a career. Hence many universities worldwide have created more and more courses for professional career purposes. Knowing your students is a vital part of lesson planning and teaching. Following the change of the university management, their change of student acceptance has brought more and more international students attending the universities in the UK. Kreber, C. (2009) also suggests that only certain section of society attended universities, especially institutions considered as elite, many of students today are the first of their family to enrol in university and may not have the cultural capital that could help with the success at university. Aronowitz (2000) pointed out that there were rising number of students accepted into the courses without sufficient confidence and skills for university life and study. Therefore, schools ought to provide help for students from deprived area in every way not limited in learning. Apart from local students there are increasing number of international students, mostly from Europe, Asia and Africa. Biggs, J. and Tang, C. (2011) which indicates that educators need to be aware of the special needs of the international students: the language and social support. The potential value of higher education for the students is to prepare for the workforce, citizenship, social relations and personal life that the teachers should know how to set good learning aims for multiple approaches of learning; effectively use small groups; evaluate complex types of learning; involve students in active learning; develop rubrics; accommodate students with diverse characteristics; teach large classes, creativity and critical thinking; help students become self-directing learners; and use technology to promote better learning (Davis, J.R. and Arend, B.D., 2012). I am a ESL and modern language teacher. Therefore, my subjects are considered by the learners as a skill to get a job, a better pay grade or to improve the communication. It is not only a hard work for students to learn a new language so they could obtain their dream job or benefit their career but also a big responsibility for me, the teacher to bring the students to the level to communicate with the native speakers using the language. To help minimise the ineffective teaching and learning, it is most important to create a warm learning environment for the students, get to know them on the first few lessons and let them get to know the peers as well.

I learned a technique from other language teachers. Ice Breaker activity does not have to be boring. They could create their own interesting or weird and outside of box questions and walk around to find out answers from each other. Even though they might not be able to use the target language for ice breaker activities especially for the beginner level students, it is a necessary activity and step for teacher to get to know students and students to learn about each other. Learning about the language and the culture from each other would help to dissolve the awkwardness between each other. Once the class is brought together, they would be more willing and open to participate in learning activities, in particular the shy students or the students with less confidence in speaking and group activities. The local students would also try to help the international students with their language, living or cultural problems. When there is a good rapport between the students and the teacher, the students would be more engaged in learning and more likely to ask for help when they face any learning or social difficulty. Furthermore, knowing the background languages and culture of the learners would help teacher identify the difficulties or confusion the learners may have in learning the subject language. In a way, this is a part of assessment to help with the lesson planning.

Unfortunately, as it was not a long course and a proper assessment could not be conducted, there was not enough time to get to know the students well in terms of their language level. However, I was able to know a little bit of their background such as their nationalities and why they came to UK, and learn about their learning behaviour through some sessions, which helped me understand their possible common learning issues. Also, in a couple of sessions, I was able to build a good rapport with them which helped with class engagement and group discussion.

My tutor also pointed out that I did not always have to explain about the grammar structure to the students. I could have given them a chance to work it out on their own from time to time. Which was an eye opener for me. Kagan (1992) put forward that “teachers’ beliefs were a kind of special and personal implicit presumption about teaching practice”. Phipps and Borg (2009) also suggest that teaching approaches were not purposeful, were dominated by certain teaching beliefs meant for some specific teaching purpose, contents, and target. Indeed, during my school time, I was always given a formula to solve an equation, a grammar structure to produce a sentence in a foreign language. I was never given a chance to work the rules out on my own. I was used to the approach that I took it as the principal of teaching method. Having giving it a thought, it is rather exciting to be able to figure out a rule and more practical than memorising the rule. Autonomous learning is suggested to be more effective than relying on the teacher’s input. On the other hand, teachers may argue, in order to ensure the lesson can be completed by schedule, they would rather give students the grammar rules and let them practise drills. I suppose it depends on what sort of grammar rules. If it needs more explanation such as first conditional or second conditional, it might be worthwhile for students to work out the rules by themselves or in groups. It would also stimulate the engagement and team work. The simple rules like “I am Martin. You are Peter. She is Susan. He is Paul.” is self-explanatory. It would be much easier for students to drill following the rules.

I took my tutor’s advice and set out a few stages of grammar exercises in the following session, giving them the answers but without giving them any explanation until the end of practice. My peers were very curious how I would be able to pull this off and students would be able to understand the target grammar structure. It turned out the tutor’s method worked.

After all the exercises, the rules became clear to the students. I only needed to give them some pointers, explain some common confusions, conclude the grammar rules. The lesson was well executed as the feedback given by the same tutor afterwards. I was pleased with the teaching result and was impressed with my students' ability to work the rules out on their own. Naturally while students were working through the tasks, some of them may have some questions. Giving them some guidance, they were able to clear their problems and have their breakthrough.

In addition to give students more chances to figure the rules out and develop their autonomous learning, it is as important to provide them more chances to put what they learned in practice. After all it is a subject that students need to build up their skills and speak the language in the real life someday. Hence, apart from receptive skill practice, there should be more productive skill practice in every lesson, that include writing and speaking. As writing can take loads of time, it could be set as assignment and leave the lesson time for pair or group speaking practice. Students tend not to like writing because it takes more effort, and they might not be confident enough with their language and the sentence structure. Compared with writing, they are more incline to do speak practice. Again, some of them might be shy to speak up. However, speaking practice focuses more on the fluency rather than accuracy. It is recommended to group students in pairs and then in groups, they can gather ideas from each other before feedback to the whole class which ease the individual tension. For the writing assignments, students can collaborate as well, especially in the early learning stage.

Archer, A.L. and Hughes, C.A. (2010) describe explicit instruction is a structured, systematic, and effective approach for teaching academic skills. Explicit instruction includes a series of supports or scaffolds which guide students through the learning steps with clear statement about the aim and reason for learning the new skills, clear explanation and demonstrations of the instructional goal, and supported exercise with feedback until the aim is achieved. Without a clear instruction, the students may not do what they were supposed to do or know where to begin. It would lead to ineffective teaching and learning. There are many ways of giving clear example and I find that giving a demonstration following the instruction is the most effective method. It is also useful to confirm their understanding by asking concept check questions. However, I must constantly remind myself to ask effective concept check questions to get a precise and relevant answer.

Conclusion

To achieve an effective teaching, it needs an effective lesson plan. It is not only to have an idea of the lesson steps but to have a detailed written plan. I find it is extremely time consuming to prepare all the lesson materials and also to write down all the detail steps, the aim, the rational for the tasks, the analysis on the language structures. It is clear that the better the lesson plan is written, the better I can deliver a lesson. With a careful planning, I was able to give a better and more effective lesson on the following session.

Based on *The Art of Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages* (1880), the search of teaching methods has begun around 1880. However, it has been pointed out that teaching methods are too prescriptive, assuming too much about a context before the context has even been identified. Also, the methods are quite distinctive at the early stages of a language course but not at later stages. David Nunan (1991) concludes that there never was and probably never will be a method for all. It is terrifying but a hard truth. That means to prevent from doing the same activities over and over again, teachers need to constantly create new

activities or present a same topic in a different form. No matter how a lesson is delivered, students should feel like engaging themselves with the learning, the activities and enjoy the learning process, and the most important thing is to achieve the lesson aim.

Action plan

Like it is mentioned previously, no matter how enthusiastic and passionate teachers are when they just start their teaching career, the teaching methods tend to settle later on. Some teachers might be ok with using the same teaching approaches, but it could diminish students' learning willing and interest. Besides, under the educational guideline, teachers are encouraged to improve their teachings skills by participating in CPD frequently. In particular, the learning is not limited to 2D dimension on the paper, but also through songs, videos, art crafts, cooking, computer games and so on. Unfortunately, there are not often CPD related to my subjects accessible in my area. Nevertheless, there are many language teachers sharing their teaching ideas online. Moreover, there have been more and more language teaching resources created and available online as well so even if I can not come up with an original lesson plan, I can always go online and look for some ideas. I can also observe other teachers' lessons or join some CPD seminars to improve my teaching skills.

As many of us now have experienced a year long of distant teaching and learning and I believe many people have accepted the idea of online learning and perhaps have enjoyed learning online. Apart from developing my classroom teaching skills, I believe it is essential to keep on developing my online teaching skills as well. There are numerous online teaching platform and language teaching and learning apps that I can explore. There have been many more teaching online forums emerging in the past year that I can participate from time to time.

Online classroom management and differentiation are tricky skills that I would like to develop. It is not easy to manage a normal classroom with different behaviours and different learning skills and abilities. I have managed to use breakout room and teaching assistants to help with the pair practice. However, having different ability students, time control is quite tricky. Also is it possible to engage students with learning difficult through webcam? There are many teaching and learning issues with online learning that I wish to learn about. I am hoping that I can develop effective online teaching and learning skills for all types of students in the long run.

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Cambridge CELTA – First TP feedback

Observer: Jen
Welsh

Date: 5.10.18

Name: Nonie Bowen

Time: 30mins

Level: Int

Number of learners: ~~12~~ 13

Start Time: 1pm

Preparation

Very well prepared lesson plan and materials ✓✓
Variety of activities ✓✓

Use of the Board

You've used both boards well but think about
your use of capital letters.

lovely vocab activity w/mini flashcards.

Good things

Good discussion activity + use of plate with pictures
of food.

Nice eliciting examples, vocab activity

Good control of the class.

To consider

How you pair students for discussion activities

Giving a demonstration when you set a task!

Avoid asking "Do you understand?"

General Comment (if necessary)

Timings when
setting up
a task



Name: Nonie Bowen

Observer: Jen Weltri

TP Number & Date: 10/10/18

Time: 30mins

Level: Intermediate

Number of learners: 16

Start Time: 2:30pm.

Lesson Plan

N/A for TP2.

Main & Subsidiary Aims	
Stage Aims (ie Rationale for each stage)	
Skills Analysis	
Language Analysis (M/F/P)	
Staging (ie Logical progression of lesson stages)	
Other	

Lesson Plan: To standard / Not to standard (delete as appropriate)

Running Commentary

Stages/Activities	Positives	Suggestions / Points to Remember
2:30 Reorganise group.	lovely prompt start ✓✓. Great you recap vocab and get info from learners ✓✓ Nice to move learners around based on their birth order.	Think about your lang. "last child" → "youngest child"
2:34 Visual prompt	You've provided the book title and asked to discuss. Good that you use this time to prep. your whiteboard.	→ Some guided questions might be helpful here. Could a time limit be useful? No feedback for this task?
2:38 vocab pre-teach	You've selected words, and attempt to drill pron.	You want the meanings → could they be prepped in advance? Could the meanings be written up for Ss?
2:41 Listening for gist	Worksheet is checked and not given out until the instruction is given ✓✓	

Stages/Activities	Positives	Suggestions / Points to Remember
	Concept check attempted "What are you doing?" Worksheet now handed out ✓✓	→ Guided q's will help eg: Are you listening? Will you write? What will you write? Avoid asking "do you understand?"
2:44pm listening	Learners all focused ✓✓	
2:47 pm. Listen for detail		No feedback? They need feedback so they know what to focus on with the detailed listening task.
	Instruction ✓	→ Concept checked?
2:50pm.	Good pausing for ss to make notes ✓✓	
2:53pm. Feedback in groups.	Instruction given → Monitoring ✓	Needs concept checking

Stages/Activities	Positives	Suggestions / Points to Remember
2:55pm. Class feedback	You've displayed answers	Why are you doing feedback for the first task now? When you do feedback like this, you could stop to check meanings of some vocab, maybe through synonyms.
2:57pm	Detailed feedback elicited ✓✓ Praise given ✓✓	Don't forget to nominate!
2:59pm. Moving Ss for final discussion activity		You won't have time for this! It's a shame you haven't had time for feedback.

Overall comment

Strengths:

- Well prepared materials and powerpoint ✓
- You attempt to concept check ✓
- Some good classroom management.
- Lovely use of praise and encouraging nature.

Consider:

- Getting feedback from learners after tasks
- Nominating when getting feedback.
- Ways to refine your concept check questions

Performance descriptors for this stage of the course:

Examples

- Planning: You are starting to plan effectively with guidance
- Language and skills: You delivered a satisfactory skills lesson and used different classroom techniques with a degree of success.
- Awareness of learners: You showed some awareness of learners and some ability to respond to their needs.
- Reflection: You were able to reflect on some key strengths and weaknesses and this is starting to develop and inform your teaching skills.

Grading: To standard / Not to standard (delete as appropriate)

Tutor Observation Report 1

This is an observation on our CELTA tutors' lesson.

All three of my tutors are great in different teaching approaches. The common thing that all of them possess is the confidence in teaching and in class management. It looks very easy for them to pair / group the students and swap them around without any fuss. Also, they could manage the disruption from students. Effective classroom management leads to effective teaching and learning. There would be less time wasted during activities. In addition, with effective classroom management, it puts disrupting students under control and the teacher regain their attention. Although class management in the higher education is not a big issue compared with it in the primary and the secondary education. On the other hand, one of the main aims of a language subject is to ensure the students develop the skill to communicate verbally. It means inevitably students are required to participate in group discussion. Often, we find when we group students from same countries, they tend to be chatting in their common languages instead of the target language once they have contributed a little in their discussion in the target language. Therefore, it is essential for the teachers to keep that in mind when grouping students, monitor students' activity progress and swiftly swap them around or move on to the next topic.

The activities that they did, there were paper based activities, and also drill, role play and discussion. They did use pictures and film clips to support the activities. Though they did not use any apps to help with any activities. However, they did tell us there are apps available for interactive activities. Even though they did not use any computer apps to form any games, their paper based activities and speaking activities did not bore students. They put papers with phrases or sentences on different tables or up on the walls, students had to walk around in pair or groups to find the answers or form conversations. The activities were not for speaking purpose only but also for practising grammar structures, tense and story orders. It proves that game apps can increase the fun in learning, without it, teachers can still create something fun for students to engage in learning.

They also demonstrated different techniques in error correction. It is common for the teachers to point out the errors that the students made. Error correction could be done simultaneously or after each task. It can be given verbally. Though the tutors encouraged us to put them on the board as a visual aid. On the contrary to teacher does the error correction, it can also be done by the students as peer correction. Teachers do not always have to give the answers or the explanations if the students can figure out the mistakes on their own and feedback to the class. It helps with students' autonomous learning and believed to be more effective than traditional teacher talking teaching approach.

Parliament Visit

21 Oct. 17

The visit to the parliament was very insightful! Apart from the tour through the houses of lord, houses of common and monarch which form the parliament, we had a chance to discuss about the fundamental British values. Ofsted advocates fundamental British values as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith (Citizenship Foundation, 2017). The British value is promoted in schools to assure young people are prepared for life in modern Britain after leaving school (The Department for Education, 2014). The purpose of promoting Fundamental British values are to put these standards in order on student welfare to enhance safeguarding and the standards on spiritual (the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, 2011).

At first, I thought it was not relevant with my subject and it did not seem possible to promote these values in my lessons. However, we were explained that we could embed these values while discussing about the differences between various cultural values, and the strengths, merit and demerit of democracy. It is also vital to ensure that all pupils understand their rights and practice democratic procedures such as students voting for school council members or maybe as small as electing a class leader. All students must be heard within the school and must be given the chance to learn how to debate on different opinions.

Apart from exercising the right of every individual's, students are encouraged to respect everyone including all faiths, races and cultures. As from my subject point of view, it is only naturally that students learn to understand that all races are equal, all faiths have equal right to exist and all cultures can be different. After all I am teaching a totally different language which is one of the most spoken languages across different countries, different governing parties and different mentalities. In order to truly master the language, students need to understand all those cultural backgrounds. Although some may argue that people might not be able to accept all views of others, all people need to obey the law while living in England. Therefore, we need to learn to tolerate different opinions. In addition, all school are required to support the rule of English civil and criminal law, and not to teach anything would sabotage it. On the other hand, schools need to make parents aware of the school policy and students need to be informed the differences between the law of the country and religious law. Also, students should be encouraged to run activities which can promote fundamental British values. Ofsted insists that schools should not fear for advocating British values because children are being brought up in environments which are actively hostile to them (Ofsted, 2017). As Ofsted claims that the education system is playing a vital role in inculcating and upholding these British values, it is my responsibility to spread these British values in my lessons so students can be more resilient and have more respect to the others with different opinions and faiths.

Reference

Citizenship Foundation, 2017; Schools must promote British values, says UK Government

Departmental advice for maintained schools, 2014; Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools

Ofsted, 2017; Press Association: Schools should not be afraid to promote British values

Meet the Learning Needs

The whole learning cycle involves the identification of learning needs, Planning learning to meet needs, training in accordance with learning plan, monitoring/reviewing progress/evaluating training. All learners are supposed to have an initial assessment, perhaps over a period of time in some cases. The initial assessment is vital because it is set to collect a wide range of information about the learners before the education starts. Base on the result of the initial assessment, the education provider can identify what the learners' levels of a certain subject or programme are and the support they need. With that information, the learners can be placed in the right level class or a suitable career related programme which matches their skills, knowledge and abilities, and receive the individual learning support identified as in need based on the assessment. It also means the teaching staff will not waste time figuring out what the learners already know, or their potentials are and what they need to develop or improve. Moreover, they can develop an efficient and effective learning plan, and take an action right away to educate and support the learners.

It is suggested that the providers have the responsibilities to conduct the initial assessment of their learners. The organisations and agencies which the provider works with, including employers can also provide relevant information regarding learners' learning and support needs. Not every learner would have the same initial assessment method. It is important for the provider to decide the most appropriate assessment method for each learner. It is also emphasized that the learners should comprehend the importance of this initial assessment process and work with the educators completely in developing their learning plans. Thus, they don't feel like it's been done to them rather than with them, and they'd be more positive in learning and know the support is there.

The learner plan should include the details of the training and the support that every learner will be given so the learner knows how to achieve their objectives and complete their learning programme. However, without the provider providing teaching or training staff with a wide range of skills and knowledge, the initial assessment and the learning plan will not be effective. The competence of the teaching/ training staff is the key to the effective learning. The staff have to have the knowledge and understanding of the purpose of initial assessment, appropriate initial assessment methods to identify learning and support needs of the learners and collect information, the learning programmes their organisation has and the other providers in the market have for the best interest of the learners, interviewing and questioning techniques if needed to prepare the learners for a job interview in the future, positive feedback techniques and etc. Even though the staff should be competent in doing their jobs, the proper levels of support, advice and training on initial assessment and the production of individual learning plans should be provided by the organisation.

The organisation, the teaching /training staff and the learners, each has their own roles to ensure the initial assessment can have an effective result and provide the information that is needed to create the learning plan for each individual learner. The initial assessment is vital for the beginning of each learning cycle. Without the assessment, what support does a learner need is unknown. Thus the learning plan which can effectively help the learners to complete their programme is hard to develop

and could be ineffective. Therefore, an effective assessment method which can collect useful information is very important in a learning cycle.

Phonics Visit

23 Oct. 17

The five skills taught in Jolly Phonics

1. Learning the letter sounds

Children are taught the 42 main letter sounds. This includes alphabet sounds as well as digraphs such as sh, th, ai and ue.

2. Learning letter formation

Using different multi-sensory methods, children learn how to form and write the letters.

3. Blending

Children are taught how to blend the sounds together to read and write new words.

4. Identifying the sounds in words (Segmenting)

Listening for the sounds in words gives children the best start for improving spelling.

5. Tricky words

Tricky words have irregular spellings and children learn these separately.

Phonics is one of the key points in learning a language. Children are very good with picking up the sounds as they are very good at mimicking what they hear. As for the learners in the higher education, they are more likely settled with the sounds that they know and have hard time to say the sound that they do not know, or they incline to keep quite when they encounter a sound that they are not familiar with or never heard of. To conquer this learning curve, group drilling is extremely helpful to soften the fear of making any sound that they never made before. Repetition of practice in different format would keep students' engagement and keep the activity interesting as well.

Learning letter formation is not only important for Latin originated languages but also for Chinese language. Many Chinese words were formed by the shapes of objects and animals. By identifying those words, it helps to know the meanings involved. Training students to identify the formation of the words, is like to identify what kind of Lego pieces are used on a creation. In my teaching experience, it improves students' learning progress every time a student can identify the parts of a Chinese Character /word.

Learning a language, it includes learning to listen, speak, to read and to write the words. Listening and speaking go together hand in hand. You can not learn one without the other. Some may think they only want to be able to speak and understand what the others say. However, without being able to read, it is hard to say one really knows the language because there are words with same pronunciation but completely different meanings. Also, writing practice helps with reading skills. Some may still have trouble telling the meaning or the sound of the words even though they were able to write the words. Hence, all 4 skills should be blended in the lesson.

There are always words with identical or similar sound, or similar spelling. They may be confusing to the learners but the trick to learn them well is to learn them together. Learning their similarities and differences is the key to success.