Leonard Zeng Selected Daily Reflection

Day 1 Reflections, June 29 Leonard Zeng

The key concepts that we learned today are 5Cs, backward design and Lingua Folio.

How to implement 5.1 In schools setting, we have one day opportunity to promote Chinese language program in 5th grade students. Chinese teacher was able to bring several six grade students to share their Chinese language learning experiences with 5th grade students, which include the websites of their voki.com project and the stories they created by using toondoo.com. In addition, they taught 5th grade students how to write Chinese characters. Our 6th grade students shared their knowledge of Chinese language and culture with younger students who may be learn Chinese next year. The output is great, we have more students registered Chinese language program and we empowered our students. Another good practice is to ask our students to teach their parents a few Chinese characters and several sentences and report their parents learning Chinese experience in Chinese class. Both in school and outside school setting, we used livemocha.com to teach students online chat with Chinese language native speakers. This activity is suitable for all level students, in order to assist our student practice online communication, we prepared the most common used chatting script, and practiced the script in the class. Some students are able to chat with native speakers for more than one hour after school. Meanwhile, we advised our students to avoid possible negative sides online chatting.

About backward design

 I learned backward design philosophy about three years ago. The principal is top-down approach. The typical example to illustrate this approach is the dinner preparation of Chinese new-year. We have desired outcome in our mind and implement the detail. However, I haven't applied backward design principal in my daily less plan. I was so busy with the design of daily student-centered activities, but didn't build connection between the daily learning activities with overall students language proficiency. After today's less, I will be able to apply the backward design to my daily lesson plan.

Day 2 Reflections June 30 Leonard Zeng

Effective use technologies as communicative tools

I have used a lot of technologies in teaching Chinese. The technology is double edged sword, it can be used as a good communicative tools, which assists students to implement collaborative tasks. It can also used as teacher-fronted presentation tools. Overuse or improper use of technology can result in frustration, less effective teaching and learning. It is totally depend on how to use it and who use it.

Palm mobile devices are very good tools to engage in students in teaching and learning Chinese, it can also build the connection between the teachers and students. If we compare using palm mobile devices with using the laptop or desk computers, it is very light and portable, a teacher can easily carry twenty to thirty palm mobile devices, and travel among different classroom. It is ideal for many language teachers who have to teach in multiply schools and classrooms. It takes students a few second to turn it on, and begin to input Chinese, it is as fast as using pens or pencils to write Chinese. Students do not need to save and shut down palm when they finish their tasks, since the palm mobile devices depend on its internal memory to save its works. Instead of forbidding the students bring the mobile device to school, schools can use the palm mobile devices teach Chinese in teachable movement effectively.

There are two ways to use palm mobile devices as follows:

1. To use palm mobile devices as mechanical drills tool, in other words, to use palm mobile devices as an input tool to practice type Chinese characters, pinyin and read Chinese characters.
2. To use palm mobile device carry out the meaningful and communicative drills. For instance, we can use palm to interview the language pairs' daily schedule.

Day 3
I have attended many professional development workshops in the past few years while teaching in K-12 public schools. The UVA Academy is the best! The program is so organized, well-planned, effectively-delivered, and successfully-implemented. I can't wait to bring the sprit, skills, and best practices I learned in the Academy to our classroom.
The sessions I like most is the teaching modeling conducted by Dr Tseng. Dr. Tseng showed us how to teach a total immersion lesson by using her local dialogue. The lesson includes the key techniques, such as how TPR, elicit students to produce complete sentence, question skills, the interchange between teacher-fronted and learner-centered activities.　The strategies we learned can be directly applied to our Chinese language class.

Day4

How to use camcorder effectively: One of student-centered projects is to use MS Movie Maker or Mac IMovie to produce program about their family, friends and school, etc. The teachers of our UVA Startalk 2010 and previous year Startalk program have to use camcorder to record, transfer and format their teacher demo to either movie-maker or iMovie readable format. Most language teachers are not comfortable to use the technology, as a result, we spend much more time to produce presentable movies. Following tips may helps:

1. Make sure you have installed right program and drive. The CDs, which include program and drive, normally come with camcorder, the drive will enable your computer and your camcorder can "talk", transfer the your video and audio file from your camcorder to your computer via USB cable.

2. Your program will enable your save or export the file into Movie Maker readable format.

Another solution is to buy a easy to use camcorder, which cost you less than $100, and transfer files from your camcorder to computer in right format without conversion file type. The disadvantages are quality of movie is not high end professional quality and hard disk space may limit to one hour shooting.

3. Prepare and test the your camcorder will save your precious time in the program!