

June 26

Choose one to two chapters that are of most interest to you from the following book. If you are not familiar with 5 national standards or communicative activities, do choose these two chapters as your priority reading.

推動專業化的 AP 中文教學（大學二年級成功教學模式） by Miao-fen Tseng for assigned readings.

Write the following:

1. Summarize what inspires you the most, highlight the content, and write your reflections in relation to teaching.
2. Your reflections on what you have learned from today's workshop.

I selected Chapter Five - Communicative Teaching Strategies (1): Group Interactive Activities and Chapter Six – Communicative teaching Strategies (2): teacher-students classroom interactive activities to read, because communicative language teaching is a very big part of what we learned in today's lecture. I am familiar with the topics we have covered today; however, this is the first time someone made the 5C's so much easier for me to remember! Dr, Zeng also clearly defined a lot of the overly used but perhaps misunderstood concepts, like: teacher centered vs. learner centered; ask mechanical vs meaningful vs communicative questions. The discussion about the LinguaFolio and ACTFAL's OPI made it ever more clearly to me how I should set our objectives for all levels of our students. All this will help me become a better and more effective teacher. I will always remember: comprehensible input is not enough, comprehensible and productive output is what I will be work for!

To get what I want, I read chapter five and chapter six for some tools that I can use.

In Chapter Five, Dr. Zeng pointed out that small group work activities often generate more output than teacher-fronted activities. She then gives ten very useful tips to better conduct those activities (p151):

1. Only do small group activities after the students are ready to get the best result
2. Clearly state the activity goal and process (modeling, modeling, and modeling!)
3. Set the time duration before the activity
4. When divide groups, mix high performing students with low performing students and mix students with different culture background together to benefit everybody.
5. Make sure that the students have the ability to negotiate meanings. Expressions like: Sorry, I don't understand! How do you say... What did you just say? Please tell me... should be talk early on in novice level.
6. Be a good facilitator, walk around the class to provide feedback, correct errors and give help.

7. Make it very clear to the students that the only language used should be Chinese.
8. Some activities that take longer to finish should be completed after class.
9. Make sure the students listen carefully, ask questions to help correct the mistakes made by their peers.
10. Follow-up activities are just as important.

In my own teaching practice, I do a lot of group activities. I have suffered my fair share of failure because I failed to do tips #1 and #2. Also, I need to remind students about tip #9 more often. For all the sample activities, Dr. Zeng not only gives all the detailed steps but also point out some of the common mistakes some teachers make (guilty!), and gives valuable tips to ensure the activity to be more effective. I'm very eager to go back to my own classroom to use some of the activities and to create new activities with all the valuable tips in mind.

June 27

Read Epilogue: Implications for Teaching selected from *Input to Output: A Teacher's Guide to Second Language Acquisition*, by Van Patten, 2002.

Write the following:

- 1) 1/2 commentary & what inspires you and reshapes your teaching philosophy;
- 2) your daily reflections on today's workshop training.

Follow the steps to find the article through online UVaCollab (or hard copies in your packet):

Resources->Teaching program materials-> academics-> second language acquisition

I thought I have already known about "comprehensible input" until I read the Epilogue: Implications for Teaching selected from *Input to Output: A Teacher's Guide to Second Language Acquisition*, by Van Patten, 2002. This article discussed five implications of SLA research for the development of L2 curricula.

In my own practice, I am aware of all the implications. However, after the reading I realize how much more I can do.

I am very inspired by the examples showing how to introduce new vocabulary. Sure, I use target language; sure, I use pictures, gestures and facial expressions. But the family example went further. By using her own family as example and by repeatedly quizzing the students, the teacher was able to not only introduce vocabulary meaningfully, but also better engage the students.

The example about bilingual and bicultural makes me think about how teacher-student interaction should be conducted so it allows them to focus on meaning and produce level-appropriate output; at the same time engage them in higher level thinking thus encourage them to actively participate.

I am most interested in the example of a sequence of tasks that requires a lot of interactions between students that focus on meaning and foster language acquisition. We have also seen examples in our workshop. One big task on my to-do list will be creating some multi-step tasks to implement for the next school year.

As to the workshop, it is another very fruitful day!

What I appreciate most is the way Dr. Tseng extracts and organizes information about second language acquisition that are most useful to us language instructors and put them together like a puzzle so it all make sense to me! I am also very appreciative of the readings she assigned us to read, which are not only very helpful for my professional development, but also always relevant to what I have learned in the workshop for the day, so I gain deeper insights of the topics.

I have heard comprehensible input everywhere I have been, but the UVa STARTALK 2012 is the first place where comprehensible and productive output is greatly emphasized, which I'm truly convinced is crucial to students successfully acquiring a foreign language! When I get back, I will work harder to design better task-based activities so my students will be able to generate more comprehensible output.

June 28

Read “如何观摩课堂教学学习教学技巧,” by Hsin-hsin Liang.”

Look for the article in the packet (or online UVaCollab)

Please keep the concepts and principles in mind while observing classes and preparing teaching practicum.

Write the following:

1. 1/2 page of commentary on this article along with your daily reflections
2. Your reflections on the content of today's workshop.

Just like Hsin-hsin Liang stated in this article, “to many teacher trainees and inexperienced teachers, the classroom observation process is too overwhelming to figure out where to begin.” I felt exactly the same way until I read this article. I have done my share of classroom observations, but I have always felt overwhelmed as to what to observe, most of the time I just get a feel of the class, and may notice something interesting that the teacher did. This article suggested five aspects of a particular classroom observation and what to observe, which is very interesting and helpful for me before I start my practicum next week. I am very excited about this opportunity to learn from all the wonderful teachers from all over the country, this article will make surely make my observation more fruitful.

One suggestion that is especially interesting to me is to find out what content the teacher is going to teach before the class, and plan a lesson as if I were to teach it. Then when observing the class, I then can compare the how the teacher teaches and how I would teach to gain more insight for

the observation. What a great suggestion! I will definitely put it into action for all my observations here at the UVa STARTALK program and when I get back.

Another suggestion stands out is after the observation, besides expressing gratitude, one should make an appointment with the teacher to give some feedback. I am not sure if it is presumptuous for me to do this with every teacher I have observed. My own experience is: some teachers ask for feedback, some don't really care. Should I only meet with the teachers who ask?

The most exciting thing about today's workshop on Brains and Second Language Acquisition by Dr. Ruth Ferree was I got to be so close to a human brain! The analogy between brains and UPC bar codes was both fascinating and effective for me to understand how brain works. Dr. Ferree also demonstrated some of her great teaching techniques. The researches on Brains and SLA acquisition completely support all the theories and strategies we have covered in the workshops from the previous two days, made the case of implementing the six STARTALK Instructional Principles all the more powerful.

Then I was fortunate enough to see the six principles in action when I observed Xu Laoshi and Zhong Laoshi's demo teaching. They stayed in target language throughout, used a lot of comprehensible input with the help of pictures, realias, ppts and clear hand gestures and body languages. They designed interesting student-centered activities to help students learn the language and check students' understanding. There were also minor issues that serve as a reminder for us to pay attention to giving clear instruction to the students and not overwhelming them with too much information. Another day of rich learning!

July 4

Reflect upon your experiences in your first teaching practicum in one or all of three phases: pre-practicum, during-practicum, and after-practicum.

The first teaching practicum was very painful but fruitful for me.

Pre-practicum: It was very painful, because it was a real struggle for me. I knew we would be teaching beginners, but somehow, in my head, I was still aiming at students in a regular program when it came to designing my first lesson plan. My team did not realize how much collaboration this type of practicum requires. We did not divide the objectives and contents each one of us should cover very evenly. I also failed to realize that I should have gone through my lesson plan with 许老师 or 钟老师 prior to us presenting our lesson plan the day before we had to teach. I worked very hard in my room for days, but produced teaching materials that were not suitable for the students I would be teaching. I was devastated the night before the practicum. I wanted to quit! But I am really glad I stayed. I would have missed all the growth I gained from this experience. I would also have disappointed Dr. Tseng, who picked me from a lot of excellent candidates. I am very grateful to 许老师. It was her help, encouragement and support that gave me strength during my darkest moment.

During-practicum: I ended up teaching part of the class with PowerPoints I had not seen before the start of the class. I had to improvise with the help of 许老师 and my team mates to pull off

the first practicum. Although it was not a total disaster, and the students also produced output, it was not what I planned.

After practicum: I reflected on what happened, and realized that this program is set up in a way that was ideal for me to improve my scaffolding skills and learn how to teach effectively. In order to teach students who have no prior exposure to Chinese so much language in such short time successfully, one needs to improve those skills in a hurry and see it at work instantly. I am very grateful for this opportunity to improve my teaching. I have also learned so much from observing so many skilled teachers in action, which is such a rare opportunity. That is the reason I say it was also fruitful.

July 6

Reflect upon your experiences in your second teaching practicum in one or all of three phases: pre-practicum, during-practicum, and after-practicum.

The second teaching practicum went a lot more smoothly!

Pre-practicum: My team learned a lot from our first practicum and discussed and collaborated through the whole process. We divided the objectives and contents each one of us should cover very thoughtfully, and brainstormed and worked together as much as we could. We also ran through our lesson plans with each other several times, and gave each other helpful feedback and suggestions. At the presentation the day prior to the second practicum, I listened very carefully to the feedback that Dr. Tseng and other teachers had given me and made corrections that evening. Then like my team mates, I ran through my lesson plans with 许老师 and made changes according to her suggestion. I worked very hard on scaffolding procedures and make the lesson flow smoothly so everything makes sense to the students.

During-practicum: I used realia, ppt and gestures to achieve my lesson objectives. I paid attention to scaffolding and communicative activities to improve students' comprehensible output. I had a lot of fun acting out to help students' comprehension. Using realia to teach is very effective, because students get to hear, see, feel and speak, multiple senses are all involved. The overall objectives were achieved.

After practicum: I got positive feedback from Dr. Tseng, Tsu Laoshi and my fellow teacher trainees, which restored my confidence and inspired me to continue to challenge myself to do better. Hsu Laoshi pointed out that I need to make sure that students get enough practice to have a good control of the statements before I make them ask questions, so this will be one of the main areas I will work on for my next practicum. I will continue to work hard on improving my scaffolding skills and aim at achieving lesson objectives.

July 10

Reflect upon your experiences in your third teaching practicum in one or all of three phases: pre-practicum, during-practicum, and after-practicum.

The third teaching practicum was another good experience!

Pre-practicum: This time, we have horizontal cooperation as well as vertical cooperation. Two teams that would teach the same materials to two classes sat down and brainstormed together and came up with a lot of ideas, so all three sections gathered more than enough activities to make our lessons fun and effective. Then we had horizontal cooperation. I teach session 2 to Changcheng class, and Hung Laoshi teaches session 2 to Gugong class, so we worked together very effectively. The day before the 3rd practicum, we presented to the class, I took advises from Dr. Tseng and everybody, made changes, then ran the lesson over with my team and Zhong Laoshi, made more changes to make sure my lesson will be as good as possible. I was determined to further improve my scaffolding skills especially in the question and answer area.

During-practicum: I used realia (clothes), ppt and gestures to achieve my lesson objectives. I paid attention to scaffolding and how I lead students to correctly answer more complicated questions I threw at them. I think I achieved my objectives in this aspect. But I eventually ran out of time, so the last quarter of the lesson was a bit hurried. I ended with an activity called "Celebrity Stylists" where the students had to glue the cutouts of clothing items on celebrities and color the outfit, then report to the class, the students really enjoyed this activity, they continued to work on their project even the class was over

After practicum: I got both Dr. Tseng and Zhong Laoshi's praises and encouragements, which meant a lot to me, because I know in my heart, that I made a lot of progress in my professional development. My hard work paid off! I am extremely grateful to this program! I know I still have a lot of growth to do, but I am definitely leaving the University of Virginia a more confident and effective teacher.