

Selected Daily Reflections

6/29/2010

Today is a very productive and refreshing day for me. There are lots of concepts and theories that I had learned and heard in the past but still not very proficient or mastering yet, such as National Standards and three communicative modes, ACTFL's Proficiency Guidelines and OPI. After today's systematically review and thorough explanation, those concepts become more apparent in my mind. In addition, I learn several new concepts today, such as backward design and LinguaFolio. K-12 Performance Guidelines also provide me a very good guideline to assess the students' performance. I especially like the (interactive) exercises in the class which allow me to evaluate whether the knowledge and information that I learned in the class are mastered.

06/30/2010

I was afraid the jet lag had got me in my second day, but I am really grateful that the long-term effects of those two cups of coffee which kept me awake the entire evening last night. I thought the moment Dr. Tseng started the lecture, I will certainly fell asleep. Unexpectedly, I am still very alert at this time (5:30 p.m.). I even told other teachers that I can survive for another night without sleep.

Today's classroom was as fruitful as yesterday. We were taught the Theories and Approaches in Second Language Teaching. This is the first time for me to learn all those theories and approaches of foreign language teaching systemically. Professor Tseng explained the development of the system clearly and vividly with clips and insertion of a lot of the examples for discussions. As Professor Tseng said, as a professional Chinese language teacher, it will be very embarrassed if we don't even know these professional terms, such as GLM, ALM, CLT, CA, NA, CLL, CBI, TBLT.

In addition, I especially like the classroom interactive discussion section by listening other teachers' professional experience which gives me a lot teaching inspiration. I have been very questionable about the immersion Chinese at the novice level which a lot of teachers confirm that it is possible. We also agree that it is necessary to enable the correction pronunciation during instruction the class. We also learn the best way to provide the corrective feedback. I cannot say all that knowledge I learned today has been all absorbed and digested or can be immediately applied to teaching, but at least this is a great start by learning those theories which can lead me to be very successful in the future.

I think the main reason that my little sleepy caterpillar did not dare bothering me was because today's content was really very useful. If I fell asleep, I will be sorry to myself and Dr. Tseng.

Today, I also have another fantasy hypothesis. During our open ceremony, we were told that one of the teachers is a return student to this Startalk program because of his expertise in technology. My fantasy is that do you think Dr. Tseng could count my awareness for over 24 hours as an expertise and let me come back and participate Startalk program again next year? Ha ...ha.....ha.....

07/01/2010

“LOVE IS CONTENTIOUS” - - - by Jia-pei (Betty) Hou

There is no doubt that the level of the water in my cup has raised a lot after last three days of intensive training. Dr. Ferree’s lecture was very educated, informative and interesting. We all enjoyed her lecture very much and learned a lot of anatomy about our brain. However, there was one the most important thing I would like to share with all of you. No matter how much knowledge I learned from the last few days, this important thing was very valuable for me so far and will last for my life.

I was the last group to leave the classroom today with Hou Laoshi. It was eight o’clock in the evening and we didn’t need to walk all the way back to hotel. Zhang Xiaojin Laoshi drove to the classroom and gave us a free ride back to the hotel (THANK YOU ZHANG LAOSHI). While Hou Laoshi and I were waiting for Zhang Laoshi’s minivan, Hou Laoshi was graceful to everyone’s warm hearts to her. She shared her wonderful experience with her ex-classmates in 2007 AP training at Beijing. Her sweet smiling told me that everyone who attended the 2007 AP Beijing training loved her very much and their graceful loves would last with Hou Laoshi forever. When Hou Laoshi asked me about my 2007 AP training experience at Shanghai, I was speechless for at least 10 seconds. We did have some fun time in Shanghai but definitely not as much as this time around. I remembered most of time in the class we ended up with a lot of arguments and defense against each other. Everyone was so eager to show their point of views in the class. The atmosphere was completely different from now. There were so much fun and laughing in the class. We learned new knowledge; we shared experience; we cared about each other and we laughed into tears together as well.

I am so glad to be here with all other teachers, especially Hou Laoshi. I believe that she is the one who harmonized the class. She is the star who awakens our love, our love to her and to others. She is the peaceful angel who brings us the peace, generosity and love to others. I feel being loved and cared by all of you every day and every moment. I am sure after these three week’s training, my cup of water will be filled up with knowledge and friendship. Let’s be contentious among other’s with LOVE.

Thanks to Professor Tseng, Daphane, Shofei, Jia-pei, Zoe, Shannon, Li Xia, Diana, Pingping, Xiaojin, Gloria, Naichi, Grace, Lillian and Leonard.

07/02/2010

My home sickness is getting more and more vanished.....I feel guilty to my kids and husband.

I like today lecture. All the information and lecture that Dr. Tan delivered was very practical. How to effectively use the authentic materials in the class inspired me a lot. I liked the moment that every teacher was so generous and eager to share their information, experience and resources to others. This is the best meeting/conference that I have ever been. The longer I stay in this class, the poorer I feel about myself in technique, knowledge and theories.

Oh! No. My cup of water much leaks every day.....

<学海无涯，唯勤是岸> When I go home, I am going to push myself to pursue more and more knowledge about being a professional teacher.....

I am also very nervous, worried and excited about tomorrow's microteaching and next week practicum. I want to see if I can apply all those knowledge and technique in the class. I also want to hear all the comments 金石良言 from the other teachers. This is going to be a very valuable opportunity to have so many professional experienced teachers to audit my class.

07/08/2010

“三人行必有我师”-----Confucius

During Day 6 Lee Laoshi's demo lecture, I learned a lot from her. Her lecture was very smooth, immersive and knowledgeable. The part which impressed me most was her professionalism and skills in handling unexpected questions from the students. Also, she used a lot of authentic material; visualized teaching method and immersion to deliver the grammar and vocabulary which I could never do. Lee Laoshi was so good putting the theory of communicative approaching into the live show during her lecture.

On Day 8, it was my turn doing the practicum rehearsal. I felt so good about my preparation before standing in front of the class. At least, I thought I already tried my best to follow all the requirements and cover everything. When Lee Laoshi input her comments about my second slide of introducing family members is a meaningless mechanical vocabulary drill, I was very offended and couldn't understand her point at the very beginning. Later of the day, when I put away my ego and reconsidered Lee Laoshi's comment, I suddenly understood her point of view and totally agreed with her suggestions. Her suggestion not only just helped my next day practicum teaching, but I could also use as my guideline in the future when I prepare my teaching plan.

In the last five days, I learned a lot of practical teaching methods from all teachers. Everyone is an excellent teacher and there is always something that I can learn by watching the practicum rehearsal and actually teaching lecture. How to design and deliver a meaningful practical teaching flow for the class is the most valuable lecture that I learned from this STARTALK program.

07/14/2010

Today is the last day of the practicum. Finally we all made it. We finished one week of STARTALK intensive teacher training, following with two weeks of practicum. During the past three weeks, we stayed in the hotel lobby longer than we stayed in our room. Every night after seven in the evening, almost every teacher would come down to the lobby with computer, join the party of studying, discussion, and work on the project and doing homework. I was not the only one who worked until 4:30 am. We all knew the time when the hotel start serving the breakfast (at 2 am). Sometimes, the hotel breakfast became our midnight snack. Although we only slept few hours, we never thought of skipping a minute of the class. We worked hours

after hours but never felt tired.

The only reason we did not complain about this STARTALK program is because this is the best program we had ever attended. Everyone learned a lot of knowledge and ideas from the lecture, practicum, reinforcement, and consolidation section. All the knowledge we learned is not limited only at the theoretical level. That knowledge is very practical and we can use the training immediately in our daily teaching curriculum. All teachers are very generous in sharing their teaching experiences, their teaching resources and technologies. This kind of generous sharing within the same is very rare for Chinese culture. Such phenomenon is exhibited by its characters and the success of this project.

I sincerely thanks to Dr. Tseng, JJ, Daphane, all the teachers and our two assistants. This is a very fruitful and success program. The sharing part from every teacher was great and influential. I will never forget such valuable experiences and hopefully everybody is going to progress their techniques of teaching and the students are beneficial from us. Wish everyone good luck and see you all in the future.