

Reinforced understanding of pedagogy

The first week online training session has solidified my understanding of ACTFL 5Cs guidelines and three modes of communication. In my previous teaching, interpersonal and presentational modes are most commonly adopted. After the sessions this week, I was very much inspired by the examples of interpretive mode from the provided readings and PowerPoint. In addition, the relationship among the three modes and the design concept combining three modes and 5Cs are reinforced during the online sessions by discussing about teaching video samples.

Another component that inspired me very much is target language and comprehensible input. According to Van Patten (2002), there are five essential principles: The more meaning-based class, the better; the more interaction, the better; all learner production should be meaning-based, or communicative; focus on form should be meaning-based and tied to input or communication; and we should watch out for what we expect of learners. It was more productive to observe the teaching videos and reflect after learning about the principles. For instance, how to make class more interactive? Besides one-to-one interpersonal communication, challenging the thinking of students is very effective. In the examples, teachers lead students to think, organize their own thoughts, analyze their ideas, encourage students to exchange or compare the information, and students make conclusion at the end. The scaffolding procedure is very clear and organized. The effectiveness of this approach is demonstrated through students' sophisticated output.

Moreover, the principles we discussed about can be connected to my previous teaching practice and it is clearer to see where the improvements can be done when theory is brought into practice. Theoretically, I understood that foreign language teaching should focus on meaning rather than form. However, sometimes I failed to deliver my class in a completely communicative format because the grammar patterns took over the center place in the teaching. In the future teaching, I would like to emphasize on spontaneous use of language and create natural conversation with students where forms are embedded in.

I look forward to learning more online applications and tools next week and bringing the teaching principles and theories to online classroom!

Van Patten, B. (2002). *From Input to Output: A Teacher's guide to Second Language Acquisition*. McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages.

Eye-opening technology session

The training sessions in week 2 introduced some crucial concepts in both face-to-face and online teaching.

First of all, every instruction or activity should be purposeful. This idea echoes the concept of meaningful and communicative instruction in week 1. We have learned that a screen crammed with texts and pictures will make students feel lost and overwhelmed. Therefore, the design of the presentation needs to be clearly target-oriented. Students should feel easy and comfortable to understand the task goal and start to complete the task. This is extremely important in online teaching because the way of presentation is the only media for students to understand the task requirements. In face-to-face teaching, I am used to make animations to introduce prompts. I think I need to adjust the way of organizing PowerPoint in online teaching so the presentation is clear and concise.

Secondly, there is no perfect learning tool. Effective features are just like double-edged sword, which offers both good and bad consequences. For example, screen sharing is very convenient for teacher to present the content but it might turn the class into a one-directional communication that prohibits students' participation. Drawing feature is very interactive but it might create chaos without appropriate instructions. The appropriate instructions come from a clear purpose. Therefore, I need to prepare clearer instructions of activities for students in online teaching.

Upon my personal practice using WizIQ with my partner, we have experienced excitement at the beginning, frustration when we encountered technical difficulties, and feeling of achievement after the difficulties were resolved. At first when I watched the online teaching samples, learning tools like WizIQ seems like a perfect elixir to me. It can provide so many functions and playing with it didn't look difficult at all. However, learning by doing, I deeply realize that it is the design and instruction that plays the key role in the class delivery, not the platform. Teachers cannot completely rely on technology to create a successful class. It always comes back to the core principles of teaching like student-centered and performance-based design.

WizIQ will be a very effective tool to support teaching three communicative modes in online learning environment. Teachers can upload files or embed online video links in the content. This offers great input opportunities so that students can learn through interpretive mode. The video and audio functions, as well as drawing and whiteboard features create chances for teachers and students, students and students, to make interpersonal communication. Presentational mode can also be achieved in WizIQ as wrap-up activities. Students should be able to accomplish presentational tasks after the solid practice of interpersonal and interpretive modes.

Start the journey

This weekend has been so productive!!! Starting from Friday afternoon, Group 1 where I belong to began to discuss about the Day 1 preparation. Teamwork is a very interesting process. It wasn't formed immediately at the beginning, but after a while when we discussed in a democratic manner. Everyone talked about her own thoughts and contributed to the formation of teamwork. The lead teacher, Lin laoshi and Dr. Tseng left us enough freedom and room to make our choices and decisions but also advised at right moments. Three small groups were formed and in charge of different tasks: first half of text, second half of text, and wrap-up activities.

Shi Ai laoshi and I were the third group to design wrap-up activities. Our goal was to integrate as many skills, vocabulary and grammar patterns in the authentic scenario as possible. We designed three activities: talking about Mr. Bean's experience on the flight, role-play of him reporting lost luggage to police officer, and role-play of him making phone call to his parents to describe the first day experience. These activities are arranged in chronological order and under the same theme.

We thought they were "perfect" and were very satisfied with them. So naïve...☺ The rehearsal and critique part on Saturday afternoon made us realize where the problems were. This session was very beneficial. First of all, demonstrating the activities in front of all teachers made me nervous, but it will help real teaching on Monday go smoothly. Secondly, outsider's perspective is very valuable. For example, we didn't realize that Mr. Bean's parents didn't speak Chinese so the role-play scenario didn't make sense. We also learned that the character selection needs to fit learner's interest. Mr. Bean is too old for high school students; moreover, assigned character doesn't provide opportunities for students to talk about their own experience. The revised version after the critique is closer to "perfect" state but I have known that there is no perfect PowerPoint. It needs revision for different learners anyway.

The collaboration in our big group is much better and more efficient now. We discuss about can-do statements first then design the class in backward order. Each small group will look at other groups' design and make sure the transition go smooth. I believe that next class preparation will be more successful than the first one.

First day accomplished

This week I completed my first online teaching class! I spent a lot of time preparing it and thought about many possible scenarios that might happen. Even though there was plenty of preparation work, I was still nervous on Monday morning. The counting down in WiziQ just made things worse. One of my students in the first session had audio difficulties when she was called on tasks. It turned out that she pretended that audio didn't work. There are two possible reasons: she is not confident in her speaking and listening skills; or she is not used to communicative teaching and learning mode. While she was trying to solve "audio connection" problem, I had to continue the class with the other student. The other student's proficiency level exceeded my expectation a lot. He completed all the tasks and carried on the conversation in a very comfortable and relaxing manner. The second session went very well too. There was a touching moment when two students spontaneously started the conversation on their own without any instructions. I felt very proud of them because their initiative broke the interaction barrier in online learning mode. Online teaching could be very intimate and interactive too!

The preparation work of online teaching is way more than face-to-face because the PowerPoint and the delivering platform is the only medium that learning is based on. Instructors need to create real-life context through PowerPoint with images and text. How to reflect the context accurately and present the content effectively? I never thought about many details about PowerPoint layout in face-to-face teaching before. However, Henny laoshi has offered plenty of valuable advice such as removing the background to make it more real-life-like, using thinner lines to minimize instructor's impact on the board, and make sufficient use of images to engage students in communicative activities.

I was very satisfied with my first day teaching. Meanwhile, I need more practice to keep calm when three students are present and assigning tasks could be more organized. I also planned to intergrade more tools in the activities for more effective

learning outcomes.