

## **Selected Daily Reflections**

**Zhiqin Wu**

06/30

Today I know I made a right decision to have participated in this Startalk program. I am fascinated with both Tseng Laoshi and Zhao Laoshi's teaching and their nice personality. I also feel grateful for having all these wonderful fellow teachers.

In today's class, I learned different theories and approaches in Second Language Teaching: Behaviorism, Innatist perspectives, Psychological perspective and Sociocultural perspective. I'm especially interested in the Socioculture perspective because I think the Communicative Approach is so important in language teaching and learning. Prior to today's class, I was confused about a teacher's role. It seemed that the more student-centered, the better. Now I know better about a teacher's role in a classroom. Teacher-fronted instruction can be communicative and effective in a meaningful context.

I like Zhao Laoshi's checklist for a communicative class. I'll use it as a guideline.

07/01

Today I learned the factors examined in learner studies: General intelligence, language aptitude, learning styles, personality, motivation and attitudes, identity and ethnic group affiliation, learner beliefs/ perceptions, age. Among these factors, motivation and attitudes are of the greatest importance. If a learner is highly motivated and eager to learn, it is very possible that he'll achieve a lot and become a very successful learner.

We also learned the assessments classified by Gardner's intelligences: verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

Tseng Laoshi and Zhao Laoshi's presentations are demonstrations on how we need to manage the classroom and how to incorporate activities and exercises to the class. By doing the exercises in the morning, Zhao Laoshi demonstrated how brain always pays more attention to meaning rather than forms. The demonstration opened a door to my thinking. I have never thought about the relationship between meaning and form before. I'll make my teaching more meaningful.

07/02

To create an immersion environment and use the target language all the time in a foreign language classroom is what strikes me most today! I'll try to speak only Chinese in my foreign language teaching.

This morning Zhao Laoshi demonstrated on how to teach novice level students completely in Chinese, something I did not dare to think about before. Obviously it is a successful class. Tseng Laoshi's demonstration further convinced me that with the target language only, a teacher can teach not only language, but also grammar and culture in a meaningful and communicative context. What's more, Zhao Laoshi's demo on how to teach pinyin is great and the websites about pinyin are very helpful.

07/03

All the communicative approaches in Tseng Laosh's book are very inspiring. They have inspired me and provided many possible activities for me to apply to class. I will try the Information Exchange Approach in the Chinese II to review what they learned in the previous school year, but I'll change some of the questions according to the topics we learned. The Bingo Game, Role Play and Inner Circle Outer Circle in this chapter are more appropriate to intermediate or advanced students.

After I observed the classes and learned the meaningful communicative approaches,

one question hooked my mind “how to teach texts”. Jigsaw is an answer to my question. The students with the same paragraph are assigned to the same group to discuss, then regroup the students: make sure that there is a representative from each group, so they can discuss the entire text. What a creative approach to learn the text! The students play the active role from the beginning to the end, just make sure the text cannot be too difficult.

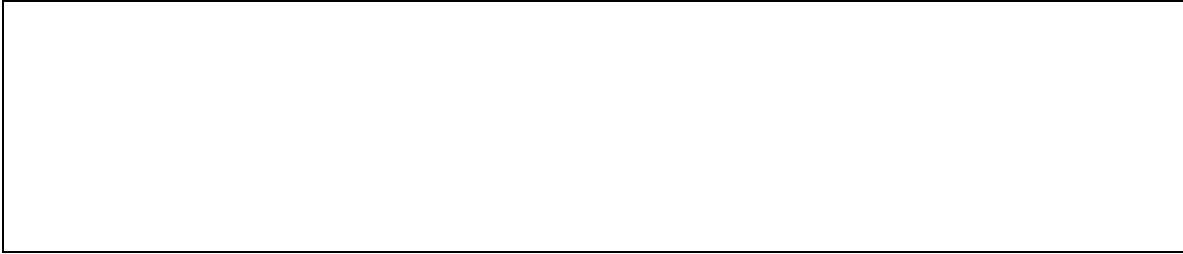
I have learned a lot from this chapter and cannot wait to incorporate these approaches into my teaching.

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