

Capstone English Language Learners Portfolio

Yue Wu

Peabody College, Vanderbilt University

## Abstract

This Capstone English Language Learners Portfolio demonstrates my theoretical understandings, professional knowledge and practices in the area of teaching English as a second language during my studies at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University.

This portfolio contains three parts: (1) Philosophy of Teaching; (2) TESOL Domains and Standards; and (3) Implication for Practice. In the first part, I explained my theoretical understanding and beliefs as a future English teacher, and methods and approaches that fit in the theoretical framework. In the second part, I discussed my understandings of eight TESOL domains: 1) Planning; 2) Instructing; 3) Assessing; 4) Identity and Context; 5) Language Proficiency; 6) Learning; 7) Content; and 8) Commitment and Professionalism, and each domain focused on four categories: learners and learner, learning environment, curriculum, and assessment. I also presented artifacts as examples of my practice, which prove my mastery of professional knowledge and skills in teaching English as a second language. In the third part, I summarized my understandings in the first two parts, discussed my prospect for future teaching, predicted the obstacles I may face in future teaching, and provided possible solutions. Future professional development goals are also discussed to show my determination of becoming a professional, responsible language teacher in the future.

## Table of Content

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Philosophy of Teaching.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Respect.....	4
Engagement.....	6
Interaction .....	8
Conclusion .....	10
<b>TESOL Domains and Standards .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Domain: Planning .....	11
Domain: Instructing .....	15
Domain: Assessing.....	18
Domain: Identity and Context.....	21
Domain: Language Proficiency .....	24
Domain: Learning .....	25
Domain: Content.....	28
Domain: Commitment and Professionalism .....	31
<b>Implication for Practice.....</b>	<b>34</b>
Prospect for Future Teaching.....	34
Obstacles and Possible Solutions.....	35
Professional Development .....	36
<b>Reference .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Artifact A .....	41
Artifact B .....	47
Artifact C .....	60
Artifact D .....	77
Artifact E.....	86
Artifact F.....	95
Artifact G .....	98
Artifact H .....	104

## Philosophy of Teaching

My experience here at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University inspired me to be a teacher that guides students to learn language effectively, to explore, and to pursue excellence. In this part, I will discuss about my philosophy of teaching, and how I'm going to achieve my goal of being a teacher that leads my students to success. I will list my three principles in teaching, explain the theoretical basis of these principals, and what I would do in order to help me to follow them.

### 1. Respect

As a teacher that is eager to take care of children and provide a safe and respectful environment in my classroom, I will always respect my students' background, and view students, their families and communities as valuable resources of knowledge.

Before coming to Vanderbilt, I never realized that students' background, prior knowledge and experiences can be used as resources in classroom. After taking EDUC 6520 and the practicum, I understood the value of students' background, and decided to follow Gay's (2010) idea of "Culturally Responsive Caring" in my future career. He emphasizes that teachers should never devalue students because of their race, gender, native language and cultural background, and identity, and suggested that teachers should care for students by respecting students' language and culture (Gay, 2010). I also become an advocate of "Funds of Knowledge" recommend by Moll et al. (1992), which provided methods that teachers can use to make connections with students' families and communities in the classroom, and enable me to investigate students' background and families, and encourage home reading for literacy development.

To realize this goal, I have to make sure that students feel safe and welcomed, so that they would be willing to share their backgrounds, thoughts and experiences, and enable all students to understand and respect diversity. Researchers have discussed about acculturation,

ELL's identity, and the importance of creating a safe and welcoming environment. For example, Townsend & Fu (1998; 2001) suggested that teachers allow students to use their native language, accept "interlanguage", encourage students to tell their stories, give them choices in tasks and assignments, and give them time for thinking (Townsend & Fu, 1998, p. 196; Townsend & Fu, 2001, p.113). Allen (2007) and Moll et al. (1992) also recommend "Funds of Knowledge" and suggested that teachers to design activities that include parents and community members in classrooms. Together, these theories help me think about students' identity and voice, what students can bring into the classroom as resource, and how to create a welcoming environment through emphasizing such resources.

As an ELL and oversea student myself, I understand the difficulties that ESL/EFL students may face in the new classroom, for example, unfamiliarity of the education system and rules, negative effects of acculturation, language barrier, shyness, etc. With the guidance of these research results and ideas, I can think of many ways to create the safe and welcoming environment. I will leave some flexibility for newcomers, like giving them choices in tasks and allowing extra time to complete the tasks, which may help reduce anxiety and pressure over time, thus help the newcomers to smoothly go through the procedure of acculturation. I would also encourage students to share about their own life, families and communities. Inspired by "Funds of knowledge", I would design an activity that asks my students to interview their parents or grandparents, tell stories from their own culture, explain some unique customs, or sing a rhyme from their hometown, then share with the whole class.

Another area of focus would be students' learning outside school. Noticing the importance of out-of-school literacy in ESL education stated in several studies (Jiménez et al.,2010; Pierce, 1995; Stewart, 2010) and the benefits of home reading in both students' native language and English, I will spend time investigating students' families to learn about

their home learning context, and how students use languages in social context. By encouraging students and their parents to read together at home, and designing tasks that include parents in students' learning process, my students will be able to develop their language and learning skills both inside and outside school. This would also connect parents with school in an effective and beneficial way.

## 2. Engagement

Thinking of my own experiences of language learning, I can't find many activities that engaged me in my English lessons over the past 16 years. Teachers focused on vocabulary and grammar explanation, and there were not many activities that elicit authentic communications, which is not helpful for developing communicative competences. Since authentic productions were missing in this process, it took me about 10 years before I started to believe that I could communicate with native speakers using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and use the language fluently. At the same time, the lessons were too boring for me to get engaged. Therefore, if I'm going to lead students to become active thinkers, creators and scholars, I must use various approaches, activities and materials to engage my students in my classroom.

First, in order to engage my students, their learning context should be meaningful with the support of authentic materials that cover different genres and come from multiple medium. Hammond and Gibbons (2005) state that "ESL learners' success in school is largely related to the opportunities they have to participate in a range of authentic learning contexts and meaning-making, and the support – or scaffolding – that they are given to do so successfully in English." (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005, p.10). Research have also proved that, compared with vocabulary taught separately with text, learning vocabulary from context is much more effective (Townsend & Fu, 1998, p.109). I believe that using authentic, meaningful contents and materials will not only teach students the language that they can use

to communicate and learn, but also arouse students' interest in language learning, and help them practice learning strategies when using these materials.

Second, in my opinion, if students are viewed as active learners and thinkers, and teachers set expectations of excellence at the same time, they would be more engaged, more likely to succeed in school and head to higher education. Cummins's (2015) suggested that "When students are treated as competent they are likely to demonstrate competence" (Cummins et al., 2015, p.564). Gay (2010) also emphasized the importance of setting higher expectations and seeking for excellence in ESL/EFL classrooms, and that "teachers who really care for students honor their humanity, hold them in high esteem, expect high performance from them, and use strategies to fulfill their expectations" (Gay, 2010, p.48). Setting high expectations would enable teachers to consider developing various skills, and at the same time, students would have an opportunity to face challenges, and practice skills in the problem-solving process.

Hence, in my future career as a teacher, I would try my best to see my students' potential in learning, set both basic and challenging goals for them, always prepare them for higher education, and help them to succeed in the social environment in 21<sup>st</sup> century, rather than just helping them to exit the EL program or pass the standardized tests. In my ideal classroom, students will have a clear understanding of their goal of learning, and be engaged in meaningful activities that promotes authentic, spontaneous language production. Inspired by the idea of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) developed by Vygotsky, in which he suggests that "the most effective learning ... is that which occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) ... when the challenge presented by a task is ahead of learners' actual or current development" (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005, p.8), I would create "ZPD" for my students so that they will be challenged, but support would be given so that they would have

opportunities to explore on their own, and enjoy the process of facing challenge and see their own ability and potential in learning.

In addition, in order to engage my students in activities and tasks, I would collect various materials that covers different genres from multiple media, like books, articles, pictures, videos, posters, etc., use them as resources in building background knowledge, skills and strategies, and explicit authentic communication and interaction. For example, I will use the literacy activities developed during my internship in Nashville Public Library in my classroom to help practice students' literacy skills through reading books or authentic texts and have activities related to the text. These activities are designed to fit in the six categories of Bloom's taxonomy, a theory recommended by our textbooks (Boyle, Peregoy, 2001; Byrnes, Wasik, 2012), course readings (National Research Council, 2013) and the theoretical framework of WIDA (WIDA Consortium, 2014). The original goal of these activities is promoting home literacy in a fun way, which is correlated to my idea of creating a fun and engaging learning environment for my students. If properly adjusted considering students' age and language level, these activities can be very useful in my ideal classroom.

Last but not least, I will gain feedback from my students about my lessons and activities, and collect suggestions from them about interactions, activities and lesson materials. Gaining feedbacks from students and allowing them to give suggestions will bring them confidence, and build a sense to students that they have their own voice in the classroom. I can also learn the latest trends and students' interests, which will be very helpful in my preparation of lesson materials.

### 3. Interaction

Language is created for communication, hence effective language teaching should put the emphasis on how to teach students to communicate and use language in real-life context. As mentioned above, I couldn't build confidence in communicating because authentic



interactions and language productions were not emphasized in my language learning process. Thus, when I finally faced the challenge of real-life language use, it took me a long time before I got familiar with the environment, and felt confident in daily communications. I will provide enough interactions for my students to practice communicative competences, and teach them how to use language in real-life context, so that they would not have to face the situation that I have experienced, in which I received minimum support and wasted time.

Research has proved that communication opportunities are important in children's native language development, early literacy development, and second language acquisition. As for native language and literacy development, Dickinson and his colleagues (Dickinson et al., 2011) summarized research that focus on native language and early literacy development, and made a conclusion that communication opportunities can predict children's literacy development (Dickinson et al., 2011). In terms of second language acquisition, Jiménez et al. (2015) and Daniel and Pacheco (2017) discussed the positive effect of Translanguaging, an approach that allows students to cooperate in translating texts, in which communication and negotiation are emphasized (Jiménez et al., 2015; Daniel, Pacheco, 2017). Gay (2010) also mentioned that "the heart of the educational process is the interactions that occur between teachers and students. These interactions are major determinations of the quality of education children receive" (Gay, 2010, p.48). Gathering together, research findings suggest that interactions and spontaneous communications are pivotal in language learning, and should be emphasized in second language learning classrooms.

In classrooms guided by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), "language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes" (Brown, 2001, p. 43), which will be my ultimate goal in designing curriculums. Hence, I would design curriculums that use multiple approaches, tasks, projects and activities rather than focusing on vocabulary, grammar and rigid

conversation patterns in the textbook. I would consider using the SIOP model (Echevarria et al., 2013) with the support of Scaffolding (Hammond, Gibbons, 2005) and Backward Design (Wiggins, McTighe, 2005) to make sure that interaction is emphasized in the very beginning stage of lesson planning, for all three approaches or models emphasize interactions. Also, as an advocator of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Project-based Learning (PBL), I will use projects and tasks that require different kinds of outcomes to promote both teacher-student and student-student communication. Using tasks and projects would help students to develop communicating skills and problem-solving strategies, and at the same time practice higher-order thinking and critical thinking skills. These skills would not only help students to learn language and complete the tasks and projects, but also prepare them for successful learning after they exit the EL program/classrooms and pursue further education.

#### 4. Conclusion

In all, my ideal classroom would be respectful, diversified, and meaningful, in which my students will be engaged in purposeful activities, tasks and projects, and are able to use their prior knowledge and explore their further potential. I would always encourage them to pursue excellence, and prepare them for success in school and social context. I will always believe that my students “will become like stars that will light the world with excellence, with self-determination, with pride” (Gay, 2010, p.59).

## TESOL Domains and Standards

In this part, my understanding of professional knowledge will be presented, and artifacts will be provided as examples of application of such understanding. I will use the TESOL standards and discuss within the following eight domains: (1) Planning; (2) Instructing; (3) Assessing; (4) Identity and Context; (5) Language Proficiency; (6) Learning; (7) Content; and (8) Commitment and Professionalism. The discussion will start with my understanding of each domain and the standard, followed by an overview of the artifact, and finally the analysis of the artifact which focuses on learners and learning, the learning environment, curriculum, and assessment.

### **Domain: Planning**

*Standard 1: Teachers plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals, and modify plans to assure learner engagement and achievement.*

Lesson planning is a basic, yet pivotal skill for all teachers. As a future EFL teacher, especially a new teacher with limited experience in real classrooms, there are so many details and factors for me to consider in future lesson planning in order to leverage students' background knowledge, language, and culture, engage students in both language and content learning, and lead all students to success. Reading different lesson plans and observing in ELL classrooms allowed me to see how other excellent teachers scaffold and design class tasks activities for students. During the process of designing lesson plans on my own, I found out the power of backward design and scaffolding, which enabled me to combine the theories of how students learn and interact in classroom and practices like various tasks, projects, and activities. Within the lesson plan, I can design activities to investigate and leverage students' background knowledge, prior knowledge, native language and culture; I can also have students interact and participate actively in tasks and projects that use various meaningful and authentic material and encourage students to produce authentic language; I will carefully

sequence the tasks and use different participant structures to promote participation; I can finally lead students to success in both language and subject content area through carefully planning my lessons and adjusting my instructions.

For this part, I will use a lesson plan I designed for my practicum at J.E. Moss Elementary School as my Artifact A. The lesson plan was designed for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELL students, mainly Spanish and English native speakers. According to WIDA standards, students' language proficiency in the classroom range from Level 2 to Level 5. The theme of this lesson is plant parts, and students are going to recognize and tell plant parts with visual support as the outcome of this small group guided reading lesson. Various materials were used in this lesson plan to investigate students' prior knowledge, connect their prior knowledge with new knowledge, and enhance their new learning.

***Learners and Learning.*** Within the lesson plan, the activities and tasks were differentiated according to students' language level. Since this lesson plan was designed for small group guided reading, and students were divided into three groups of varied language proficiency, I made three different mini plans to meet students' language proficiency. For the low group, I used more time to investigate students' prior knowledge and connect their prior knowledge with new learning, which help students to review their knowledge, bridge what they have learned and what they are going to learn, and use their prior knowledge as a support in new learning. For example, inspired by the activity "word sort" recommended by the SIOP model, I designed an activity called "Picture Sort" for the low group, in which students saw picture cards with the key words of plant parts, and were asked to judge if the picture is a plant part. Then, students were given the opportunity to see real plant pictures, and link the picture cards with the picture to review their sort. For medium and high group, since students provided more information about their prior knowledge during the bridging section (e.g. students can tell half or nearly all words that I'm going to explain, and explain

the shape, color and functions of them), instead of spending much time in connecting prior knowledge with new learning, I designed some challenging tasks, like asking students to brainstorm and tell some plant parts they know, and using thinking maps to collect their ideas. After investigating students' prior knowledge and collecting their ideas and thoughts, I used the information to adjust my instruction, spent less time in key word explanation and identification, paid more attention to words that students are not familiar with, and asked students to connect their prior knowledge with the new knowledge poster I drew to show key concepts. Students were able to recognize the plant parts they had prior knowledge with, name the plant parts they saw on the poster, and quickly connected the newly learned parts with the visual aid of the poster and some hand and body gestures. Through making a detailed lesson plan with space for adjustments according to students' responses and following the lesson plan, I completed all what I need to do, and guided students to become active contributors of knowledge, and fully engaged in the process of using their prior knowledge and connect to new learning.

***Learning Environment.*** The two highlights of this lesson plan are connection to students' background, and using various materials to support students' learning.

First, during lesson planning, I paid attention to connecting students' background and prior knowledge, for various models in lesson planning (SIOP, Scaffolding) support the idea that it's important to bridge what students know with what students are going to learn. In the homeroom I observed and taught practice lessons, students' native language and culture are respected, and sometimes the homeroom teacher would use some Spanish words in both instructions and leisure conversations. Inspired by my mentor teacher and SIOP feature # 7 (Echevarria et al., 2013), I decided that I would show respect to students' background through including their language in my instructions as support for students who had limited language proficiency. Hence, during lesson planning, I made word cards with Spanish words

that look similar to the English words, like “fruta” (fruit) and “flor” (flower). During the activity, I asked students to read the Spanish words. They were happy to do that, showed interest in connecting Spanish with English words, and the following process of learning.

My mentor teacher used many materials to create meaningful activities, like posters, pictures, stickers, books, etc. Therefore, when I started to make this lesson plan, I thought of using different materials to make my instructions clearer for students at different level, and help create an environment that uses multiple resources that enable students to see more and learn more. I designed the poster, word cards and the guiding sheet, and searched pictures online that fit the content and language level of learning.

**Curriculum.** In the process of designing this lesson plan, I implemented scaffolding elements to help students to meet the goal of learning. I investigated students’ prior knowledge and experience through asking questions and brainstorming what they know about plant parts; I selected tasks that help students to connect prior knowledge and new learning, like identifying the plant parts on the poster, and connecting the pictures/word cards with the poster; I used instructional strategies like appropriating, recapping and cued elicitation to engage students’ interaction, for example, repeating students’ answers, and asking students to explain more about what they know to help them practicing communicative competences.

**Assessment.** In this lesson plan, I used three different ways to assess students’ learning, and marked all the actions that I can use for assessments in the lesson plan (As shown in Figure 1). First, I checked students’ understanding by asking questions and using gestures (thumb up). Second, I used the poster and the book as visual support and asked students to identify plant parts without the key vocabulary to assess students’ learning outcome. Third, students were required to complete a guiding sheet as Exit Ticket. They were required to use key vocabulary to fill in the blanks to complete the full explanation of plant parts. Through using these assessment methods, I checked students’ prior knowledge at the beginning of the

lesson, their process in new learning during the lesson, and their understandings of new knowledge at the end of the lesson. Through implementing these assessments, I can learn more about my students, find clues on how to connect the new knowledge with their prior knowledge and backgrounds, and adjust my lesson plans according to students' understanding of the new knowledge.

Lesson Sequence:	Support, Review & Assessment:
(1) Prior Knowledge: Did you see plants during field trip/fall break? Where? How do they look like (color, size)? Can you find any plant in our classroom? (guide students to find the flowers near the guided reading table) How do they look like? (guide students to understand that different parts have different colors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check students' prior knowledge</li> <li>- Using examples in the classroom to build up background knowledge</li> </ul>
(2) Picture sort: Give some pictures of plant parts with key vocabulary, and ask students to discuss and judge if these are plant parts, and tell the reason if possible. Put the pictures in two different places based on students' discussion results. Give pictures of whole plants (a tree and a flower) and match the plant parts pictures used before with these 2 pictures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Past learning (similar to "word sort"), visual support</li> <li>- Students may have different opinions; put the pictures that students cannot make the decision in a new place as "oddballs"</li> <li>- Building Background knowledge</li> </ul>

**Figure 1** Artifact 1 Screenshot

### **Domain: Instructing**

*Standard 2: Teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions.*

Under the theory of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which I emphasized in my philosophy of teaching as the basis of promoting interactions in my classroom, it is important that students produce authentic, spontaneous language as output in order to develop language skills and strategies they can finally use in communication. According to Brown (2001), students should be engaged "in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes" (Brown 2011, p.43). Hence, in order to create an environment that students can interact with peers, and produce meaningful conversations and communications,

language teachers should use authentic materials and meaningful activities for students to practice language skills necessary in real-life communication. Moreover, teachers should leverage students' background knowledge and real-life experience in instructions to encourage students to become active contributors of knowledge, thus create a welcoming environment and promote participation and interaction.

Artifact B for this domain is a lesson plan designed for EDUC 6560: Teaching *English as a Foreign Language* under the frame of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT). This lesson plan was designed for a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English Class in a middle school located in Shanghai, China, and the theme of this lesson is friendship. Students would watch a video and read texts about friendship, share their own experiences of friendship, and make a poster to show a story that represents friendship. During this process, students work in pairs, communicate and collaborate with their partners, and use and produce meaningful materials that lead to purposeful peer interactions.

***Learners and Learning.*** Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes interactions, communications and authentic texts/communications. In this lesson plan, students have opportunities to share their real-life experiences and make a poster based on such experience, which elicits authentic peer-to-peer and teacher-to-student communication. The task of making a poster required that students cooperate with partners to prepare materials for the poster, in which students would discuss and negotiate with each other, and brainstorm for interesting ideas that lead to better outcomes. I will monitor the whole process, and arrange different task for different students to make sure that everyone is participating. Not only language skills would be practiced, but also communicative competences like communicating strategies, cooperation strategies and creative thinking skills would be enhanced.

***Learning Environment.*** By implementing this lesson plan, I want to create an environment in which students are free to share their experiences, opinions and thoughts. I



would allow flexibility for students to make sure that their imagination is inspired. For example, in the guiding sheet that includes instructions of making the poster, I gave examples of some ideas came from comics, movies, and books, and encouraged students to use these virtual characters to backgrounds to create meaningful, interesting stories. Students are free to use the characters they like, which arouses their interest in creating the product. Allowing flexibility through not setting limits would enable students to think creatively, thus create wonderful products that include their crazy but fantastic ideas that present their own perspective and voice in the classroom.

**Curriculum.** The lesson plan used the frame of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which I liked a lot and emphasized in my philosophy of teaching. According to Ellis, the ‘task’ should meet all 4 criteria: meaning, gap, resource, outcome (Ellis, 2009). First, as for meaning, I used a video and a text in which different people shared their stories with their good/best friends to create a meaningful environment, for this video is an authentic material, and provided different perspectives of viewing friendship. Second, the gap would be created by students reading different text and retell the story in their own words to their partners. Third, students have the guiding sheet, video, text, and online resources to refer to in the poster making task. Last, the poster would be the outcome of the lesson, and students would be asked to share their poster with other pairs, give and receive feedbacks, and share with the whole class.

**Assessment.** Brown (2005) suggested that teachers use various tools to evaluate students’ understanding, rather than using simply high-stake tests and quizzes (Brown, 2005). Therefore, I’m using observations, assignments and feedbacks. The poster and the rubric for peer assessment would be the major materials for me to assess students’ outcomes. Students would listen to other students’ introduction of their own posters, check with the rubric, and give feedback. I can see their outcomes directly from the poster, and indirectly from the

rubric and their feedbacks, in which I can find out if students have identified other students' strengths and weaknesses. I will also monitor students during the process of poster making, listen to their conversations and observe their interactions.

**Domain: Assessing**

*Standard 3: Teachers recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner. Teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction “on the spot” and for the future. Teachers involve learners in determining what will be assessed and provide constructive feedback to learners, based on assessments of their learning.*

Assessment should be a continuous process in the classroom, and teachers should apply multiple ways of assessments to ensure the validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessments. Standardized, formal exams are what we usually use, but should definitely not be what we only use in assessing our students. In order to test students' skills in the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and other skills like problem solving, interacting, communicating, cooperating and collaborating, negotiating, etc., teachers should choose different kinds of tasks for multiple purposes, and apply these tasks in appropriate time and environment (Brown, 2001). Since I emphasized that I want to create a fun, meaningful learning environment for my students in the future, I would not use high-stake tests all the time. Instead, informal assessments and observations would be frequently used to check students' understanding, and I would ask my students to give feedback regularly so that I can learn their thoughts and feelings of my lesson. Through combining standardized tests and informal assessments, I can assess students' progress from different perspectives, and at the same time reduce their stress of facing high-stake tests.

The Artifact C presented for this domain would be a case study report developed for EDUC 6530: *Educational Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition*. This case study assessed Julie, a female student studying at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University for her master degree in education. In this case study, I assessed this student's English language ability through investigating her performance in phonology, semantics, grammar, and pragmatics, and developed a report that includes suggestions and an instructional plan for her further improvement in language acquisition.

***Learners and Learning.*** This case study is a detailed, individualized report for this student, in which her oral and written sample were collected and analyzed from different perspectives. In this case study, Julie was treated respectfully, and the materials collected for the assessment were authentic, spontaneous language production. Having the same cultural background, I was able to understand her language learning experience, her feelings in learning and using her second language in her hometown and here in the U.S., and her concerns in learning, practicing and using the language.

Through leisure communications, informal assessments and analysis on her written work, I found out that Julie has issues in pronunciation and grammar, and expressed anxiety in speaking English in front of native speakers due to such issue. In the individualized instructional plan, I gave suggestions for her in practicing language use, improving her speech through building confidence, and relieving pressure of speaking through practice and adequate interactions.

***Learning Environment.*** As a Mandarin Chinese native speaker, the huge difference between Julie's native language and English brought her some pronunciation and grammar issues directly related to native language. For example, she might use Chinese language patterns and word sequences in writing, which should not be considered wrong, but still need improvement in order to provide appropriate language in different contexts. In reading

paragraphs and speaking with me, she would be affected by native language transfer, and hence pronounces some words incorrectly.

In terms of her language learning here at Vanderbilt, she was experiencing anxiety to some extent, which may refer to Krashen's theory of affective filter. Krashen (1981; 1982) hypothesized that in language learning, students who have low affective filters would be more confident to practice their oral language, for they show less anxiety in language learning and speaking, while students who have high affective filters are nervous and anxious when they were asked to speak the second language (Krashen, 1981, 2981; Retrieved from Pierce, 1995). To reduce Julie's anxiety in speaking English, I gave some suggestions like practicing more with her English speaking friends, ask them to check her pronunciation and grammar, and build confidence through such practice.

***Curriculum.*** Julie was already a graduate student here in the United States, and she went through the challenge of TOEFL and GRE tests, which means that she can handle difficult tasks in language using. What she has to learn through curriculum is checking her tiny grammar mistakes, and build her vocabulary, especially academic vocabulary, in order to help her in her future learning as a graduate student. Hence, I would not suggest that she attend some language learning classes, but practice with English native speakers, and accept some individual guidance.

After analyzing Julie's language proficiency and her overall ability of using the language, I made an individualized instructional plan for her. In this individual plan, I focused on improving her pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, and gave suggestions to deal with her anxiety. I suggested that she practice more on academic vocabulary, taking notes when encountering useful academic words and sentence patterns, learning vocabulary through translating on her own, etc. Since she had some tiny grammar mistakes in her writing, I recommended that she find an academic writing piece she did before and rewrite

some paragraphs, check her grammar use, eliminate the mistakes, and use advanced academic word and expressions.

**Assessment.** I used several tools to assess Julie's language ability in this case study. First, as for her oral language proficiency, I used Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) to analyze her oral sample, and the result indicated that she's an advanced English speaker. I also counted the fillers and pauses in her oral sample to show her ability of organizing sentences and recalling vocabulary in speaking. In terms of writing, I calculated the average sentence length and word length in her writing sample to analyze her ability of using complex patterns and academic vocabulary.

Since this case study focused on analyzing participant's language ability, I didn't give recommendations on future assessments. In my future career, I will include assessment suggestions when I make individualized plan for my students.

### **Domain: Identity and Context**

*Standard 4: Teachers understand the importance of who learners are and how their communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning. Teachers recognize the importance how context contributes to identity formation and therefore influences learning. Teachers use this knowledge of identity and settings in planning, instructing, and assessing.*

As a language teacher, students' identity should be considered in lesson planning, instruction delivering, and other domains in teaching. As Townsend and Fu (2010) said, "To see linguistic diversity as a resource is to invite all our language newcomers to full participation in our classrooms" (Townsend, Fu, 2010, p.200-201). As mentioned above in my philosophy of teacher, researchers (Allen, 2007; Townsend, Fu, 1998, 2001) have also emphasized the difficulties students will face in the process of acculturation when they enter classrooms as ELLs. Recognizing and leveraging students' identity means that students'

background knowledge, including their native language, cultural background, race, gender, and community are accepted and welcomed in the classroom, which helps a lot in building confidence and engaging in the new learning environment. Therefore, if students who bring varied background knowledge are viewed as resources of knowledge, the gradual transfer of their identity would benefit their language learning.

Artifact D and Artifact E will be the *Community Literacy Project Report* I wrote for EDUC 6520: *Foundations of Emergent Bilingual Education*, in which I investigated the Hispanic community in Nashville, and *Investigating Schools Report*, another report written after a day's observation in Haywood Elementary School. Before writing the Community Literacy Project Report, I visited Casa Azafrán, an organization which provides support for immigrant families here in Nashville, Tennessee, and some international supermarkets and restaurants that serve the minority communities in southeast Nashville area, like K&S World Market and Mercado La Hacienda Panaderia y Carniceria. As for the Investigating Schools Report, I provided my observations in ELL classrooms, asked questions about the EL services there, and made some suggestions for the school to serve ELLs better.

***Learners and Learning.*** Through investigating minority communities and visiting ELL classrooms, I realized the importance of identity and context, and saw the value and power of theories like Cultural Responsive Caring and Funds of Knowledge. As a future language teacher, I would try my best to “honor their [students’] community, hold them in high esteem, expect high performance from them, and use strategies to fulfill their expectations” (Gay, 2010, p.48). If students’ identity is not recognized and respected in the classroom, they will not get involved in the learning environment, face stress, show anxiety, which lead to unsuccessful learning. On the contrary, if ELs’ identity is recognized and respected, they would feel welcomed and safe in the new environment, hence engage in the learning context, and perform better.

***Learning Environment.*** In the two artifacts, I explained the learning environment I want to create in my future career as a language teacher. As explained in my philosophy of teaching, I want my future students to feel safe and welcomed in my classroom. To reach this goal, I would encourage them to share their experiences and backgrounds, and help them to go through the process of acculturation, and lead them to success in both language and content learning. I would also ask my students to show respect, to embrace diversity, and to help each other on their way of learning language and content.

***Curriculum.*** The Artifact E presents my observations at Haywood Elementary School, which lead me to think about the curriculum for ELLs in an unfamiliar environment. A year after the visit, I still have a deep impression on the “No Spanish” yelling toward two Spanish-speaking students when they were not using English in pair work. I started to think that, among all the ways I can use to stop students from relying too much on their native language, I must choose the best ones that truly guide students to use the target language and produce language spontaneously, rather than simply banning native language use and offer no support to solve the problem.

***Assessment.*** After completing the two artifacts, I realized the importance of identity in learning environment, especially for ELLs who have varied backgrounds, experience acculturation, and are forced to get familiar with a new culture. “Funds of Knowledge” and “Cultural Responsive Caring” are the two approaches I liked most, and would consider applying when designing lesson plans, individualized plans and assessment plans.

The two artifacts I use for this domain were both completed in the first semester of my program, and I didn’t have opportunity to observe how teachers assessed their students, hence I didn’t explain how to modify assessments considering the issue of identity and context. After learning how to design and use assessments in different context, I realized that I have to make changes according to students’ identity, backgrounds and the context. For example, I

should check the testing materials to make sure that there are no culturally biased contents, or words and students that are strongly related to certain cultural background, which would be unfair for students unfamiliar to it.

As for assessments in my future classroom, I would use more informal assessments, and try my best to make sure that students receive enough support in high-stake standardized assessments, like reading the lines for the students, or provide translations if needed. I would also choose some examples and texts that related to students' cultural background, so that students would feel less anxiety for they are familiar with the text.

### **Domain: Language Proficiency**

*Standard 5: Teachers demonstrate proficiency in social, business/workplace and academic English. Proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing means that a teacher is functionally equivalent to a native speaker with some higher education.*

As a future language teacher, my language ability is the basis of my ability of teaching English. I always believe that, if I'm going to be a language teacher, I should learn the correct form of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and every other aspect of this language. I should be familiar with the correct form of using the language, and provide students the correct information in order to deliver high-quality instructions.

My own English learning experience started in kindergarten, where I learned the 26 letters in English, and some simple words like "apple" and "mom". Starting in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, I learned to listen, speak, read and write in English, and gradually developed my overall English skills through the following 16 years. By the time I got my Bachelor degree, I got 107 in TEOFL test, 26 for Speaking and 27 for other three domains, and 318+4 for GRE test. I also passed the TEM-8 test designed for English majors in China, which they must pass before they become English teachers.



As for my ability of using English in real-life context, I completed the academic papers during my studies here at Vanderbilt University, and my professors were satisfied with my language use. I'm able to read academic articles, understand and use academic vocabulary, identify and use complex sentence patterns, and complete presentations that focus on a specific topic in my academic field.

### **Domain: Learning**

*Standard 6: Teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings. They use this knowledge to support adult language learning.*

Language teachers must learn how language is learned, how learners process knowledge of language in their brain, and what teachers can do to guide learners to success in language learning. During my studies at Peabody College, I learned a lot of theories and approaches, discussed a variety of research with my professors and classmates, and practiced my skills of teaching English as a second language through completing my practicum. For example, after taking the course EDUC 6520: *Foundations of Emergent Bilingual Education*, I understood the importance of students' native language and cultural background, community, and identity in the process of second language learning, and modified my philosophy of teaching based on what I learned. Later, after taking the practicum in 2017 Fall semester, I went back to my philosophy of teaching again, and added some key factors in lesson planning and assessments. Looking at my latest philosophy of teaching, I emphasized diversified perspectives through investigating students' background knowledge and encourage them to share their backgrounds; various participating structures will be used in my lesson planning and instruction delivery, and both student-student interaction and student-teacher interaction will be encouraged, thus creating a student-centered learning environment; I would also combine various assessment tools, like observing, low-stake tests, assignments that contain

various kinds of tasks, rather than sending students to an learning environment that is full of high-stake tests and standardized tests.

In this domain, I will use the lesson plan of my 3<sup>rd</sup> practice lesson during my practicum at J.E. Moss Elementary School, a 55-minute Language Art lesson, as Artifact F, in which I reviewed a story students read during that week, helped them to review the concept and usage of quotations, and asked them to add dialogues in the individual fable writing task.

***Learners and Learning.*** Interactions are vital in both first and second language learning (Dickinson, 2001; Echevarria et al., 2013), hence in the two lesson plans I present here as artifacts, interactions are listed as the first priority. I implemented various participant structures, included both individual tasks, pair work, and group tasks, so that students would have enough opportunity to interact with each other, learn from their peer, which help them in completing their individual tasks. For example, I asked students to make a hand gesture when they heard a dialogue in my story reading. Before asking the question “Why do you think you hear a dialogue? Can you tell the reason?”, I asked students to discuss with a partner, then share with the whole class to increase interaction, and had students more prepared before answering the question. Another example is that, I gave students a task, in which they needed to add quotations marks to a dialogue, and I asked students to work with their table group. Through using various participant structures, students discussed and shared their opinions frequently in the classroom, which means that they were using the language frequently, and providing authentic interactions. As mentioned in the philosophy of teaching, the quantity and quality of interactions are pivotal in children’s language development, and using various participant structures is an effective way to reach this goal.

Another focus in my lesson plan is scaffolding, a model I learned from EDUC 6540, and used and practiced through my practicum. I would always start my lesson with a quick activity that links to students’ prior learning, reviews what they learned/read in previous

lesson, and the skills they practiced and will be used in my lesson. I also used several scaffolding features, like varied participant structures, selected tasks that promote interaction as mentioned above, increased perspectives through asking students to do cooperative writing, etc.

***Learning Environment.*** Creating a student-centered learning environment is always my focus in building the learning environment. As explained in the category “Learners and Learning”, I used different activities and tasks to promote interaction. I also worked hard to make sure that I’m not the only resource of knowledge in the classroom. For example, when I gave examples of dialogues, I asked a question “How are you feeling today?” The student answered “I feel happy today”, and I used the student’s answer to write the sentence “xxx said, ‘I feel happy today’.” Through allowing students to share their thoughts and using their answers and discussions as resource, they turn into an important source of knowledge and examples, thus become active participants of the lesson, which is emphasized in scaffolding features (Hammond, Gibbons, 2005) and the SIOP model (Echevarria et al., 2013).

***Curriculum.*** Scaffolding approaches (Hammond, Gibbons, 2005) emphasized the importance of connecting prior knowledge with new learning, and preparing students for future learning in instructions. Hence, this lesson is closely connected with the previous and following lessons. In the previous lessons, students started to read a wordless picture book for this fable, and listened to the teacher to read the story, so that they could get familiar with the plot. At the same time, the key concept of quotation marks was given as the language objective in the unit. Before this lesson, students had reviewed the plot three times, and wrote the basic plot in their own picture book. After this lesson, students will continue adding dialogues in their own fable, then revise and edit before completing their own picture book.

***Assessment.*** In this lesson plan, I have explanations on how I assess students in my lesson, and mostly I used observations, questions, hand gestures and task sheets to evaluate

students' understanding. For instance, on my task sheet, I removed some of the quotation marks, and asked students to work with table group to "find the missing quotation marks". By looking at their task sheet, I can see if students have mastered the skill of "using quotations marks correctly in dialogues". Another example is that, I read a story to them, and asked them to make a certain hand gesture when they hear a dialogue. When I see students making the hand gesture, I can tell that they have heard the dialogue, and the result of this brief assessment is that "students are able to recognize dialogues in a story". After asking the question "Why do you think you hear a dialogue?", I can get answers like "Because I heard the word 'said'", which indicates that students are able to identify the speaker's tag. Through using activities and asking questions, I can complete the assessment, see students' progress, and adjust my instructions based on the results.

**Domain: Content**

*Standard 7: Teachers understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. Teachers understand that the content of the language course is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area.*

*Teachers design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about.*

Appropriate content should be used in language teaching, which means I have to make sure that the content I use in my lessons should be age appropriate for my students, fit their English language proficiency, and does not contain cultural biased information. During my practicum, I found that my mentor teacher was required to use books that are not age appropriate, and do not fit her students' English language proficiency, while the purpose of using these books was "making every classroom look the same", which is unfair for ESL students. I also heard of a similar situation from one of my classmate observed in a high

school classroom, where some Spanish-speaking beginners who could barely provide a complete sentence were required to understand a 300-page novel written in English, on the basis of American culture, which contains many complex sentence patterns and rhetoric. My classmate's and my experiences let me know the importance of using appropriate content in language teaching, and how inappropriate content would bring difficulties for both language teachers and students.

Artifact G is a workshop plan I made during my internship in Nashville Public Library. I worked in the Bringing Books to Life program, which hold workshops for preschool and early elementary teachers and parents in early literacy development. I designed my own workshop, targeting Grade 2-3 native English-speaking students. Based on Bloom's taxonomy, I created 12 different activities that correspond to each category of Bloom's taxonomy. I also searched for picture books and chapter books that fits the reading ability and content needs for target audiences of this workshop.

***Learners and Learning.*** As mentioned in my philosophy of teaching, research results suggest that home literacy plays an important role in children's literacy development (Dickinson, 2001). Children who have parents read books with them at home frequently perform better in literacy in future learning. It has also been proved that interactions between parents/care givers and children have continuous impact on children's literacy development (Dickinson, 2001; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2013). Therefore, I designed this workshop to promote home literacy, and tell parents the importance of reading and playing with children at home.

Speaking of content, I have to make sure that the book I choose for this workshop is age appropriate. I learned from my colleagues and the library website that I can tell the reading level of a book through checking the lexical score, which reflects the complexity of sentences and vocabulary level of a book. After reading more than 100 books in the children's area in

Nashville Public Library, I chose some picture books and chapter books that are appropriate for Grade 2-3 children, and make sure that I choose books with varied difficulty (reading level ranging 1.5-4.6) so that students at different reading levels would be taken care of. Second, I checked each book to make sure that the story and its moral is meaningful for the target learners, and does not contain cultural biased information.

***Learning Environment.*** Traditionally, schools were considered as the only learning environment. Yet, recent research has proved that parent-child communities and interactions are important in children's language development, hence home is also an important learning environment (Dickinson et al., 2001, 2011; Hoff, 2006, 2013). In order to create an engaging learning environment, parents should read books, interact and play with children, and give them opportunities to see and learn more through trips to libraries and museums. Through using the books and activities listed in this artifact, parents can read a book with children and play the games with them, in which everyone can have fun and learn something, and see the positive effects of book reading and book-related activities on children's learning environment. Moreover, they can do a lot beyond the books and activities, like searching online about the book, the author, or some interesting details in the book.

***Curriculum.*** Although this is a material designed for a workshop, I used some activities from this list in my practice lessons. In my 3<sup>rd</sup> practice lesson, I used the activity "Switch Writers" in the small group guided reading. I asked students to continue the story, and added a requirement that they have to write at least one compound sentence on the paper before they switch. Students were engaged after they get familiar with this activity, and showed excitement in sharing and listening to other students' stories. Students were engaged for they were creating their own story, in which they implemented their own ideas and knowledge, and at the same time encouraged to share their thoughts, which reflect the theories of students' identity in classrooms, as explained in my philosophy of teaching.

**Assessment.** Since this is a workshop, and having fun is important, I didn't consider any formal assessments. However, we can use these activities as assessment tools. For example, the activity "Character Information Card" can be used as an assessment. Students need to collect details of a character, organize the details, and choose the important ones to put on the card, which require that students have the ability to identify important details, organize, and summarize. Another example can be "Recommend the Book", in which students have to tell the basic information of the book (title, author, plot, moral), and the reason for recommending the book. Students need to remember the information, summarize the plot, organize their sentences, and analyze the plot/moral to give reasoning. In all, I can use these activities to promote, and at the same time assess students' literacy skills

### **Domain: Commitment and Professionalism**

*Standard 8: Teachers continue to grow in their understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning to the community of English language teaching professionals, the broader teaching community, and communities at large, and use these understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.*

During my studies here at Peabody College, an important concept I learned is that teachers should also be life-long learners. New theories and research come out, yet it takes a long time before teachers start to use the newly developed theories and approaches to guide their teaching. As a future language teacher, my life-long learning goal is that I should be always open to new theories and approaches that are proved helpful for students. I would be eager to try out different approaches and activities, and find out which ones work best. In addition, before implementing new things into my teaching, I have to make choices from various research results, modify some details to fit my students and environment, and adjust according to students' responses and feedback, which require me to keep learning and keep working on my lesson plans and the way I deliver the instructions.

Artifact H for this domain is a paper I completed for EDUC 7951: *Practicum in English Language Learner Education*. In this paper, I explained my understanding of theories on early literacy development and home literacy, emphasized my focus on the benefits of home literacy, and developed literacy tasks and projects that can be used in ESL classrooms based on the workshop I designed for English native-speaking students during my internship at Nashville Public Library.

***Learners and Learning.*** When I was designing the workshop, I started to think, “Now I’m designing activities for English native speakers, but what about ELLs? Can I use the same activities and games for ELL students to promote their literacy development?” After reading research results and articles about home literacy, I start to believe that I can use these activities in ELL classrooms as long as I modify them to fit my students. Based on this idea, I completed this artifact, explaining my thoughts and designed tasks and projects based on the games I designed. For example, a home literacy activity I designed “Reading and Singing Rhyme” was modified to a project “Bring a Rhyme from Home & Bring a Rhyme Back Home”, in which students can learn and share a rhyme from their own culture, and bring a new rhyme back and share with their families. Through reading and singing a rhyme, students can get familiar with sounds, which is beneficial for developing their phonological awareness. At the same time, children can feel the rhythm of words, phrases and sentences in rhyme, which may bring positive effect to their literacy development in the future (Dickinson et al., 2001; Heath, 1982).

***Learning Environment.*** Learning environment includes both home and school. Many ELLs use English only in school, while at home they speak other languages, which means they have limited opportunities to practice English outside school. Since home literacy contributes to children’s early literacy development, and research show that the interactions between parents and children are important in home literacy (Dickinson, 2001), I designed 3



tasks or projects that enable children to work with their parents and promote parent-children interactions. For instance, the singing project mentioned above is an example of creating a fun learning environment at home. Singing together doesn't take too much time, and both parents and teachers can have fun through this activity. Parents can have close interactions with children, while children can practice their language skills.

Home literacy activities also help building a welcoming environment in the classroom. Two projects I designed ("Travel plan" and "Bring a Rhyme from Home & Bring a Rhyme Back Home") require students to ask their parents some questions about their hometown and culture, then share in the classroom, thus giving students opportunities to share their background knowledge. Students can also see how diversity is shown in the classroom, and learn how to respect people who have diversified backgrounds.

**Curriculum.** The activities I designed are very flexible, and can be fitted in various units. For example, the rhyme activity can be completed when students learn a rhyme, which is common in pre-K or Kindergarten. Another home reading task is even more flexible, for students are reading books every week, and teachers can choose what skills or content to emphasize when implementing this task in the lesson plan. Researches have proved that book-related activities and games following book reading have positive effect on vocabulary learning (Hassing-Das et al., 2016; Weisberg et al., 2015). Therefore, using activities and games in home reading can bring positive effect on children's literacy development.

**Assessment.** In the artifact, I explained that teachers can ask parents to write their feedback on students' journal, or use other ways to communicate with teachers, like writing a memo or sending a text message. As for students' assessments, I think I can use checklists, or asking students questions like "What's the best moment in this activity?", and ask them to share with the class.

## Implication for Practice

In my philosophy of teaching and TESOL domain discussion, I explained my theoretical understandings in language education, and what I have done here at Peabody to practice skills of language teaching and build my beliefs in this area. In this section, I will discuss what I will do in my classroom in the future, and display the ideal classroom. I will also consider what challenges I may face, and possible solutions to the problems that might exist in my future career. Finally, I will address my belief in life-long learning, and show what I'm going to do to pursue further professional development.

### 1. Prospect for Future Teaching

***Students' voice in classroom.*** One of the most important idea I learned here at Peabody College is that, language teaching is not only about language. Language is only the tip of the iceberg, while the influence of culture, ethnicity, identity, experiences are all issues that lie underwater, and such issues must be considered in language classrooms. As a language teacher, I have to teach language in an engaging, meaningful environment, and at the same time allow students to keep their own identity and cultural background, and share their knowledge as resources in my classroom. In my philosophy of teaching, I also emphasized "Culturally Responsive Caring" (Gay, 2010) and "Funds of Knowledge" (Moll et al., 1992), and explained that I will use these theories to guide my teaching. In conclusion, my future students will have their own voice in my classroom. They will have opportunities to speak out, share their experiences and thoughts, understand and embrace diversity, and share a common sense that each student and his/her identity and backgrounds should be respected.

***Interactions.*** During my studying at Peabody, I become an advocate of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes communications and interactions in language teaching. As I mentioned in the discussion of TESOL Domains, my personal experiences of language learning were boring and lacked opportunities of interactions and language use in

real-life context, which resulted in a lack of confidence in my real language use both in classroom discussions and real life communications. Therefore, I will try my best to help my future students to avoid such situation through giving them enough opportunities to talk, and using meaningful activities and authentic materials to engage students in interactions. In addition, in light of approaches like Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), I will design tasks and projects that simulate real-life situations in my classroom to enable my students to practice daily language use, develop their overall skills, and build confidence. I will also include activities like public speech, presentations and debates to develop students' communicative competence.

***Expectations of Excellence.*** Another idea I emphasized in my philosophy of teaching is my belief in expectations of excellence. Each student has different backgrounds and experiences, but they come to school to learn, to succeed, and to pursue a bright future through learning. I will make individualized plans for each student, in which student's potential will be analyzed, and issues like cultural background, educational background and prior knowledge will be considered. I will set higher expectations for all my students, design high-demanding tasks with high support to create Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), so that students can reach their goals and develop their abilities in this learning process.

## 2. Obstacles and Possible Solutions

The first challenge came into my mind was that, I might face a classroom, in which students are at different language proficiency levels. Mixed levels require language teachers to adjust their instructions and language use in the classroom to make sure that all students, especially students at lower levels are taken care of, while challenges are still provided to meet the needs of those at advanced levels. Thinking of my observations at J.E. Moss Elementary School, in which classrooms are all mixed-level, I think the possible solutions might be: a) Small group instructions that divide students according to their reading level/oral

language proficiency; b) Group work and pair work that pair students with different levels together, and use peer help to help lower level students, and increase peer interactions as well; c) Design a project, and ask students to complete different tasks that require different skills and fit in various language levels.

The second challenge I may face is students' differentiated learning style. Some students may acquire new knowledge quickly, while other students may need longer time to understand the new concepts and process in brain before applying. Some students like direct explanations, while others may prefer reading and summarizing on their own. In my opinion, the first priority in this situation is that, if I meet students that need longer time to process, I have to remind myself that students have different learning styles, and I should give them more time. Second, I should include information of learning style in students' individualized plan, and adjust my instructions based on what I know about my students. Adjustments might include using different kinds of activities to meet students with differentiated needs, having students do self-evaluations on learning style and process, and collecting feedback, etc.

### 3. Professional Development

In order to teach high-quality language lessons, I have to keep learning. My ultimate goal is to become a life-long learner, keep myself updated with the latest theories and approaches, and continue searching for effective ways of teaching language. I will learn from my colleagues and other teachers I have worked with before, who have more experiences in teaching and working with children, about how to teach language effectively and how to develop my own skills of classroom management. Moreover, I will join some teaching communities to get the updated information in this area.

Another direction of development is improving my instructions. I will keep working on designing meaningful activities with the guidance of theories I advocate, which are explained in my philosophy of teaching. For example, I will design tasks and projects based on what I

know about PBL and TBLT, and adjust some details in these tasks and projects according to actual practice and students' feedback and outcomes.

In conclusion, I will set high expectations not only for my students, but also for myself. I will pursue my dream of becoming an excellent language teacher that takes care of all my students, respect their identities and backgrounds, share my enthusiasm with my students and co-workers, and lead all my students to academic success.

## Reference

- Allen, J. (2007). *Creating Welcoming Schools: A Practical Guide to Home-School Partnerships with Diverse Families*. International Reading Association (NJ3). Chapter 3, 7, 8, 9: pp.39-51, 93-124.
- Boyle, O., & Peregoy, S. (2001). *Reading, writing and learning in ESL*. Association.
- Byrnes, J. P., & Wasik, B. A. (2012). *Language and literacy development: What educators need to know*. Guilford Press.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to learning pedagogy*.
- Cummins, J., Hu, S., Markus, P., & Kristiina Montero, M. (2015). Identity texts and academic achievement: Connecting the dots in multilingual school contexts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(3), 555-581.
- Daniel, S. M., & Pacheco, M. B. (2016). Translanguaging practices and perspectives of four multilingual teens. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(6), 653-663.
- Dickinson, D. K., Griffith, J. A., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2012). How reading books fosters language development around the world. *Child development research*, 2012.
- Dickinson, D. K., & McCabe, A. (2001). Bringing it all together: The multiple origins, skills, and environmental supports of early literacy. *Learning disabilities research and practice*, 16(4), 186-202.
- Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. J. (2013). *Making content comprehensible for elementary English learners: The SIOP model*. Pearson Higher Ed.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: Sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(3), 221-246.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press, Chapter 3. 123-150.

- Hammond, J., & Gibbons, P. (2005). Putting scaffolding to work: The contribution of scaffolding in articulating ESL education.
- Hassinger-Das, B., Ridge, K., Parker, A., Golinkoff, R. M., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Dickinson, D. K. (2016). Building vocabulary knowledge in preschoolers through shared book reading and gameplay. *Mind, Brain, and Education, 10*(2), 71-80.
- Jimenez, R. T., Smith, P. H., & Teague, B. L. (2009). Transnational and community literacies for teachers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 53*(1), 16-26.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice, 31*(2), 132-141.
- National Research Council. (2013). *Education for life and work: Developing transferable knowledge and skills in the 21st century*. National Academies Press.
- Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL quarterly, 29*(1), 9-31.
- Stewart, M. A. (2014). Social networking, workplace, and entertainment literacies: The out-of-school literate lives of newcomer adolescent immigrants. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 53*(4), 347-371.
- Townsend, J. S., & Fu, D. (1998). A Chinese boy's joyful initiation into American literacy. *Language Arts, 75*(3), 193-201.
- Townsend, J. S., & Fu, D. (1998). A Chinese boy's joyful initiation into American literacy. *Language Arts, 75*(3), 193-201.
- Townsend, J. S., & Fu, D. (2001). Paw's story: A Laotian refugee's lonely entry into American literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 45*(2), 104-114.
- Vernon-Feagans, L., Bratsch-Hines, M. E., & Family Life Project Key Investigators. (2013). Caregiver-child verbal interactions in child care: A buffer against poor language

outcomes when maternal language input is less. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 28(4), 858-873.

Weisberg, D. S., Ilgaz, H., Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R., Nicolopoulou, A., & Dickinson, D. K. (2015). Shovels and swords: How realistic and fantastical themes affect children's word learning. *Cognitive Development*, 35, 1-14.

WIDA Consortium. (2014). The WIDA standards framework and its theoretical foundations.

Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*. Ascd.



## Appendix

### Artifact A: Lesson Plan – Plant Parts

#### Lesson Plan

Yue Wu

**School:** J.E. Moss Elementary School                      **Grade:** Grade 3

**Student Teacher:** Yue Wu                                      **Mentor Teacher:** Mrs. Laura Laufman

**Lesson:** 10/16/2017 8:15~9:15 Small Group Guided Reading (3 groups, 20 minutes for each group)

**Student:** All ELL students, over a half are Spanish/English bilinguals; mixed level (ACCESS raw score ranging from 2-6)

**Unit Theme:** Plant Parts

**This Class in the Unit:** The first class; teach key vocabulary and build background knowledge

**Standard:**

**ELA: Grade 3**

- 3.FL.SC.6h: **simple sentences**
- 3.W.TTP.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information.

**Science: Plants' Needs and Life Cycles**

- GLE.0307.1.1 **Use magnifiers to make observations of specific plant and animal body parts and describe their functions.**
- 3.RI.KID.3: Relationships b/t technical steps
- RI.CS.5: Text features

<p><b>Language Objective:</b></p> <p>Students will be able to identify plant parts, and use key vocabulary and complete sentences to introduce plant parts with visual support.</p>	<p><b>Content Objective:</b></p> <p>Students will know that plants have different parts, and are able to recognize and distinguish them.</p>
<p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b></p> <p>tree, root, fruit, seed, flower, petal, stem, leaf</p> <p><b>Key Concept:</b></p> <p>Plants have different parts.</p> <p>All parts have different usage and support the plant growth.</p>	<p><b>Supporting Materials:</b></p> <p>Bubble map</p> <p>Poster</p> <p>Guiding Sheet (for students to color and match)</p> <p>Book: <i>Du Iz Tak</i> by Carson Ellis</p> <p>“Picture Sort” cards with Spanish words</p>

**Connections to Prior Knowledge and Past Learning: Building Background**

**Prior Knowledge:**

- Guiding questions: past experience of seeing/observing/planting plants during field trip/fall break/in real life, and on TV/books/online/any other materials
- Visual/Material support: using pictures of plants and plant parts; using flowers in the classroom; make a poster and use guiding sheet for support

**Past Learning:**

- Picture Sort (Word Sort with picture support)
- Using book illustrations as visual support to recall, review, and assess students’ understanding of key words and concepts

**Learning Strategies:**

- Make connections with prior knowledge and real-life experience
- Identify key vocabulary
- Make outlines (guiding sheet)
- Purposefully grouping and labeling words (Picture Sort)

**Group 1 -- Low**

**Lesson Sequence:**

- (1) Prior Knowledge: Did you see plants during field trip/fall break? Where? How do they look like (color, size)? Can you find any plant in our classroom? (guide students to find the flowers near the guided reading table) How do they look like? (guide students to understand that different parts have different colors)
- (2) Picture sort: Give some pictures of plant parts with key vocabulary, and ask students to discuss and judge if these are plant parts, and tell the reason if possible. Put the pictures in two different places based on students’ discussion results. Give pictures of whole plants (a tree and a flower) and match the plant parts pictures used before with these 2 pictures.
- (3) Poster: Put up the tree & flower poster, and put the words that all students sorted “plant parts” on the poster, and describe these plant parts with hand/body gestures. Then, put the

**Support, Review & Assessment:**

- Check students’ prior knowledge
- Using examples in the classroom to build up background knowledge
- Past learning (similar to “word sort”), visual support
- Students may have different opinions; put the pictures that students cannot make the decision in a new place as “oddballs”
- Building Background knowledge

<p>definition on the poster (use sticky notes so that the poster can be used for multiple times). If some plant parts are sorted as “oddballs”, bring them back, and give the words and definitions with hand/body gesture.</p> <p>(4) Book: Choose one page, point at certain parts and ask students to give the correct word. Repeat the definitions with hand/body gestures.</p> <p>(5) Guiding sheet: Give the guiding sheet and ask students to work in pairs, match the key vocabulary with the picture with the support of the poster, check the answers, and color the pictures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review</li> <li>- Review &amp; Assessment</li> <li>- Peer help: Pair work</li> </ul>
--	---

**Group 2 -- Mid**

<p><b>Lesson Sequence:</b></p> <p>(1) Prior Knowledge: Did you see plants during fall break? What did you see? Have you read any books or articles about plants, or see something on TV that talk about plants? Can you find any plant in the classroom? How does it look like?</p> <p>(2) Pictures: Give some pictures of whole plants, then ask questions: Do you see any plant parts in these pictures? Point the picture and tell me what do you know about the plant parts. Write down what students mentioned on a bubble map and draw simple illustrations beside the words. Draw illustrations for the parts that students cannot identify.</p> <p>(3) Poster: put up the tree &amp; flower poster. Match the bubble map with the poster, and put the words students give on the poster with sticky notes; give definitions of the existing parts and support the definitions with body and hand gestures; give the parts that students are not able to identify, and ask students to guess the usage of these parts or just give the definition with gestures (see students’ response in previous activities). Go back to the bubble map and add the key vocabulary.</p> <p>(4) Book: Choose one page, ask students to identify plant parts they see on the page and give definitions if possible. Repeat</p>	<p><b>Support, Review &amp; Assessment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment: Check students’ prior knowledge and prior learning</li> <li>- Assessment: Check students’ prior knowledge</li> <li>- Build background knowledge</li> <li>- Visual support</li> <li>- Review &amp; Assessment</li> </ul>
--	--

the definitions with hand/body gestures.

- (5) Guiding Sheet: Give the guiding sheet, ask students to work in pairs, match the key vocabulary with pictures with the support of the poster, check the answer with a partner, and color the picture.

- Peer help: pair work

**Group 3 -- High**

**Lesson Sequence:**

- (1) Prior Knowledge: Where do you see plants? Can you describe some plants you see during the fall break/field trip? How do they look like?
- (2) Brainstorming: Put what students mentioned in the discussion on the bubble map and add illustrations. Ask students to brainstorm for more details and share with the group. (If students have difficulty doing this, show some pictures of plants; or guide them to find the flowers beside the guided reading table as support) Draw the parts that students cannot identify on the bubble map. (put the words on after the poster activity)
- (3) Poster: put up the tree & flower poster. Match the bubble map with the poster, and put the words students give on the poster with sticky notes; give definitions of the existing parts and support the definitions with body and hand gestures; give the parts that students are not able to identify, and ask students to guess the usage of these parts, then give definitions.
- (4) Book: Turn to the first pages and ask students to identify some plant parts and give definitions if possible, then ask them to make predictions of what they will see in the following pictures.
- (5) Guiding Sheet: Give the guiding sheet, and ask students to work with a partner, match the plant parts with the picture, and check the answers, and finally color the picture.

**Support, Review & Assessment:**

- Check students' prior knowledge and prior learning
- Check students' prior knowledge
- Review, Assessment & Challenging students
- Peer help: pair work

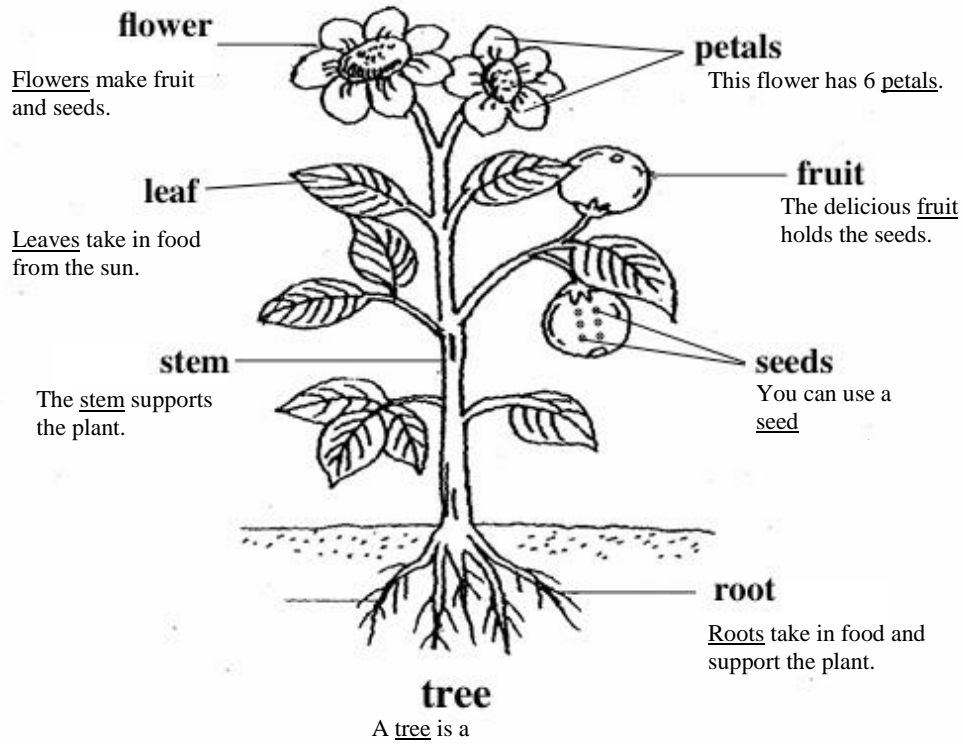
---

Important Factors in Instruction:

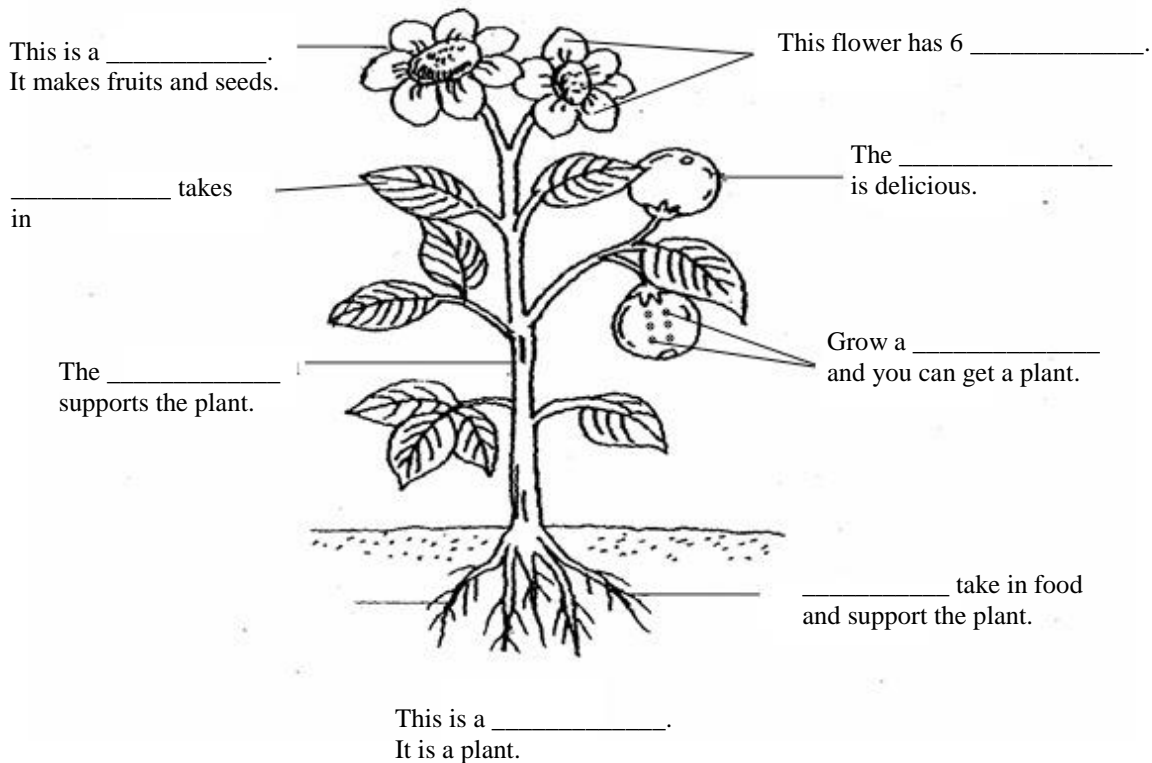
- Give students enough thinking time
  - Encourage complete sentences
  - Ask students to listen to their peer carefully and give responses if possible
-

### Supporting Materials

#### 1. Poster: Plant Parts



#### 2. Guiding Sheet



## Artifact B: Lesson Plan – Friendship

## Lesson Plan Template

Teacher / School:	Yue Wu A middle school in Shanghai, China Students: Grade 6/first year in middle school, intermediate-low level
Unit Theme:	Describing past and present actions Tell about friendships
Which “Can Do” statements for this unit will students be making progress on today?	I can describe how I met and found my best friend. I can tell a story that is important or impressive happened between me and my best friend(s). I can use present tense and past tense correctly. I can use learned irregular verbs correctly.
Which standards will students be making progress on today?	Grammar: Students can use present tense and past tense according to the situation of the tasks/activities. Students can use both present tense and past tense correctly in discussions and written work. Vocabulary: Students can use some words/phrases/sentence structures from the authentic text, but not only using them. Pronunciation and Fluency: Students can pronounce and use the words and phrases in this unit in the correct form. See the rubric for more details.
Time:	80 minutes (40+40, two classes in two different days)
Materials Needed:	Video: That’s how we became best friends ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpDJrkQqWQs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpDJrkQqWQs</a> ) Text: That’s what friends are for (Side by Side student book level 2, p. 135)

	<p>Task Paper: task page: describe the requirements and provide topics and guidance for students; assessment page: rubrics for peer assessment</p> <p>Poster (made by students)</p> <p>Diary page</p>
<p>Methodological Approach:</p>	<p>Task based language teaching. Students will do tasks in class to have spontaneous communications, and produce dialogues and written works that are not all following the fixed form in the textbook/authentic text/video, and have their own creativity shown in the products of the tasks.</p> <p>By completing such tasks, students will learn to form their own sentences rather than following the textbook for all time.</p> <p>IPA would be considered in designing the tasks.</p>
<p>What is this lesson's connection to other lessons in this unit?</p>	<p>This class will be taught in the middle of this unit.</p> <p>Before this class, students will learn how to describe their relationships and past/present interactions with their friends.</p> <p>In this class, students will learn how to describe a specific story/event happened between them and their best friend(s) and include more details. During this class, students' ability to transfer between past tense and present tense will be practiced and enhanced.</p> <p>After this class, students will cover the rest parts of this unit, and receive an in-class assessment based on IPA.</p>

Stage	Teacher Activity	Student Activity	Issues Anticipated	Time	Materials Used
Preparation the night before	Prepare the text, video, and transcript. Also prepare the task	Review previous class materials. Think about a story that happened	Students might not think about the required story, or they might not have	15'	Text Video Transcript



	paper and the diary page	between you and one of your friend that left you a deep impression (like how you met each other, why did you become best friends).	a story that left them a deep impression.		Task paper  iPad
Pre-Task	<p>Introduce what students will do in this class.</p> <p>Give each student an iPad and a transcript, and ask them to watch only one part of the video according to given transcript. Tell them not to show their video and transcript to others.</p> <p>Pay attention to the usage of past and present tense in students' retelling.</p>	<p>Students work as groups of three.</p> <p>Each member watch one part of the video, then tell other members the story you've watched, introduce the people included, how and when they met each other and become best friends, and tell one sentence or one part of the story that leaves you the deepest impression.</p> <p>After group discussion, ask</p>	Students might not follow the instruction, or just copy the transcript.	10'-15'	<p>Video</p> <p>Video Transcript</p> <p>iPad</p>

		three students to share their own idea.			
Task	<p>Give the text and instructions.</p> <p>Walk around to make sure that students are not reading the text.</p> <p>Give the task paper and explain the task.</p> <p>Teach briefly how to make screen shots and search/make pictures on iPad.</p> <p>Recommend some online tools and apps that students may use.</p> <p>Ask students to use the time in class to work on the task, and make the final product after</p>	<p>Students work in pairs. One of them will have the first paragraph, and another one will have the second paragraph. Don't show their own text to their partner.</p> <p>After reading the text, students should retell the story of the text they have to their partner.</p> <p>Choose two students (can be a pair or from different pairs) to share with the class.</p> <p>Based on the story happened in the text, students</p>	<p>Students might play with the iPad, but not do the task in the given time.</p> <p>Students might not understand the requirements of the task.</p>	25'-30'	<p>Text</p> <p>Task paper</p> <p>iPad</p>

	<p>school or with teachers' help.</p>	<p>should choose one background from the list provided by teacher (or choose their own with teacher's permission) and design two complete dialogues and write a thank-you card/email, and use text message or other online chat apps to form the dialogue/group talk and provide a screenshot of the dialogue. See the task paper for topics and other detailed requirements.</p> <p>Give one or two examples or models to explain what are expected.</p>			
--	---------------------------------------	---	--	--	--

		<p>Print/draw what they've got (screenshots, dialogues, thank-you card) and make a poster (A3 size).</p> <p>See the rubric on the assessment page and make sure that the poster meets the requirements.</p>			
<p>Planning/Report</p>	<p>Give students a couple of minutes to prepare their presentation to the class.</p> <p>Walk around to make sure that they are all presenting and answer questions of needed.</p>	<p>Students have about 2 minutes to check their poster, and make preparations for their presentation.</p> <p>Two pairs work together and share their poster with each other. Make notes during the process on the task paper.</p>	<p>Students might not prepared well for the presentation, or just read the words on the poster.</p>	<p>10'</p>	<p>Poster</p> <p>Task paper</p>
<p>Analysis/Assessment</p>	<p>Peer assessment.</p> <p>Give instructions on how to use the</p>	<p>Choose 3 pairs to present to the class. After each group completes</p>	<p>Students might not understand the instructions on how to use</p>	<p>20'</p>	<p>Poster</p> <p>Task paper</p>

	<p>rubric on the assessment page.</p>	<p>the presentation, give immediate feedback on how they meet or might don't meet the requirement, and give suggestions.</p> <p>Ask several students (those who don't present to the class) to choose one poster that they like best, and tell why they like it, what's the best part and what can be improved.</p> <p>Then each group use the assessment page on the task paper to evaluate the other group's poster. Make sure that you complete the assessment according to the rubric and give some</p>	<p>the rubric and give feedback.</p>		
--	---------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------	--	--

		feedback/suggestions to your peer.			
Practice	<p>Give instructions on how to write the diary.</p> <p>Give the designed diary page.</p> <p>Collect the diary pages at the end of the class.</p>	<p>Each student chooses a character in their own story, and write a diary on his/her perspective. (1-2 paragraphs, about 150 words)</p> <p>Describe the story briefly and tell the character's feeling. Refer to the text if needed.</p>	Students might copy the sentence structure of the text.	10'	Text Task Paper Diary page
Student follow up work after class	<p>Keep the assessment paper and diary page in each student's personal folder.</p> <p>Take pictures for each poster and print it out so that every student can have a copy of their own poster, and these pictures can be used as</p>	<p>Help the teacher to put their own poster on the wall in the classroom or in the corridor outside the classroom.</p> <p>Choose more than 1 posters and write down your comments on each poster.</p>		10'-15'	Poster

	<p>models in the following years.</p> <p>Put the posters on the wall of the classroom or in the corridor outside the classroom.</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Task Paper: That's What Friends Are For -- Task Page**

Today you are going to complete a task on friendship. You should do the following steps:

1. Find your partner. This will be a pair work. Your partner's name:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Choose a background from the list below or create your own one:

A story happened between you and your partner (Can be imagined and totally crazy! E.g. You lost an important thing and ask him/her to look for it together with you / You want to borrow a book from your partner / You are a fairy comes from the paradise and you need a little help to go back to your home, ...)

Spiderman asks Batman if he can help to beat the evil boss and save the world

The Red Riding Hood asks Mr. Hunter to beat the wolf and save her grandma

The prince asks you to help him finding the girl danced with him on the ball

A frog asks a prince to kiss him so that he can turn back to a prince

A penguin asks a polar bear to take care of his/her kid for a while

A koala asks a kangaroo to take him/her on a vacation

Your name is Mona Lisa and you ask a painter friend Da Vinci to paint a portrait for you

... ..

3. Complete the task: See examples your teacher gives you.

Make some screenshots of the following products:

- The first product should be a dialogue about one asking another for help. Describe the event, and discuss about the time/date of the event, and express thankfulness.
- The second product should include a picture that the helper shows his/her helping outcome on social network, and a dialogue under the picture or on a separate page



that the helper chats with another character or other characters about this helping event. Include a brief intro of the event and express feelings.

- The third product should be a thank-you card that the one being helped writes to the helper. Include the event, time/date and express thankfulness.

4. Make a poster! Be sure to have a blank space on your poster for peer comments!

**Task Paper: That's What Friends Are For -- Assessment Page**

Find another group and do the peer assessment. Read the rubrics before you listen to another group's presentation!

The group you are going to evaluate: \_\_\_\_\_

### Poster & Presentation Rubric

- \_\_\_\_ They have their own names and the characters' names on the poster.
- \_\_\_\_ The first dialogue includes greeting, asking for help, describe the event, and discuss the date/time. (Underline the element if not included in the dialogue)
- \_\_\_\_ The second dialogue includes asking about the event, describing the event, and discussions on feelings. (Underline the element if not included in the dialogue)
- \_\_\_\_ The second dialogue comes with a picture related to the helping event.
- \_\_\_\_ The thank-you card includes the event, time/date and gratefulness.
- \_\_\_\_ No grammar mistakes on present and past tense on the poster. (If have, describe in the feedback space)
- \_\_\_\_ The poster leaves space for peer comment.
- \_\_\_\_ The poster is carefully and clearly designed and have a good visual effect. Add a star beside the "\_\_\_\_" if the poster has art design.
- \_\_\_\_ Both people described their products and ideas during their presentation.
- \_\_\_\_ The presentation is not shorter than 2 minutes.
- \_\_\_\_ The presentation is generally fluent.
- \_\_\_\_ The presenters include their background, ideas and thoughts, and introduction of their poster in their presentation.

Feedback & suggestions:

---

---

---

---



## Artifact C: EDUC 6530 Case Study Report

## EDUC 6530 Case Study Final Report

**1. Introduction of Participant**

**Basic Information:** My participant Julie is a graduate student studying in Peabody college. She's a 22-year-old female, and was born and raised in Nanjing, China. Her native language is Mandarin Chinese, and her second language is English. She likes going out and talk to other people, making friends, sharing new ideas and participating in various on- and off-campus activities. Having an enthusiasm in learning English, she loves watching English TV series, movies, documentary films and literature. She's also working hard to improve her academic English skills in order to perform better in class and assignments.

**Educational Background and English Development:** Julie started to learn English since she was 7 years old, a first grader in elementary school; in other words, she has studied English for more than 15 years. She was an excellent student in middle school and high school, hence she went to the best middle and high schools in Nanjing, where the quality of English teaching is above average. In the interview, she mentioned that she liked her high school English teacher very much, for the teacher lived in England for many years and knows a lot about English literature and culture. Moreover, the teacher was knowledgeable and shared many interesting ideas and stories to her students, which left Julie a deep impression. Since then, Julie started to look for English movies, TV series and literature to improve her English language skills and broaden her horizon. She continued this interest on English materials in her university studies. Majoring in Chinese Language and Literature, Julie didn't have many chances to use English, while her English skills, especially reading and listening skills, were still improving thanks to her interest on learning English. She complained that the English classes in her university were boring and not challenging enough for her, and this was another reason that she used additional materials to practice English. After graduation,

she went here to Nashville to continue her studies this year, and her English has improved a lot since she came here.

**Socio-cultural Factors:** Based on the previous information, there are both advantage and disadvantage in Socio-cultural factors that influence Julie's second language acquisition. As for the strengths, Julie has learned English for 15 years, which is a long time that provided her plenty of English learning materials and knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar. Moreover, her enthusiasm in learning English encouraged her to look for various resources that could help her English learning. Furthermore, studying in the best middle and high school in Nanjing (also among the best schools in China), Julie has reached the best English teaching resources and taught by excellent teachers. Regarding disadvantages, since she was born and raised in China mainland, she didn't have an exposure to an English-speaking environment. English was only used when taking classes and having exams. After coming to Nashville, although she uses English much more than in her hometown, she lives with Chinese roommates and makes friends with mostly Chinese students, hence she is still using Chinese as the main language. Since Chinese is totally different from English in nearly all factors, it would be difficult for her to master English pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and semantics and pragmatics skills.

**Current Situation:** Since Julie is an outgoing girl, she's willing to talk to others and share her ideas. Not having enough experiences communicating with English native speakers back in China, however, Julie reported feeling nervous when she spoke in class, facing her professors and classmates. She has a clear thought in her mind, but due to her tension, she sometimes might forget the words she wanted to say, or she could not present a clear structure for her thoughts. Moreover, since she's using Chinese to think in her mind sometimes, she needs a process to translate her ideas into English, and the lack of academic vocabulary becomes an obstacle in this process.

## 2. Participant's Oral and Written Language Ability

In this part, I will discuss four elements in Julie's second language acquisition. First, the analysis would focus on Julie's phonological abilities and comprehension of communications in different contexts. Second, a semantics analysis will show her capacity of choosing proper words, and provide data to show the lexical density of her oral and written sample. The third part would center on grammar, and would provide an analysis on her knowledge of morphology and syntax. The last mini analysis would describe the four maxims—quantity, quality, relation and manner—of Julie's oral and written samples. In each part, the context of studying, participant's strengths and areas that need further development would be provided and supported by evidences from both data analyses and excerpts quoted from her oral and written samples.

### a. Phonology Mini Analysis

**Context:** I asked Julie to read two paragraphs from a TOEFL reading about early childhood education, and had an interview about her life back in China, here in Nashville, and her English learning experiences both in China and in the U.S.

**Strengths:** Generally speaking, Julie is a fluent English speaker in various contexts, and since she practiced her listening skills through watching English TV series, movies and documentaries, she is an excellent listener. As for comprehension, Julie could easily understand daily conversations. She can also respond to others immediately, and use everyday words correctly. Moreover, Julie's doing well in fluency in daily communications, and she sometimes could correct her tiny mistakes in grammar and pronunciation herself.

**Areas Need Further Development:** Although Julie was generally fluent, sometimes Julie had to repeat a word many times to organize her sentences, or stop for a while to search for the word she wanted to use. In the interview, she used fillers very often, like she used "uh" for 88 times, and "umm" for 23 times in the 25-minute interview. Other fillers such as "like"

and “yeah” also appeared frequently in her response. Moreover, sometimes she needed to repeat pronouns like “it” and “I”, or prepositions like “to” and “in” a couple of times before continuing to speak.

Word /pronunciation/	Incorrect Pronunciation	Error Frequency
Think / θɪŋk /	/sɪŋk/	24/32 (75%)
With / wið /	/wis/	6/10 (60%)
And /ænd/	/ændɑ:/, /ændʌ/	12/70 (17.14%)
That / ðæt /	/dæt/	6/36 (16.67%)
The / ðə /	/də/	11/77 (14.29%)

In terms of pronunciation, four kinds of errors related to pronunciation emerged in the two oral samples. First, Julie couldn't pronounce the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ correctly from time to time, and instead used /s/ or /d/. She pronounced “wið” as “wis”, “θɪŋk” as “sɪŋk”, “ðə” as “də”, and “ðæt” as “dæt”. In words with /θ/ or /ð/ sound in our interview, about 27.54% (57/207) were pronounced incorrectly, especially “think” and “with” (see the chart above). Second, Julie added a vowel sound /ɑ:/ or /ʌ/ after “and”, making this word sound like “ændɑ:” or “ændʌ”. Third, Julie had coda consonant missing errors, especially for the /d/ sound at the end of some words. She pronounced “frɛndz” as “frɛns”, and “taɪəd” as “taɪə”. These three kinds of errors are common among Chinese students, in that there are no /θ/ and /ð/ sounds in Chinese, and only two consonants—/n/ and /ŋ/—are allowed at the end of the syllables in the Chinese Pinyin system. Lastly, Julie had difficulty pronouncing long and complex words, finding the stress, and pronouncing vowels correctly in those words. For instance, she couldn't pronounce “academic” (/ˌækə'demɪk/) correctly both in the interview and the reading sample, and finally chose “/ʌ'kædmɪk/” after she tried three or four times to pronounce the word.

In conclusion, Julie did well in fluency and comprehension in daily settings, and pronunciation is the biggest problem in her phonological performances.

### b. Semantics Mini Analysis

**Context:** My participant Julie provided two samples, an interview and a writing sample. The excerpts I chose for this analysis were three parts from the interview about her habits, her dog and her English learning experiences. I also drew from the third part of her writing sample about classroom practice (Julie’s EDUC 6520 Paper #1). In general, these excerpts show that Julie has mastered everyday vocabulary, but she needs to expand her repertoire of more advanced academic words so that her writing skills, can be improved.

**Strength:** An online statistical tool ([www.usingenglish.com](http://www.usingenglish.com)) is used to analyze Julie’s oral and writing samples. First, as for word choice, Julie did well in choosing proper words in social and academic contexts, and she used nearly all words correctly. She used mainly Tier 1 words to describe her dog and her daily life, and Tier 2 words when explaining her English experiences (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002, from Lecture Slide, October 2016). By contrast, in her academic writing, she used longer and more challenging words. 31 “hard” words were used in the 240-word writing sample (12.92%), and academic words such as “encounter.” The data shows that Julie is aware of academic language, and has learned to use different words in various contexts.

Word Count	Total Unique Words	Lexical Density	Hard Words	2-5 Letter Words
Oral: 435	163	37.47%	15 (3.45%)	313 (71.95%)
Written: 240	140	58.33%	31 (12.92%)	149 (62.08%)

Second, in terms of lexical density, Julie did well in academic writing. The lexical density and the proportion of hard words in her written sample are much higher than that of her oral sample, indicating that she had a good performance in her academic writing.



**Areas Need Further Development:** There are two problems in Julie’s oral and written samples. First, Julie needs to improve the lexical density of her speaking. In the oral sample, Julie used 163 unique words, and she scored 37.47% in lexical density, which is much lower than that of her writing sample (58.33%). The reason for such differences might be that she used a lot of filler in the oral sample, such as “umm” and “like,” and she was repeating prepositions, articles and pronouns frequently. During the interview, Julie asked several times about the English translation for the Chinese word she provided, which shows her lack of vocabulary. Second, although she did well in academic writing, she need more academic words, for no Tier 3 word was seen in her written sample. In all, the context analysis shows that Julie has the ability to choose the words according to the context, but she needs to work to improve her fluency in oral English, and at the same time enlarge her vocabulary.

### c. Grammar Mini Analysis

**Context:** The context used in this mini analysis are two paragraphs from Julie’s interview, in which she talked about her English learning and speaking experiences. The written sample contains four paragraphs from Julie’s EDUC 6520 Paper #1 that provided recommendations for her future students in cultural related issues.

**Participant’s Morphological Ability:** Analyzing Julie’s oral and written sample, the result shows that she has a clear awareness of English grammar and morphology, and knows how to use proper words and morphemes to organize her expressions. However, her mistakes indicate that Julie still needs to work on inflectional suffixes and breaking utterances.

Sample Type	Word Count	Morpheme Count	MLUm
Oral	225	232	9.667
Written	400	504	12.923

Counting Julie's Mean Length of Utterance (MLU), the data shows that, Julie's oral sample gets a score of 9.667 words per utterance, and writing sample 12.923 words per utterance, showing that her sentences in her writing sample are generally longer than that she spoke, indicating better consideration and organization in her written works, and shows the usage of clauses and some other complex sentence structures.

**Participant's Syntactic Ability:** Considering syntax, word order is Julie's strength, for she can organize her words in correct order and use different ways to construct her sentences. Yet, sentence breaking is an obvious problem in her writing. The first problem is that she often failed to divide the utterances with proper conjunctions. For example, in one sentence in her writing sample, "Apart from that, you can see lots of billboards on the streets, some businessman even set up stalls alongside the street," she forgot to add an "and" after the comma, which is a common mistake in her sentences. Another problem is that she sometimes forgot to stop a sentence and start a new one, thus creating sentences too long for readers, and at the same time lack a clear grammar structure. The third one is that Julie has a limited knowledge of conjunction words, and this might also be a reason for her failure in dividing utterances correctly. Here's an example from Julie's written sample that reveals these two problems: "I will also recommend my students to talk with people here, for example, when I visited the hair salon in Flushing Chinatown, I asked the barber there politely about how long has he been here, and how is the English language learning process going when he got there, the most interesting thing is that he thinks he does not need to practice his English because he can live by Chinese in Flushing, but he added, the customers are not always Chinese, so it seems necessary to learn English but he does not have much time and opportunities to practice." This is a super long sentence that should be divided into at least three sentences. Moreover, she only used "and" and "but" as transition words. These three problems show

that Julie has trouble dividing sentences, indicating a lack of awareness of syntax, especially recognizing and using various sentence structures and linking devices.

**Global Assessment of Participant's Grammatical Knowledge:** Julie has an awareness of nearly all the morphemes, and she performed well in using the present and progressive tense. She occasionally made grammar mistakes, but this didn't hinder understanding. In speaking, she frequently makes mistakes when using past tense and plural forms. Usually she remembers to add "-ed" in past tense when using regular verbs, but when it comes to irregular verbs, she sometimes forgot to use their correct form in the past tense. For example, in the oral sample, she used the original form of the words "spend" and "bring" when she described her English classes in high school. As for plural forms, she occasionally forgot the "-s" after nouns. For instance, in the sentence, "I got lots of chance to talk with people", the "-s" after "chance" is missing. Similar mistakes appeared in her writing sample, In the writing sample, the problem of irregular verbs and plural forms were corrected. However, other problems emerged in her writing, like she sometimes forgot to add "-ing" when starting a new utterance with a verb.

**Strength and Areas to be Developed:** The previous analysis shows that Julie knows that she need different ways of expression in speaking and writing, and her knowledge of clauses and sentence structures help her in organizing her writing works. She also has a clear awareness of morphemes. However, her weakness in using inflectional suffixes, break utterances and conjunction words are obstacles in the development of her English skills.

#### **d. Pragmatics Mini Analysis**

**Context:** The oral samples I use in this mini analysis are two paragraphs from the interview in which Julie talks about her leisure times and her pet dog, and one paragraph describing a picture story. I recorded these two samples with Julie in her house, and she was not nervous or anxious because that was a casual conversation in a relaxing atmosphere. The word count

is in total 433 words. The written sample used in this analysis is two paragraphs from Julie's EDUC 6520 Paper #2, in which she discussed the laws and policies on ESL education in the United States and their impacts. The total word count is 420 words.

**Pragmatics Analysis Using Grice's Maxims:** In terms of linguistic context, the first paragraph comes from the interview, in which I asked questions about Julie's life back in China and here in Nashville. I designed some questions, and added some new questions related to her answers. We switched topics many times, talking about her lifestyle in different places and details. As for social context, we are both graduate students coming from China, so we were just talking like friends, but I was the dominant one in the interview. Sometimes she would seek help from me about word choice and grammar, and I could solve her problem because we share similar social and cultural backgrounds. For the second paragraph, she was the only speaker, and she tried her best to describe the pictures I gave her. The pictures described a short story that contains no social or cultural issues.

Seeing Julie's oral and written samples through the prospective of Grice's Maxims, Julie was capable of adhering to the four maxims, especially in the maxims of quality and relation. However, she still needs to work hard if she is to meet all the descriptions of the maxims. First, regarding the maxim of quantity, Julie was able to provide enough information in most answers in our interview, and also performed well in describing the picture. She noticed the movements and facial expressions of the characters in the picture, and described everyone's behavior and emotion vividly. She even added some sound effects, like "Awww" when she was describing the picture in which the dog bit the man. However, in some situations, her answers showed a lack of information for the listener. For example, when she talked about her leisure times, she mentioned a Korean TV show. She said the show was about a baby named Minguo, and she liked that show very much. However, she didn't provide more

information about the show, like why the baby was on the TV show, how the baby behaved, and why she liked the baby so much.

Secondly, in terms of the maxim of quality, Julie was excellent at providing the correct information that she wanted the listener to know. Learning English for 15 years, she is capable of using correct words to express her opinions clearly. In her expressions, especially in writing, she could use evidence and additional material to support her idea. For example, she listed many laws and policies that related to ESL education in the U.S. and listed some details to support her idea. Her weakness in the maxim of quality lies in grammar mistakes, like the misuse of articles, prepositions and third person singular. However, these mistakes didn't hinder listener/readers' understanding.

Third, in terms of the maxim of relation, she also performed well in focusing on the topic. In the interview, when I asked her a question, she could always stay on the topic, and sometimes add some supplementary information. For example, when she talked about her pet dog, she added that when she met a dog on the street, it would remind her of her dog, and she would interact with the dog she met, which she said was “[an] opportunity to express my love of my dog.”

Last, regarding the maxim of manner, sometimes Julie couldn't find proper words or sentences to express herself, and people may get confused about what she was saying. For example, when she talked about her pet dog, she didn't know the correct word of her dog's breed (Bishon), so she used Chinese Pinyin “Bixiong” instead, which was good for me since I know what she was saying, but not for native English speakers. Moreover, in her writing, she occasionally forgot to stop her sentences; thus, some sentences in her writing were too long for readers to understand quickly and clearly.

**Strengths and Areas to Improve:** Basically Julie is a good English speaker and writing with a clear awareness of her language. She always answers the questions directly, stay within the

topic, and provide correct information. If she wants to improve her overall quality of speaking and writing, she need a larger vocabulary in different contexts, and has to provide more evidence to proof her ideas.

### 3. Overall Assessment and Theoretical Framework

After analyzing participant's English skills from the perspective of four elements, an overall assessment is provided here to show the current stage of participant's second language acquisition, possible influencing factors and theoretical evidences.

**Participant's Current Stage of Second Language Acquisition:** Having a 15-year English learning experience, Julie knows clearly what words and sentence structures she should use in speaking and writing. She can complete daily communications easily, and be an active participant in class discussions thanks to her excellent listening skill. In terms of writing, Julie has an awareness of academic language, and she is now learning academic words through reading materials. Using Second Language Acquisition Chart as the criterion, Julie should be a Level 4, High Intermediate Fluency English learner.

Referring to the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM), I suggest that Julie can get 20/25 for her English speaking skill, scores 4 in each category. Comprehension is Julie's strength, for she can easily understand conversations in multiple contexts. As for fluency, she sometimes uses fillers frequently, which lower down her speech rate. But when she is relaxing and talking about topics that she's familiar with, she can be very fluent. In terms of vocabulary, Julie performed well in daily vocabulary, while more academic words are needed. Pronunciation is not a big problem since her tiny mistakes do not hinder understanding. Last, about grammar, which is her weakness compared with other elements, she doesn't have problem in word order, but in tiny mistakes and sentence structures.

Generally speaking, Julie did better in writing than in speaking. The main problems emerged in her oral and written samples are: a) Pronunciation in certain consonants; b) A

lack of daily and academic vocabulary; c) Breaking utterances and using conjunction words correctly; d) Grammar mistakes in inflectional suffixes, third person singular and plural form; e) Anxiety when speaking publicly.

**Influencing Factors:**

Multiple influencing factors can be recognized in Julie's English learning experiences, language and cultural background, and socio-cultural background. In this part, the possible influencing factors and theoretical evidence would be provided to explain the influencing factors of her second language acquisition.

**Pronunciation:** In terms of pronunciation, Julie has trouble pronouncing certain morphemes. This problem can be explained by native language transfer (Email-Prof. Philips Galloway), for those consonants she couldn't pronounce correctly, like /θ/ and /ð/, do not exist in Chinese sound system. It can also be explained by Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis claiming that "L2 phonemes that are different from L1 phonemes will be 'hard' to produce" (Flege, 2005). Moreover, when pronouncing long, complex words with more than three phonemes, Julie may provide two to three different pronunciation of those words (some of them are British English accent) and finally choose one that she thinks correct. This might relate to Optimality Theory suggesting that when a speaker uses his/her second language, he/she would have a list of possible outputs in mind, and finally "choose the optimal candidate based on constraints" (Lecture, October 2016). It may also relate to her English learning experiences, for textbooks in China frequently change in the past decade, and students in China learned both American and British accent, hence sometimes they may be confused when pronouncing such words.

**Vocabulary:** There are two socio-cultural factors that might influence her acquisition of English vocabulary: English education in China, and English learning environment.

Regarding English education, the Chinese English education system is not designed for

students that seek for further studies abroad, hence academic words and writing skills were not taught in English classes in China. Seeing from Cummins's theory about BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) and CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency), the Chinese English teaching system focused on BICS but lacked a training of CALP (Cummins, 1999). As for her English learning environment, Julie majored in Chinese Language and Literature at her university, which limited her use of English. After coming to the U.S., she still lacked practice in oral English skills, since she lives with exclusively Chinese roommates, and she only uses English to communicate in classrooms or when interacting at the mall with American staff.

**Grammar:** As for grammar mistakes (the misuse of articles, prepositions and third person singular) in her speaking and writing, multiple factors should be considered. First, English education in China focuses on tests and written English, and only challenging grammar points are tested; thus, those basic grammar points would not be practiced frequently. Second, in Chinese, we don't use articles, prepositions and third person singular in the way English speakers do, and we don't have a past tense in Chinese. Hence, Julie might still fall back into her habit in using Chinese when she speaks English. Last but not least, she had nearly no exposure to English in China, and also no chance to practice with native speakers.

**Anxiety:** Julie used many fillers in speaking, and she reported feeling nervous speaking in an academic setting or speaking publicly. Anxiety might be the cause of this problem, and can be explained by Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that anxiety has a strong influence in L2 input and output (EDUC 6520 Lecture, September 2016). In Julie's case, she's feeling nervous when providing outputs, and her language ability is not good enough to express her opinions accurately and provide a clear structure, while in leisure times, or in a 1-to-1 conversation with friends and even strangers, her communications are excellent.



#### 4. Specific Instructional Plan for the Participant

Based on the previous analysis, Julie is already a good English speaker. Her problems do not hinder understanding, and can be corrected under proper training and practice.

**Pronunciation:** Research suggests that practicing in a classroom or a L2 setting helps a lot in improving ELL's language skills and phonological awareness (Flege 1989; Silveria, 2012).

Hence I suggest that Julie practice her Oral English frequently with native speakers, and ask them to point out and correct her mistakes in pronunciation. She can also look for resources that provide solutions to these problems, like videos teaching standard English sounds or distinguishing British/American Accent, and courses provided by the English Language Center at Vanderbilt. VOA/BBC radios and talking books are also good resources for English learners, for they can listen and read at the same time, and read aloud with the voice, hence strengthen their memory of the pronunciation. Furthermore, readers would have proper pauses in reading, and Julie can also learn how to break sentences from them.

**Vocabulary:** I suggest that Julie should learn more academic words through reading and translating. First, when reading academic papers, she can take notes of some academic words that she can use in her own writing, make her own vocabulary cards or books, and review these word frequently. Second, learning new words through translating enables her to learn the meaning and usage of a new word at the same time. Based on my personal experience, learning a word from translating would be quicker than from reading. Third, I would recommend that Julie read the English explanation of new words rather than the Chinese version, which helps her to understand the accurate meaning of new words.

**Grammar:** To eliminate grammar mistakes in her academic writing, Julie can start from self-reflection. She can read her own work carefully after finishing the draft and see if she can see any grammar mistake. In the interview and when describing pictures, she corrected her grammar mistakes for a couple of times, hence I suggest that she has the ability to identify

grammar mistakes in speaking and writing. After that, she may find a native speaker to read her paper and point out the grammar mistakes that she was not able to recognize, and make notes to remind herself to be careful next time. Moreover, since her grammar mistakes concentrate mainly on inflectional suffixes, past tense of irregular verbs, and plural form, she can write or rewrite paragraphs that focus on one grammar mistake in her leisure time. For example, she can choose a paragraph from her academic writing, and use past tense to rewrite the paragraph to strengthen her awareness of past tense. Last but not least, Julie can learn more conjunction words from online resources, and review the knowledge of clauses and sentence structures. She can also compare and contrast in reading and translating, and figure out the proper way to break utterances and sentences.

Regarding sentence structure and breaking utterances, and pragmatics, some researchers (Chenail and Chenail, 2011; White, 2011) suggested that writers should ask themselves questions, such as, “What does the reader expect us to do?” (White, 2001, p.68) to make sure that the maxim of relation is addressed, or “Do you find the meaning of any words I used in the report to be unclear or obscure?” (Chenail and Chenail, 2011, p.283) to adhere to the maxim of manner. Hence, I suggest that Julie reread her writing assignments, and ask herself such questions after she finishes the draft to see if she has difficulty reading her own work.

**Anxiety:** The problems described above are all tiny mistakes that do not hinder understanding, so Julie shouldn't worry about confusing others, but focus on building up confidence. First, she can talk with native speakers, like her classmates, and ask them if they have any suggestion for her to improve her speech skills. Second, if she needs to do a presentation publicly, she can practice in front of a mirror, or with her roommates and get feedbacks and recommendations. Third, if her tiny mistakes are all corrected, she would naturally feel confident in her English skills.

## 5. Critical Reflection

This case study provided me a chance to use various resources and tools to evaluate my participant's second language acquisition level, and helped me to recognize the importance of evaluating and making individual plans for my future students. What's more, I learned many theories and concepts in second language acquisition, and how to apply such theories into practice in the area of teaching English as a second language.

**Individualized evaluation and recommendation:** During the process of completing this case study, I found that it is effective and helpful to evaluate a student and give specific, individualized instructional plan. As a teacher, it is always important to be familiar with students. Knowing students' ability, potential, strengths and weaknesses, a teacher can find the best way to guide the student and improve his/her language ability. If I'm going to make class plans in the future, I would evaluate my students individually to see if they have similar problems, or if some of them need specific guidance. Furthermore, completing the evaluation is not the end, and the evaluation should be a continuous process, but not a one-time work. Based on the evaluation, a teacher should provide applicable recommendations and teaching strategies. After a period of teaching, the teacher should make a new assessment to see whether students are making progress, solving previous problems, and being active learners.

**New Theories:** The most important theory I've learned through this case study is that, L1 has a strong influence on L2, and such influence can be positive or negative on Second language acquisition. I used to think that native language can only have negative effects on second language learning, while this is not the truth. I started to realize the positive effect of native language on L2, like having a clear knowledge of native language grammar would help students when they learn the grammar system of their second language. If a student has not mastered his/her native language, it would be even more difficult for this student to learn a second language, for he/she have no clear awareness of grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics.

As an English teacher, I have to work hard to help my future students to conquer the negative effect of L1 on L2, and use their L1 knowledge to help them to learn English if necessary.

**Academic Writing:** This case study has improved my academic writing skills. Since we have a page limit, I have to reorganize my sentences to make sure that they are brief and at the same time clear enough. I also read many academic papers to help me better understand the influencing factors and theories in second language acquisition, and learned many academic words through reading and writing.

## Artifact D: EDUC 6520 Community Literacy Project Report

### Community Literacy Project

The field trip on Sep. 10<sup>th</sup> enabled me to have an overview of the current situation of minority communities in Nashville. I'm going to talk about the Spanish community here, introducing this community's history and current situation, my field trip experiences and my opinion on teaching English to Hispanic students of different ages and language levels.

#### **History and Current Situation**

Nashville has a larger job market and lower living costs compared with other cities (Cornfield et al, 2003), which attracted immigrants, especially Hispanics to come here and build up their own community. The Spanish Community here in Nashville experienced huge growth within two decades from 1990 to 2010, from 0.9% to 9.8% of the Nashville population, which is a rather high speed compared with the two decades from 1970 to 1990 with only a 0.3% of growth (Wikipedia: Nashville).

In 2003, according to the Final Report of Immigrant Community Assessment of Nashville, Spanish speakers were having trouble with various problems. Many of them did not have a legal social status due to their immigrant identity, which had led to various problems in finding jobs and housing, seeking education, and other supports related to their daily life (e.g. language, policies, health insurance). Language was the main problem, for many immigrants didn't know any English and were not able to find enough support. In 2000, 32% of Hispanics who used Spanish as their household language were linguistically isolated, and 86% of these people were between 18 and 64 years old (Cornfield et al, 2003, p.23). The language barrier limited their job performances, thus leading to lower wage and disrespect from their employers and landlords.

In recent years, however, things have changed because many associations were established to support immigrant communities in Nashville, especially for the Hispanic community because of its growing population. Now, a Spanish speaker in Nashville can go to many places to ask for support such as Casa Asafrán. They can also find websites that have Spanish versions, or providing services for immigrant communities like Mayor's Office of New Americans and Center of Refugees + Immigrants of Tennessee. These websites provide services and support for Spanish speakers, including English language classes, social status and policy guidance, daily life supports, children and adult education, and cultural support for newcomers.

## Field Trip Experiences

In the field trip, I went to two places that related to the Hispanic community: Casa Asafrán and Mercado La Hacienda Panaderia y Carniceria. And I also saw something about the Hispanic community in those supermarkets we visited that day.

During the visit in Casa Asafrán, the environment and people there left a deep impression on me. At first glance, I was attracted to the beautiful art works and decorations created by artists from the Hispanic and Arabian communities (See Appendix: Figure 1 and Figure 2). I saw bright colors like red, orange and yellow everywhere, representing the enthusiasm of the Hispanic community, and making me feel refreshed. Everyone in the pictures hanging on the wall of the corridor was smiling, showing that this place could bring people happiness and satisfaction. All these decorations made me feel excited and willing to explore more there. Based on my own feeling, I think these decorations will make Hispanics and Arabians feel at home, and children will be attracted to those bright colors, cute decorations and pictures (See Appendix: Figure 3 and Figure 4). I was also amazed by those wonderful artworks created by kids studying there, which reflect their enthusiasm for Casa Asafrán and their own culture.

As for the people there, the lady that guided us was very enthusiastic and helpful. She introduced the history, environment, and services provided by Casa Asafrán. Listening to her introductions, I found that every detail in that building was carefully designed and chosen to create a warm and welcoming environment for Hispanics and Arabs, and an open space for children so that they would feel excited and willing to study and explore. I also saw some Hispanic kids and their parents waiting to attend a class, and they were chatting with each other in Spanish and smiling happily.

According to an interview with immigrants in Nashville, some of them complained about lacking exposure to their own cultural practices in their children's education in public schools, and being devalued because of their immigrant status and the language barrier (Cornfield et al, 2003). But in Casa Asafrán, these problem were all solved because of their wonderful environment and hard-working staff.

Another place that we visited was a store selling Mexican foods, snacks and products. I saw various kinds of bread and cakes with a lot of sugar, and some Mexican candies that had very attractive packings with bright colors. I bought a Palmier and it was very delicious, and the taste was very similar to those sold in Shanghai, my hometown. I also took pictures of some products like a piñata with Minions in the center circle (Figure 5), and some other cute

products that might attract children (Figure 6). The cashier there was also enthusiastic and always had a smile on her face.

In Fresh & Fresh International Market, I found a shelf of newspapers. Although this supermarket sells mainly Asian products, almost all newspapers are written in Spanish, and most news are about Mexican politics, society and entertainment. In my consideration, this reflects that the Hispanic community plays an important part in the whole immigrant communities in Nashville. Also, it shows that those immigrant communities have integrated to some extent.

### **Analysis**

Based on my experiences in the field trip and research online, I have found some methods that can be used in teaching students from the Hispanic community. I would talk about methods that might work on younger students, like elementary and middle school students, then adult students.

As for children's English education, love, care and respect will be my main focus. "Culturally Responsive Caring" philosophy requires teachers to "honor their community, hold them in high esteem, expect high performance from them, and use strategies to fulfill their expectations" (Gay, 2010, p.48), which is exactly what I want to do if I teach immigrant students. Based on this philosophy, I suggest that parents and community members should be involved in their children's education. I noticed that in Casa Asafrán, kids can attend classes with their parents, which led me to consider parents' involvement in classrooms. As mentioned above, there were some complaints about immigrant students lacking exposure to their own culture. In addition, several studies on immigrant children's English language development have proven that some immigrant students need to refer to their own culture background to feel comfortable in English dominant environments, like allowing them to use their native language in classroom, or encouraging them to share their cultural background and stories with other students (Townsend & Fu, 1998; Townsend & Fu, 2001; Gay, 2010). It is also helpful to connect immigrant students' home and classroom by inviting parents or community members to participate in classroom projects (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). Thus I would recommend teachers to invite parents or community members to come to students' classrooms and participate in some activities designed for Spanish speaking students to gain access to their own culture, like the "Candy project" described in our class reading (Moll et al, 1992). For example, I can create a "piñata project" for students to make their own piñata, introduce their designs to the class, take their art work back home, and share

with their families. In this project, Hispanic students will have the chance to introduce the piñata to native students, and Hispanic community members can come and teach the students how to make their own piñata. This project enables native students to learn more about the Hispanic community and their culture, and provides an opportunity for Spanish speaking students to introduce their own culture, and practice their oral English.

When I was looking for resources on the Casa Asafrán website, I found a link called “Global Education Center”. This organization aims to “use the arts of diverse cultures, to highlight the commonalities of all people ... to develop empathy, understanding and respect for the individual and for all humanity” (<http://www.globaleducationcenter.org/about.html>), and provides both children and adult courses and workshops, including Spanish courses. When I saw these courses, I suddenly realized that the Hispanics are famous for their music and dance, and since Nashville is called “Music City in the U.S.”, it would be reasonable that we use music in English classes designed for Spanish-speaking students, or use some materials related to Spanish music and dances. For example, teachers can play Spanish music in recess time in classroom, and schools can provide English-Spanish bilingual books for Spanish-speaking students. We can also have a project that asks students to draw a poster of their favorite singer/dancer, introducing their story, style of music/dances, and share some songs/videos with the class.

For adult students, respect to themselves and their community will be my first priority. I will visit their family and community (if allowed), talk to them, ask them what they want to learn in English classes, and encourage them to talk to me if anything happens in the classroom to frustrate them. I will also try to contact teachers and staff working in Casa Asafrán, Global Education Center and other organizations to learn more about their community. Moreover, class plans should be based on students’ necessities. Since they are adults, they might need many job and skill instructions and guidance on their status, housing, social network, etc. I can design some projects related to their daily life, like having a “Real-life Project” that asks students to act as staff and visitors in hospitals, supermarkets and restaurants, so that basic conversation skills can be practiced and vocabulary learned. At the same time, I would invite some native speakers to be their language partners based on their needs. Last but not least, food is a good media of cross-cultural communication, and since cooking is not very safe for young students, I may have a food project in an adult classroom, asking them to introduce some foods from their own culture, write down the recipe, buy ingredients in international markets, and finally cook and share their dishes. In this project,



writing and oral skills are developed, and international supermarkets become special classrooms.

Translating is a good way for ELLs with high levels of English skills, benefiting both ELLs and their friends and families that are Spanish monolingual speakers. It enables ELLs to “negotiate the linguistic and pragmatic choices necessary for creating the best translation” (Jiménez, Smith and Teague, 2009, p.22). I can find some Spanish-speaking ELLs willing to be volunteers to translate some instructions and children’s books. If their oral English is fluent, they can also become language partners of beginners.

### **Conclusion**

My investigation of the Hispanic community in Nashville helped me a lot, for I saw the enthusiasm and potential of this community, and began to understand how immigrants help each other and build their own community. This process also reminded me the importance of respect in language teaching and in other environments. In all, love, care, and respect are the core values in teaching English to students from minority groups. I believe that if I make efforts to embrace students and their community, respect their language and culture, they will see my efforts and finally give me positive feedback, which is what I’m always expecting as a teacher.

## References

- Casa Azafrán. (n.d.). Retrieved September 24, 2016, from <http://www.casaazafran.org/>
- Center of Refugee + Immigrants of Tennessee. (n.d.). Retrieved September 24, 2016, from <http://www.centerforrefugees.org/>
- Cornfield, D. B., & Brown, T. N. (2003). Immigrant Community Assessment. *Final Report prepared under contract for Nashville Metro Government. (ftp://ftp.nashville.gov/web/finance/immigrant-community-assessmentnashville.pdf)*.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press, Chapter 3. 123-150.
- Global Education Center. (n.d.). Retrieved September 24, 2016, from <http://www.globaleducationcenter.org/>
- Jimenez, R. T., Smith, P. H., & Teague, B. L. (2009). Transnational and community literacies for teachers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(1), 16-26.
- Major's Office of New Americans. (n.d.) Retrieved September 24, 2016, from <http://www.nashville.gov/Mayors-Office/Neighborhoods/New-Americans.aspx>
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- Townsend, J. S., & Fu, D. (2001). Paw's story: A Laotian refugee's lonely entry into American literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 45(2), 104-114.
- Townsend, J. S., & Fu, D. (1998). A Chinese boy's joyful initiation into American literacy. *Language Arts*, 75(3), 193-201.
- Nashville, Tennessee. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved September 25, 2016, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nashville,\\_Tennessee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nashville,_Tennessee)

Appendix

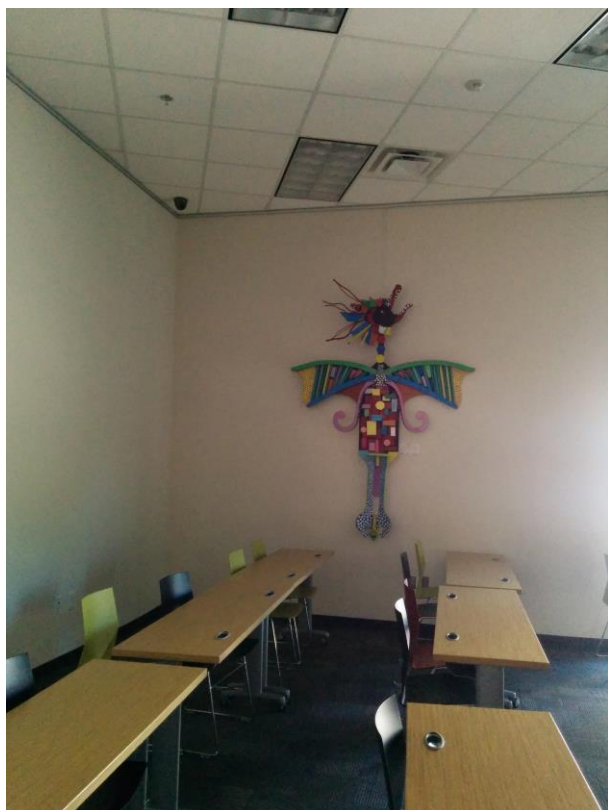


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

## Artifact E: EDUC 6520 Investigating Schools Report

### Investigating Schools

#### 1. Introduction and Observation Results

I visited Haywood Elementary School and had a wonderful experience there. Located in Southeast Nashville, this school contains 876 students in which nearly 85% are immigrant students (Interview on teachers in Haywood). About 96% of all students are participating in a free or reduced-price lunch program, indicating that many of them come from low SES families (NCES 2013-2014, retrieved from [www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org)). Among all the students, 62% come from the Hispanic community, and about 13% come from Asian or the Asian Pacific Islands ([www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org)). Around 64% of all students are ELLs, and more than twenty different languages are spoken in Haywood (MNPS Haywood Elementary School webpage), so teachers in Haywood are English Learner (EL) certificated to provide better education for ELLs.

Overall, Haywood uses mainly English Sheltered program, and different teachers may choose diversified strategies based on students' English level and background knowledge. Because of the large ELL population, most classrooms in Haywood are ELL classes, in which students from various countries are mixed. For ELL students' assessment, the school uses World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA). Students took test before they come to school and were put into different classes based on their English level, and take a WIDA test every spring to evaluate their progress. Some students have to work with ELL teachers for a whole day, while those who had some knowledge of English might enroll in a half-day immersion program, in which they learn English in the morning and study with native speakers in the afternoon.

#### 2. Observation in School

I observed four ELL classes and one homeroom class in Haywood. By the time I went to Haywood, students were learning how to identify the topic and details in a reading material, and explain what they've read on their own using the knowledge of main idea and details.

The first class I observed was a Grade 1 ELL reading and writing class taught by Ms.G. There were 15 students in the classrooms, and they seemed familiar with the class routine, so they were quiet when the teacher gave instructions, and performed well in following all the instructions. That class was similar to the English classes I experienced when I was a first grader in elementary school in China, but students were sitting on the carpet instead of their desks, which provides a more relaxing environment. The class focused on pronunciation, and the teacher mainly used repetitions to correct students' pronunciation. The teacher pointed at some words on the whiteboard and asked students to read after her, then asked questions and students wrote down the correct answer (words) on their own small white board. After this exercise, students were divided into two groups, one read a simple story book with the teacher, the other used the computers in the classroom to study on their own, waiting for their turn to read the story book with the teacher. She required students to read the story aloud and repeat core words in the story to make sure that they all learn the correct pronunciation.

The second class was also a Grade 1 ELL class taught by Ms.P and an assistant teacher. There were 14 students in that classroom. The teacher was good at using her body gesture to guide students and raise their interests. She also designed some hand gestures that represent classroom rules so that students could understand her instructions by observing her gestures and making the same gestures with her. A notable detail is that she enhanced the classroom rules by saying "Thank xxx for following the rules" or "I love the way you go back to your seat." Similar to Ms.G, she asked students to read after her to emphasize the topic of the class, but she used thinking maps to explain the topic, asking students to create their own thinking map under her guidance.

After that, I went to Ms.R's Grade 3 ELL class, which impressed me a lot. That classroom contained nine students, mainly Spanish speaking students and African students, and all of them were studying in Haywood for only two months. Like Ms.P, the teacher used many body gestures to explain the concept of main topic and details, and she used many games and activities to interact with her students. Although students were beginners and were not confident in speaking English, they were all highly involved and enjoyed the activities very much. Through using games, the teacher built up students' confidence and encouraged them to share their opinions with classmates.

After lunch, I visited Ms.F's homeroom, in which she taught 25 fourth graders to identify the theme of the reading and figure out the author's purpose. Students in that classroom had better English proficiency, so teachers were using longer reading materials to challenge them. Moreover, the book she used was an English-Spanish bilingual book, and she asked Spanish-speaking students in class to read the Spanish context and compare with the English version.

The last class I observed is Ms.L's ELL class, in which 12 students came from five different countries and had arrived at Haywood for only a couple of weeks. The teacher used Four-square word chart (See Appendix Picture 1) to help students to recognize and remember the core words. She also used word and morpheme cards to let students explore simple sentence structures in English. Students in that classroom seem to enjoy the activities and tools provided by the teacher that enabled them to explore English words and grammar.

In all, ELL teachers at Haywood applied many excellent strategies in teaching their students, and students were active learners in classrooms, for I saw and heard many positive feedbacks from students. Furthermore, students there were welcoming, active and were enthusiastic in sharing their opinions. However, some problems existed in the ELL classrooms, which would be explained in the next part.

### 3. Questions on ELL students' services



During my observation in Haywood, four problems about ELL education were seen: a) Teachers were using inappropriate instructions; b) Teachers didn't have enough communications and cooperation; c) Problems in book and content choosing; d) A lack of community member/parent involvement.

As for instructions, different teachers used different language policies in their own classrooms. Nearly all teachers used only English to give instructions, and not all of them would tolerate students' native language in their classrooms. For example, in one classroom, the teacher asked two boys to stop using Spanish by saying loudly "No Spanish" to them when they were using Spanish in a small group work. As an observer, I was not feeling well when I heard that "No Spanish" instruction, because it sounded like an order from a commander, but not the instruction from an elementary school teacher. This tough instruction would not only influence the two boys but also other students in the classroom, hence preventing students from using their native language, and may finally block students' interest and confidence in their native language and culture. This incident reminded me of Gay's (2010) "Power of Culturally Responsive Caring", in which he emphasized the importance of truly loving and caring for children both physically and mentally, and respect themselves and their backgrounds. He explained that "... teacher who really care for students honor their community, hold them in high esteem, expect high performance from them, and use strategies to fulfill their expectations" (p.48). If the teacher could use a more caring way, for example, use a lower voice and more soft words to encourage the two boys, or use other strategies to guide the students to meet her expectations, I believe that students would feel much better, and at the same time their interest in English would be raised.

Such differences between teachers aroused a question: Do ESL teachers and homeroom teachers have regular meetings, communications and cooperation on ELL education? To answer this question, I asked Ms.L about teachers' cooperation, and she replied that she did

have meetings with ESL teachers teaching the same grade with her, and shared some core ideas and teaching plans with them, but she didn't mention that she discussed with ESL teachers teaching other grades or ELL students' homeroom teachers. However, research has shown that the cooperation between teachers, especially the collaboration between homeroom and ESL teachers, would benefit students in many ways. For example, York-Barr, Ghore and Sommers (2007) concluded that, the cooperation between ESL and homeroom teachers would allow teachers to have reflections and make improvements, and at the same time benefit students through giving differentiated instructions. They made a three-year experiment and proved that "collaborative learning and practice among teachers with diverse areas of expertise was the means by which instructional coherence to advance student learning was achieved in general education classrooms" (York-Barr et al., 2007, p.331). I didn't see a clear evidence that teachers in Haywood were cooperating with each other in classrooms. To my consideration, this situation should be changed, and teachers should work together in order to benefit ELL children.

Another problem I noticed is book and context choosing in ELL classrooms. During my observation, only one teacher used a bilingual book in her teaching, while most teachers used books designed for native English-speaking children. One of the teachers I met led us to see the library, however when I asked where were bilingual books, she could not point out where they were in the library, indicating that she is not using bilingual books frequently. Also the contents that teachers chose were sometimes inappropriate considering their students' English level. In one class I observed, the teacher was teaching landscapes and some related words like "valley" and "mountain". However, her students had just started to learn English for a couple of weeks, and such content were too difficult and not useful for them. Moreover, the book she used to teach such topic was designed for English native speakers, thus there were many hard words that may distract students, and probably stop them from focusing on

the core words. To my consideration, teachers should choose contents that meet the needs of their students, and use more bilingual books or books designed for ELLs.

The last question I had was about community member/parent involvement and support. Haywood provides supports for ELLs and their families through offering translating service for parents and students in need, and information about translating services was shown on walls in the corridor. According to the MNPS website, public schools in Nashville also provide remote English classes for ELL students' parents, and legal assistance for immigrants. However, nearly no community involvement was seen in this school. Teachers there said that no community members or parents were involved in school activities, because many parents cannot speak English. In my point of view, since Haywood has a large population of ELLs and immigrants, teachers have to make efforts to learn some basic information about minority groups in Nashville, and use such knowledge in class plans. "Funds of knowledge" described by Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) provided instructions and guidance for ESL teachers on how to observe and understand a community through visiting and communicating, and how to design class activities that reflect students' native language and culture, and finally, how to involve community members and parents in school activities and projects. Allen (2007) also emphasized the advantages of teachers working together with parents. He also provided several cases and proved that nearly all students had enthusiasm in working with their families and do projects related to their own family history, native language or original culture.

#### 4. Recommendations

Base on previous analysis, I would recommend that ESL teachers in Haywood:

(a) Respect students' native language and cultural background, and "empower students by legitimizing their 'voice' and visibility" (Gay, 2010, p.55). Such attitude should be accepted by teachers and applied on students in this case, and students' native languages shouldn't be

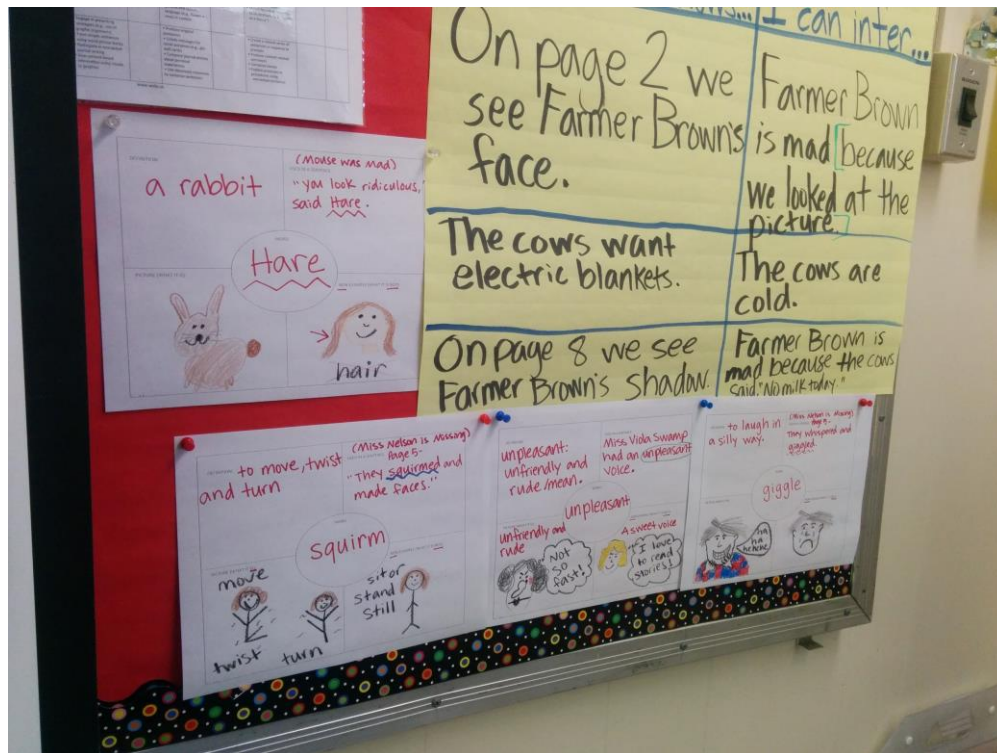
viewed as problem (de Jong, 2008). ELL teachers should listen to their kids, learn their needs, and consider better ways to give instructions to students, for they are vulnerable children and were all beginners. I also remember that Delpit (1988) explained teachers from different cultures used different ways to give instructions, and students would also understand such instructions in their own way based on their cultural knowledge. Teachers should fully understand students' cultural and educational background, and design proper ways to give instructions and interact with students that make them feel respected and cared. (b) Cooperate with other ESL teachers and homeroom teachers, have more discussions on ELL education, and make plans that help ELL students transit seamlessly in different classrooms. York-Barr et al. (2007) provided co-teaching instructional models that may help ESL teachers in Haywood to collaborate with their colleagues. The English as a Second Language Program Guide (2016, Retrieved from Tennessee Government Website) also provided guidance for ESL teachers to cooperate with the principal, ELL coordinator, and their colleagues. (c) Collaborate with the librarian to find more bilingual books or books designed for ELLs. During our visit in J.E. Moss Elementary School on October 1<sup>st</sup>, the principal shared her resources of finding high quality school books with us. I believe that teachers and the librarian in Haywood also know such resources, and can find many useful books for their students if they work together effectively. (d) Explore different communities in Nashville, visit students' home and talk with their parents, and give students more chances to talk about their own family, language and culture. I was impressed by the reading project described in Allen's (2007) book, in which parents read books with their children, and the teacher communicated with parents through journals. Teachers can try similar methods to encourage parents to communicate with them, and learn some basic information about their students, their families, and get some clues about the community. It would be better if teachers can find some community members or parents and allow them to participate in school activities.

## References

- Allen, J. (2007). *Creating Welcoming Schools: A Practical Guide to Home-School Partnerships with Diverse Families*. International Reading Association (NJ3). Chapter 3, 7, 8, 9: pp.39-51, 93-124.
- De Jong, E. J. (2011). *Foundations for multilingualism in education: From principles to practice*. Philadelphia: Caslon Pub.
- Delpit, L. D. (2006). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. The New Press. pp.21-47.
- English as a Second Language Program Guide. (2016, August). Retrieved November 12, 2016, from [http://www.tennessee.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/esl\\_english\\_as\\_a\\_second\\_language\\_program\\_guide.pdf](http://www.tennessee.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/esl_english_as_a_second_language_program_guide.pdf)
- Facella, M. A., Rampino, K. M., & Shea, E. K. (2005). Effective teaching strategies for English language learners. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 29(1), 209-221.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press. Chapter 3: pp.47-75.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- York-Barr, J., Ghere, G., & Sommerness, J. (2007). Collaborative teaching to increase ELL student learning: A three-year urban elementary case study. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 12(3), 301-335.

Appendix

Picture 1



Artifact F: Lesson Plan – Fables

**Lesson Plan**

Yue Wu

**School:** J.E. Moss Elementary School

**Grade:** Grade 3

**Student Teacher:** Yue Wu

**Mentor Teacher:** Mrs. Laura Laufman

**Lesson:** 11/15/2017 9:35~10:15 Whole Group (20 students)

**Student:** All ELL students, over a half are Spanish/English bilinguals; mixed level (ACCESS raw score ranging from 2-6)

**Unit Theme:** Fables / Dialogue and Quotation Marks

**This Class in the Unit:** Second week of reading fables and practicing writing dialogues and quotation marks. Students have learned the patterns of quotation marks, and need more practice on identifying and writing a dialogue with the support of a text.

**Standard:**

**3. FL. SC. 6(L)** - Quotes and commas in dialogue

**Writing:** Narrative Writing- Students will create their own Fable using fable elements (Will be final Culminating Task and writing piece)

**3. WTTP.3** - Narrative Writing

<p><b>Language Objective:</b> SWBAT write a dialogue and use quotation marks correctly.</p>	<p><b>Content Objective:</b> SWBAT identify dialogues in a text. SWBAT write a dialogue based on the pictures and the story they read.</p>
<p><b>Key Concept:</b> Quotation Marks Dialogue</p>	<p><b>Supporting Materials:</b> The Lion and the Mouse</p>

**Connections to Prior Knowledge and Past Learning: Building Background**

**Past Learning:**

- Quotation Marks: use posters and other examples to review the key concept
- Fables: use the fables students have read

**Learning Strategies:**

- Establishing a purpose for reading and/or learning
- Highlighting, underlining, or using sticky notes to identify important information
- Making predictions

**Lesson Structure**

**Lesson Sequence:**

- (6) Review: Give CO and LO. Use the poster and give some other examples to review quotations marks (Ask 1-2 students (1) Which fable they like better, *The Tortoise and the Hare*, or *The Fox and the Crow*? (2) What’s the moral/lesson of *The Tortoise and the Hare*/*The Fox and the Crow*? Use their answers to write a dialogue on the poster). (5-6 minutes)
- (7) Identify the dialogue: Have students review the wordless picture book. Read *The Lion and the Mouse* with the support of the picture book, and ask students to make the telephone gesture when they hear a dialogue. Ask some students to tell what did they hear, which character is talking, why they think they hear a dialogue, and where is the tag. After reading the story, use the projector to model, highlight the dialogue, and circle the tag. (8-12 minutes)
- (8) Who’s missing: Small group. In the text, some quotation marks are missing. Ask students to work together, write down their name, underline the dialogues, circle the tag, find which quotation marks are missing, and use pencils/crayons to add the missing part. After that, share the correct answer. (10 minutes)
- (9) Writing: This story doesn’t give a dialogue in the paragraph that lion was trapped and the mouse saved the lion. Ask students to take out the picture story book they have, and pick one page to model the activity (write

**Support, Review & Assessment:**

- Review, link to prior learning
- Review the story and the moral
- Review & Support: Modeling
- Link to prior learning - Students have read the wordless picture book
- Assessment: Check if students can identify the dialogue by tags
- Support: Small group
- Assessment: Check if students can identify the tag and use quotation marks correctly



<p>dialogue based on the picture, visualization, use action verbs and adjectives). Then, ask students to discuss in pairs what they think the lion would roar, and what would the mouse reply when he saw the lion was trapped. After the discussion, give students a sentence pattern (The lion filled the forest with his angry roaring, “_____.” The mouse heard that, came to the lion, and said, “_____.”), and ask students to write a dialogue on a blank paper. (Ask students to tell where to put quotation marks to use when giving the pattern.) If having time, ask some students to share their dialogues in pairs/small group, and share with whole class. (10 minutes)</p> <p>(10) Closing: Ask questions about some ideas of dialogue, enhance the idea that dialogues help readers to understand the moral/lesson of the story, and visualizing the dialogue makes a story more interesting to read. (2-3 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support: Modeling</li> <li>- Assessment: Make predictions</li> <li>- Support: Think-Pair-Share</li> <li>- Assessment: Writing</li> <li>- Assessment: Check if students can use quotation marks correctly and write short dialogues</li> <li>- Review</li> </ul>
---	--

**Important Factors in Instruction:**

- Check students’ understanding
- Give enough modeling and support
- Time control

## Artifact G: Workshop Plan

**Bringing Books to Life: Orange Workshop****What can you do with a BOOK and an “ORANGE”?****Overview**

**Workshop Target Audience:** Parents with children in elementary school, Grade 2-3

**Workshop Primary Goal:**

- Build the concept that reading at home with children can be fun and meaningful
- Guide parents to learn how to make reading at home fun and meaningful
- Guide parents to use activities to help reading at home

**Workshop Materials:**

- A picture book for display
- Recommended picture book list & chapter book list
- Material bag (Blooming taxonomy guidance & quick questions, Blooming orange activity materials, book to bring home, craft materials)
- Other materials from the library (brochures, sheets ...)

**Workshop Overview:**

This workshop is designed to help parents with children in Grade 2-3. The primary goal is to emphasize the importance and benefit of building the home reading culture, and provide ways that make home reading fun and meaningful. Concepts will be explained, and the speakers will have interactions with parents so that they will bring the experience home and share with their kids.

In this workshop, parents will learn the benefits of reading and playing with children at home, receive guidance on home reading and activities, and get helpful materials for home reading.

The recommended reading activities are designed based on Blooming Taxonomy, and the Blooming Orange is revised so that it would be easier for kids and parents with little experience reading with children.

**Recommended Picture Book List**

Title	Author	Reading Level
Mr. Tiger Goes Wild	Peter Brown	LG Level 1.5
Knuffle Bunny too: a case of mistaken identity	Mo. Willems	LG Level 2.4, Lexile 690
Imogene's Antlers	David Small	LG Level 2.6
Library Lion	Michelle Knudsen	LG Level 2.8, Lexile 470
Swimmy	Leo Lionni	LG Level 2.9, Lexile 570
Little Red Gliding Hood	Tara Lazer	LG Level 3.1, Lexile 500
Rocket Writes a Story	Tad Hills	LG Level 3.1, Lexile 540
Extra Yarn	Mac Barnett	LG Level 3.2, Lexile 620
A House for Hermit Crab	Eric Carle	LG Level 3.7, Lexile 540
Hansel and Gretel	Rika Lesser, Paul O. Zelinsky	LG Level 4.3, Lexile 680
Goodnight Songs	Margaret Wise Brown	LG Level 4.6

**Recommended Chapter Books & Fiction Books List**

Title	Author	Reading Level
Abracadabra! Magic with Mouse and Mole	Wong Herbert Yee	LG Level 2.6
Meet the Bigfeet	Kevin Sherry	LG Level 2.9
James to the Rescue (The Masterpiece Adventures Series, Book 3)	Elise Broach	LG Level 3
Stink: The Incredible Shrinking Kid (Stink Moody Volume 1)	Megan McDonald	LG Level 3, Lexile 540
No Dogs Allowed (Ready, set, dogs! Volume 1)	Stephanie Calmenson	LG Level 3.3, Lexile 570
The Dragon of Doom (Moongobble and me Volume 1)	Bruce Coville	LG Level 3.3, Lexile 590
Alvin Ho Series	Lenore Look	LG Level 3.6~3.8 Lexile 560~600
The Courage of Sarah Noble	Alice Dalgliesh	MG Level 3.9, Lexile 610
Catwings (Catwings series Volume 1)	Ursula K. Le Guin	LG Level 4.3, Lexile 700
Many Moons	James Thurber	LG Level 4.5
Elle the Thumbelina Fairy: Rainbow Magic Storybook Fairies Series, Book 1	Daisy Meadows	LG Level 4.5, Lexile 710

## Blooming Orange Pinwheel Game Guide

### Materials:

- A story book
- The Blooming Orange pinwheel

### The Game:

- Read the book.
- Use the pinwheel to decide which activity you will do.
- Do it and have fun!

### Activities:

#### 1. Remember:

**Design a costume:** Suppose you are going to act out the story. Design a costume for yourself! (Replacement: make a small paper version; design a T-shirt; choose a doll and make the costume for it)

**Find Details:** After reading a story book, grab a paper or an index card, and let your children write down some words or sentences they like or they found interesting, or draw out a scene they like most. Keep the paper/index card with the book, or find another place to keep these memories.

#### 2. Understand:

**Act it out:** Children love acting out stories with peers and parents. After reading a story book, give each of you one or more characters and act the story out!

**Character Information Card:** Let your children pick a character that they like the most, and make an information card for the character. Include name, gender, brief introduction, habits, likes & dislikes, characteristic features, and any other interesting facts.

#### 3. Apply

**Make a room for the main character:** Write down several factors and elements that related to the main character, and then decide what you are going to put in his/her room. Design and make the room for the main character. (Use cardboard boxes, flowers & grass, papers, plastics, stickers or anything you'd like to use, or just draw on the paper if you don't have enough material with you)

**Found poem:** Ask your children to choose some words and phrases from the story book, and use these words and phrases in the first lines of the poem. After that, you can expand the poem with your children as you wish, and finally get a longer poem that they can read aloud, write down and decorate, and share with families and classmates.

#### 4. Analyze:

**You draw/act, I guess:** Pick a word, a phrase, or a sentence that have a clear scene from the story book. One person read the sentence/phrase/word and draw/act it out (this person should be quiet all the time, otherwise he/she will be punished or lose points), another person guess what did the drawer/actor read. Switch roles, or find more participants and win for your group!

**Speak for another Character:** The story is always written on the perspective of the main character. But there are other characters whose emotions and thoughts might not be shown in the story. Try to retell the story from another character's perspective. (E.g. The step mother queen in Snow White, the witch in Hansel and Gretel)

#### 5. Evaluate

**Recommend the Book:** If your child loves the book very much, ask why and encourage your child to recommend the book to others. Give them time to organize their words and sentences, and remind them to include enough details and express their own thoughts.

If your children don't like this book, you can also ask them to tell why they don't like this book, and what will they do to make this book better.

**What's the Next:** Write down some sentences that contain important information in the story on post-it stickers or index cards, then give your child the beginning sentence of the story, and ask your child to choose sentences from the sentences you wrote to complete the story.

This activity can be done before or after reading the book. Doing it before you read can practice prediction, while doing it after reading can help your child to summarize the story. You can also change some sentences or add your own sentences.

#### 6. Create

**One by One story:** Pick a story book and write down the beginning sentence(s) of the story (make sure to give enough information for continue writing). Pass it to the next person, ask him/her to write down a sentence to continue the story, then cover the previous sentence(s) and pass the paper to the next person, so that each person can only see the last sentence created by the previous people. Continue for several rounds and read the story out. Make sure you have more than 20 sentences. See how amazing your story will become!

**Switch writers:** Choose a book and write down the beginning sentence on the first line of your own paper, and continue the story with your own sentence, then pass your paper to the person beside you. When your own paper finally comes back to you, write an ending for the story and share with the participants. (This activity is best for 3-5 participants. If 6 or more

want to play, divide into groups of 3 or 4 would be the best.)

### **Other Parent-Children Activities for Home**

- **Bring Experiences to Life**

If you are reading books with your children and they find something new, just search online and learn more by reading Wikipedia, watching videos and creating expanding experiences for your children. (E.g. Bring your children to the zoo if they read about animals; Find a short, interesting video if they read about art or artists) It would also be good if you buy a book related to your planned trip. (E.g. Read a book with your children about animals before your go to the zoo)

This is really helpful in building children's background knowledge and arousing their interests. Children love reading and having experiences in various genres!

- **Everyone Can be the Reader**

Read with your children is not only reading for them. If your children can and want to read, encourage them to read aloud to you. You can switch at any time during reading.

Reading aloud is very helpful. Children can practice their reading, speaking and listening skills during reading, and at the same time learn a lot of new word.

When you read a story with many conversations, poems or lyrics, try this! There are also books designed for this activity. ("You Read to Me, I'll Read to You" Series by Mary Ann Hoberman)

- **Read with Siblings/Cousins**

If you have more than one child, they can read together. Encourage the big brothers and sisters to read easy story books with their younger siblings or cousins.

All of them would benefit through reading together. You can also combine this activity with "Everyone Can be the Reader" activity, and let your children read to each other.

- **Singing with Your Children**

Lyrics are wonderful reading materials. Lyrics have rhythm and can be read as poems. If you want your children to learn more about poems, or help them to recognize different sound, listen and sing songs with them. Search "song", "lyric" or "rhyme" on the library website and choose kid's book, and enjoy your singing time!

Singing songs can build children's listening and speaking skills.

## Artifact H: EDUC 7951 Paper

### Parent Involvement in Teaching English as a Second Language: Implementing Parent-Child activities in Tasks and Projects

#### 1. Introduction

Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) and Cultural Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2010) are excellent examples of ESL teachers and researchers making efforts to promote parent involvement and students' background knowledge in ESL classrooms. In recent years, ELL's cultural background and worldview start to come to the surface, and has gradually changed the way we teach English as a Second Language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Research shows that many ELL parents attach great importance to children's education, and have a strong willing to know how their children perform in school (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014). However, many ELLs come from low SES (Social Economic Status) families, and it's not uncommon that their parents don't have strong educational background and enough English proficiency, and have limited time to learn or to help their kids at home due to living pressure (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

During my internship in the Bringing Books to Life program developed by Nashville Public Library, I discovered that parents play an important part in children's literacy development (Panferov, 2010; Tamer & Walsh, 2016). This program offers many workshops that guide parents and educators to read with children, and designed many fun and meaningful activities for the workshops. Those activities are closely connected to literacy development, and at the same time arouse children's interest in reading and writing. When I was designing activities for the project, this process reminded me of Task-Based Language Teaching and Project-Based Learning in ESL classrooms, and the concept of Funds of Knowledge and Cultural Responsive Caring. Tasks and projects emphasize meaningful context, real language use and creative thinking skills, while Funds of Knowledge and



Cultural Responsive Caring advocates the idea of respecting and using ELL's background knowledge in language teaching.

In such situation, I developed an idea that, if we can use these activities in promoting literacy development for English native speakers, we can also use these activities in language teaching. Through designing tasks and projects that allow parents to get involved, students can use their background knowledge, parents can fulfill their desire of helping their children, and teachers can find new ways to communicate and cooperate with parents to build a brighter future for ELLs. In the following paragraphs, I will analyze research results of parent involvement, and give some examples of combining home parent-child activities with tasks and projects following the concept of Cultural Responsive Caring and Funds of Knowledge.

## 2. Parent Involvement in ESL Teaching

Generally, Research on parent involvement in ESL focus on the following 3 questions:

(a) Is parent involvement really helpful in promoting children's performance, and how? (b) What factors may increase/decrease parent involvement? (c) How to encourage ELL parents to get involved in school projects and strengthen parent-teacher connection?

The benefits of parent involvement in ESL teaching has been proved by many research and studies. Antunez (2000) claims that "The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to: 1) create a home environment that encourages learning; 2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and 3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community" (Antunez, 2000, p.2), which indicates the importance of parents' attitude, encouragement and involvement in children's academic development. In general, parent involvement would bring the following benefits for ELL students: (a) better academic performance in school; (b) less social-emotional problems and better behavior in school; (c) promote attendance and

students' motivation; (d) build confidence for both parents and students. Studies show that involving parents in school activities and workshops, and promote home reading will bring positive effect on ELL's academic development and behavior in school (Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Antunez, 2000; Niehaus & Adelson, 2014). Inviting parents to family literacy programs and workshops improves parents' reading and writing skills, promotes home reading with children, and leads to children's better performance in school (Mulhern, Rodriguez-Brown & Shanahan, 1994). Moreover, if students see their parents learning together with them, they would see their parents as allies and supporters, and work hard to make progress together with their parents. Once academic achievements were gained, confidence would be built, and parents would be more willing to learn more and get involved, thus build a virtuous circle of parent involvement and students' achievement in school.

However, there are three major factors that might decrease parent involvement in ESL: (a) parents' educational background and low English proficiency; (b) ELL's family SES; (c) school support. First, parents' educational status, especially mother's educational background, is an important factor in parent involvement. Stevenson and Baker (1987) found that "more educated mothers knew more about their child's school performance, had more contact with teachers, and were more likely to have taken action, when necessary, to manage their child's academic achievement" (Stevenson & Baker, 1987, p.1349). However, many ELL's parents are not well educated, hence may have limited knowledge of the importance of parent support. This lack of education also leads to lower English proficiency, which creates a huge gap between parents and schools. Second, the families' Social Economic Status (SES) also plays an important role in parent involvement. Parents from low SES families usually have limited time due to living pressure, for they might have to take multiple jobs and take care of many children. Moreover, families with low incomes usually do not have reliable transportation and technological support, which limits their living and studying experiences

within the community. Third, School support may also affect parent's choice. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) found out that, schools have a large ELL population usually offer better support to ELLs and their families, like translators and transportation, while ESL students in an English-speaker dominated school would receive fewer support from school and teachers, hence having a lower interest in parent involvement (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). If parents don't get enough support, they might know little about the U.S. school system, hence would not be able to help students because of such unfamiliarity (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014). There are also reports showing that some school staff and teachers still have stereotype on ELL's parents (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Araujo, 2009; Niehaus & Adelson, 2014). They hold the belief that ELL's parents do not care their children's school performance, or they feel hard to talk with parents due to their low English proficiency, hence creates problems in parent-teacher communication.

Despite the difficulties and barriers, researchers and teachers have found some excellent way of implementing parent involvement in ESL teaching. For example, many schools offer parent literacy workshops, and provide transportation, child care and food in these workshops and other parent activities to attract more parents. As mentioned above, schools have a large proportion of ELLs tend to do more to promote parent involvement, like inviting translators, buying and using bilingual books, and communicate with ELL parents more often. Teachers also made their efforts through making home visit and designing individualized scholastic funds of knowledge plan for ELLs in their classrooms. Through making plans and using students' background knowledge, their academic performance increased and their parents get involved in their achievements (Allen, 2007; Araujo, 2009; Gay, 2010, Panferov, 2010). Researchers and teachers also gave many examples of parent involvement. For example, Araujo (2009) stated that "the best practices [of parent involvement] include (a) incorporating

funds of knowledge, (b) practicing culturally relevant teaching, (c) fostering communication, and (d) extending and accepting assistance” (Araujo, 2009, p. 116).

In all, researchers and teachers have made efforts to find better ways to involve parents in ESL classrooms. All these ideas and theories provide help in designing new class plans for ELL students in today’s classrooms.

### 3. Home Parent-Child Activities

Gay (2010) argues that teachers “must thoroughly understand their own and their students’ perspectives and experiences”, and “empower students by legitimizing their ‘voice’ and visibility” (Gay, 2010, p.54-55). Moll et al. (1992) emphasized the importance of home visiting, and stated that “the purpose of the parent’s visit was to contribute intellectually to the students’ academic activity” (Moll et al., 1992, p.138). Summarizing their ideas, students’ background knowledge should be respected and brought to the surface in ESL classrooms, so that students’ confidence would be built, their enthusiasm on learning would be aroused, and better academic achievements are very likely to become the final result. Panferov (2010) stated that “second language school literacy seems to hinge on three main opportunities: access to books and/or technology, structured study time, and regular reading and writing exposure” (Panferov, 2010, p.109). Therefore, tasks and projects aiming at promote parent involvement should consider these factors.

Following the idea of Culturally Responsive Caring and Funds of Knowledge, I implemented some activities I designed in my summer internship with Task-Based Language Teaching and Project-Based Learning. I will give examples of combining home parent-child activities with tasks and projects in school. These activities can involve parents in students’ school work, while high level literacy or strong background are not required. Through implementing these activities, parents and children are able to use their own background

knowledge, share their own culture with others, and at the same time promote children's literacy development.

(1) Activity: Making a map; Task: Travel plan

In this task, Students' main task is to make a travel plan for a partner who's planning to visit the students' hometown (either a city or a country would be fine). They are going to do an interview on their partners' interest, then make an individualized travel plan for the partner. Students should list the "must go sites", recommend some special dishes, make a detailed schedule, and a map for the visitors. Finally, they are going to introduce their own plan to their partners or the whole class.

"Making a map for the book" after reading is an activity developed by the Bringing Books to Life program. Students need to design, draw and write to make a map, hence develop their overall skills. And if they cooperate with their parents in the process, parents will see their own knowledge show on the map, and feel involved in children's achievements. During the process of completing the task, students are going to ask their parents about the information they need to gather, and their parents would become an excellent resource of such information. They can make discussions, search online together, or borrow a book and read together, which require them to use their literacy skills and promote active thinking.

(2) Activity: Home reading activities; Task: Home Reading

Students read English books in school every day, while their parents might not have the chance to read English books with them. Teachers can ask students to pick a book that they are able to read fluently and retell the story, and ask them to bring the book back home and read the book to their parents and siblings. If their parents and siblings can also read the book, they can read the book together and do some activities after reading the book, like acting the story out, designing costumes for the main character, design a room for a character, or play act and guess games (See Appendix for the full activity list). Playing games can

promote understanding of the book, and at the same time all family members can have fun through reading books.

(3) Activity: Reading and Singing Rhyme; Project: Bring a Rhyme from Home, Bring a Rhyme Back Home

This project fits for pre-school and early elementary English learners. Students are going to ask their parents to sing a rhyme from their home culture, learn to sing the rhyme, and bring the rhyme to their classroom. After sharing their own rhyme, they can learn an English rhyme, go back home and sing to their parents, and finally teach their parents how to sing the English rhyme. With the help of recording devices, teachers and students can see the achievement of parents and children. If such devices are not available at all homes, teachers can also ask parents to make some comments on students' journal to make sure that the project is completed at home.

Rhymes are usually easy to understand, and have a rhythm that is easy to follow, hence reading and singing rhymes are recommended by the Bringing Books to Life program. Reading rhymes help children to learn sounds and promote their understanding on rhythm and language. In this project, parents are the resource of rhymes, and also learners of English rhymes. This project can not only promote both parents and students' English skills, but also bring fun to the family and the class.

These tasks and projects can be adjusted according to grade level and language proficiency level. Before students go back home, all three tasks and projects need modeling from teachers to make sure that students know what they are going to do at home with parents. Teachers can communicate with parents through using journals, letters or notes, see the result of students' tasks and projects, or asking questions that focus on the details of parent-child interaction. The products of tasks and projects will be brought home so that parents will see their contribution on students' work.

During this process, Parents will get some idea of what their children are learning and doing in school, and might be more confident to get involved in school activities if they see their part in their children's achievements. Teachers can also gain some knowledge of students' family, which can be very useful in designing future lesson plans and continue following the idea of respecting and using students' background knowledge within the classroom. And the students would eventually enjoy the benefits of parent involvement and parent-teacher communication and collaboration.

#### 4. Conclusion

Parent involvement is a widely discussed topic in the area of Teaching English as a Second Language in U.S. school context and all over the world. If schools are not able to provide enough resource for ELL students and their families, then teachers have to take the responsibility to "empower students by legitimizing their 'voice' and visibility" (Gay, 2010, p.55). Researchers and educators believe that, "the parents of ELL children can be strong allies in their children's education if teachers and administrators can find ways to value and capitalize on the strengths of ELL families" (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014, p.815). Design class plans that encourage students to share their own background knowledge and invite parents to get involved in classrooms tasks and projects would promote parent involvement, provide an opportunity for both parents and children to develop literacy, and bridge the home-school gap of academic support.

## References

- Allen, J. (2007). *Creating Welcoming Schools: A Practical Guide to Home-School Partnerships with Diverse Families*. International Reading Association (NJ3). Chapter 3, 7, 8, 9: pp.39-51, 93-124.
- Antunez, B. (2000). When everyone is involved: Parents and communities in school reform. *Framing effective practice: Topics and issues in the education of English language learners*, 53-59.
- Araujo, B. E. (2009). Best practices in working with linguistically diverse families. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 45(2), 116-123.
- Arias, M. B., & Morillo-Campbell, M. (2008). Promoting ELL Parental Involvement: Challenges in Contested Times. *Online Submission*.
- De Jong, E. J. (2011). *Foundations for multilingualism in education: From principles to practice*. Philadelphia: Caslon Pub.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press. Chapter 3: pp.47-75.
- Johnson, E. J., & Johnson, A. B. (2016). Enhancing Academic Investment through Home-School Connections and Building on ELL Students' Scholastic Funds of Knowledge. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 12(1), 104-121.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- Mulhern, M., Rodriguez-Brown, F., & Shanahan, T. (1994). Family literacy programs lead to academic success. In *Forum*, 17 (4).



- Niehaus, K., & Adelson, J. L. (2014). School support, parental involvement, and academic and social-emotional outcomes for English language learners. *American Educational Research Journal*, 51(4), 810-844.
- Panferov, S. (2010). Increasing ELL parental involvement in our schools: Learning from the parents. *Theory Into Practice*, 49(2), 106-112.
- Stevenson, D. L., & Baker, D. P. (1987). The family-school relation and the child's school performance. *Child development*, 1348-1357.
- Tamer, M., & Walsh, B. (2016, March 1). Raising Strong Readers. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/03/raising-strong-readers>

## Appendix

### Parent-Child Activities for ELL students

**Design a costume:** Suppose you are going to act out the story. Design a costume for yourself with your parents. (Replacement: make a small paper version; design a T-shirt)

**Act it out:** Children love acting out stories with peers and parents. After reading a story book, give each of you one or more characters and act the story out!

**Make a room for the main character:** Write down several factors and elements that related to the main character, and then decide what you are going to put in his/her room. Design and make the room for the main character. (Use cardboard boxes, flowers & grass, papers, plastics, stickers or anything you'd like to use, or just draw on the paper if you don't have enough material with you)

**You draw/act, I guess:** Pick a word, a phrase, or a sentence that have a clear scene from the story book. One person read the sentence/phrase/word and draw/act it out (this person should be quiet all the time, otherwise he/she will be punished or lose points), another person guess what did the drawer/actor read. Switch roles, or find more participants and win for your group!

**Recommending Books to Others:** If your child loves one book very much, ask why and encourage your child to recommend the book to you. Ask them to organize their words and sentences, tell details about the book and explain clearly why he/she likes and recommends the book. This activity develops children's speaking skills, and helps them to learn how to summarize a text and organize their thoughts.