Capstone Portfolio

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Abstract

This capstone portfolio demonstrates my expertise and knowledge gained from coursework, pedagogical research literature, experiences working with English Language Learners (ELLs), and my competent employment of the theories that I believe into my teaching practices.

The first part of the Capstone presents my philosophy of teaching, in which I frame my theoretical beliefs for working with ELLs, based on Student-Centered Teaching, Communicative Language Teaching, and Culturally Responsive Caring. In the next part, the Capstone demonstrates my professional knowledge of the TESOL Domains from perspectives of *learner*, *learning contexts*, *curriculum*, and *assessment*, using artifacts like lesson plans, coursework, lesson observations, and etc. The third part provides an overall reflection of my pedagogical practices, referring back to my philosophy of teaching. It also defines my role and responsibilities as a teacher, that is imparting knowledge and strategies, passing on precious and healthy values, and helping learners form identities, as well as identifies two potential challenges, that is increasing student participation and dealing with the teacher's relationship with parents. The Capstone ends with some future considerations with regard to further professional development plans.

# Table of Content

**Philosophy of Teaching**

**Introduction**

Deeply impacted by the teacher who instructed me on Stylistic Rhetorics, I want to be a

middle school English teacher after obtaining my Master's degree at Vanderbilt. It's worth

mentioning that the teacher's energy for life and enthusiasm for teaching not only engaged all

the students in poetry, but positively brought us life-long influences. She also brought us to

the gorgeous natural world by sharing her personal pleasant experiences like gently fingering

the tender shoots in the early morning sunlight. After taking the class, I made my decision to

become a qualified English teacher in China, which has gradually been confirmed by my later

internships and volunteer experiences.

Having deepened my understanding of pedagogy at Vanderbilt, I believe it is the best time

to pause for a while, dwell on my personal experiences vis-à-vis education, and theorize my

own philosophy of teaching. In this statement, I hope to communicate my philosophy of

teaching, including my beliefs about the best approaches and methods for teaching English,

and the experiences that I have had which confirm or exemplify my beliefs.

**My Theoretical Beliefs**

I framed my own teaching principles around three theories: Student-Centered Teaching,

Communicative Language Teaching, and Culturally Responsive Caring. My future teaching

will take into consideration learners' needs, interests, learning styles, intelligences, goals, and

levels, thus making classes more student-centered. A variety of meaningful tasks and activities

which promote communication and collaboration will be incorporated into instruction. The

classes aim to develop students' communicative competence which enables them to know

when and how to say what to different people. Moreover, students' cultural and linguistic repertoire will be fully leveraged to enhance learning. Both students' first and second languages will be allowed in my classroom. In addition to understanding students' individual repertoire and helping them reach their full potentials, I will assist them in expressing themselves, accepting themselves as who they are, and embracing the differences of the others.

### Student-Centered Teaching

I strongly believe in the idea that English language classes should be student-centered. Student-Centered Teaching (SCT), also known as Learner-Centered Teaching (LCT), is a departure from the traditional, primarily teacher-centered instruction of years gone by. In fact, most of my previous learning experiences in China were teacher-centered, as teachers had coercive power in the classroom and they gave monotonous lectures for most of the time. Having little autonomy or opportunity to work collaboratively, students suffered greatly from anxiety as well as demotivation. Fortunately, SCT provides me with an entirely new way of seeing, thinking about, and acting on instruction. According to Jones (2007), a student-centered classroom is a place where we take into account the needs of learners and encourage them to actively participate in the learning process. The teacher's role is more that of a facilitator than a lecturer (Jones, 2007). In light of this approach, teachers can design activities that reflect the needs and interests of students, by facilitating pair and group work in addition to individual activities.

SCT notably makes instruction more motivational and engaging. Since the teacher tailors the class to the needs, interests, multiple intelligences, and levels of the students, the class is more likely to appeal to them and be more appropriate for them. There is less of a chance that

students will feel bored, anxious, or frustrated. Additionally, SCT pushes students to use language in pair and group work, in which they acquire language and learn from one another. This feature will be further discussed in the next part named Communicative Language Teaching.

### Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT) is another approach that I will employ in my future classroom, as I firmly believe that language is acquired through communication. I worked for several months at a local training agency named Injoy Youth Center, where children tended to magically pick up a language, provided with hosts of communication opportunities. Instead of reciting abstract grammar rules, they gradually learned the language by using it in a variety of fun activities. CLT encourages such communicative activities which have three common features: information gap, choice, and feedback (Johnson & Morrow, 1981). It expects frequent classroom interactions, including teacher-student and student-student interactions. Student-student interactions, which often take place in pair and group work, provide students with a bunch of opportunities to negotiate meaning, leverage communication strategies, correct misunderstandings, and repair communication breakdowns (Brown, 2001; Richards, 2006). Fluency carries more importance than accuracy (Brown, 2001). In essence, CLT aims broadly to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching. Canale and Swain (1980) identified four types of communicative competence. Grammatical competence covers the knowledge of language code — vocabulary, phonology, morphology, and syntax. Sociolinguistic competence refers to an understanding of roles of participants and functions of interactions in different social contexts. As for the discourse competence, it is the ability to combine language fragments into

cohesive spoken and written texts. Strategic competence refers to the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal strategies that help sustain communication (Celce-murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995). According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), the teacher who applies the approach facilitates communication and establishes situations likely to promote communication. The teacher's role is more that of a facilitator, an advisor, and a co-communicator, whilst students are communicators.

CLT is a motivational approach as well, since it allows students to share their personal experiences and to understand their classmates. The aroused mutual understanding and mutual trust help build a sense of community in the classroom (Richards & Farrell, 2013). CLT helps improve learners' oral language proficiency and boost their understanding of the texts (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2017). Moreover, students can benefit from pair and group work because they can learn from each other. McLeod (2012) noted that collaboration prepares students for their potential development level, as it provides the necessary scaffolding for learning new things. A more advanced student can help a less advanced student make progress (Vygotsky, 1978). Simply put, learners receive valuable assistance and instruction from their peers. In addition, as language is fundamentally social, learning grammatical rules is not enough for students (Halliday, 1973). They should also learn to appropriately perform different functions in various contexts. Fortunately, CLT enables students to use languages to achieve special social purposes, including inviting, declining invitations, promising, and so forth.

**Culturally Responsive Caring**

In addition to these two theories, I hold the belief that Culturally Responsive Caring (CRC) should be implemented in the classroom. The teacher who instructed me on Stylistics

Rhetorics sometimes encouraged us to translate well-known English poems. When introducing the theory of *domestication translation* and *foreignization translation*, she mentioned her concern that the sacrifice of Chinese culture in most English acquisition materials may lead to Chinese students' lack of confidence in their own culture. Moreover, it is noteworthy that there are 56 ethnic groups, among which the Han people are the largest one in mainland China. The students from the other 55 ethnic groups have lower academic achievement, compared with their Han counterparts (Yuan, 2018). Alam (2015) attributed this phenomenon to their lower financial position, their underdeveloped environment, and the poor educational status of their community. Owing to the strong influences of Han culture, minority students often assimilate to the culture of their Han counterparts (Zhao, 2007). Nevertheless, the minority cultures are actually unique resources for minority students. Bruner (1996) stated that learning and thinking always depends on the exploitation of cultural resources. Therefore, we should try to remove the assumption that minority students are inherently lower performing, and instead, value their cultural resources. As such, in my future career, my attitude towards the Chinese culture and how I incorporate it into instruction do have a profound impact with regard to learners' perception of the target culture, their attitudes towards their own cultures, and their motivation for language learning. Fortunately, CRC provides a way of supporting my learners, as it plays a pivotal role in reducing the achievement gap, improving self-esteem, and forming students' personal identities (Gay, 2018; Irvine & Hawley, 2011).

I will be a caring teacher who is "warm demanding", that is actively supporting students to fulfill my high expectations towards them (Gay, 2018). I will also be a "cultural mediator" by respecting students' diverse cultural backgrounds, identifying their differences, and making teaching content more accessible and meaningful to them. One way of identifying and

integrating their diverse cultures is to recognize and leverage their "funds of knowledge", which includes the historically accumulated and culturally developed knowledge and skills of their households (Moll et al., 1992). As the family and community involvement ensures the quality of teaching, I will design family oral history projects and create literacy spaces by preparing some books written by community authors so as to engage minority students' family and community into the class (Wolfendale & Bastiani, 2000). Equally important, to personalize my instruction, I will focus on the cultures of different ethnic groups in class by changing the cultural subjects biweekly. Another way of tapping students' linguistic and cultural asset is to recognize and make full use of their out-of-school literacy as well as their first language. As Hull & Moje (2012) stated, students come into the classroom with a large repertoire of invaluable literacies, which have been accumulated out of school for years. Bridging such literacies with classroom practices can motivate students to participate in their literacy and content learning (Jiménez, Smith, & Teague, 2009). To capitalize on my students' out-of-school literacies, I will encourage them to collect relevant artifacts, and engage them in collaborative translation activities where they do translations with the help of tools like paraphrasing (Goodwin & Jiménez, 2015). Learners' diversity will work as building blocks of their third spaces (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Tejeda, 1999).

## Professional Knowledge of the TESOL Domains

### Professional Knowledge Area 2: Learner

Each learner, having been directly impacted by different cultures and living environments, comes into the classroom with their unique individual differences which lead to

diverse learning behaviors. Accurately construing learners' characteristics and identity by investigating their history/herstory is illuminating for planning and carrying out more effective instruction. Hence, the professional knowledge area that I will focus on in this section concerns *learner*. This professional knowledge area will be supported by a variety of artifacts generated during my two-year graduate study at Vanderbilt University.

### TESOL Domain 4: Identity and Context

*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.*

Learners are individuals who bring their own needs and experiences to the learning environment. Understanding them lays the foundation for providing more purposeful and efficient teaching, thus spawning more effective learning. The artifact that exemplifies this TESOL domain is the case study report paper that I completed in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) course. This case study investigates Chao's oral and written language abilities from four linguistic aspects, and provides a specific instructional plan based on the analysis of his weaknesses and strengths in each aspect. Before evaluating his English proficiency, I collected my participant's oral and written samples in a variety of ways, including conducting face-to-face interviews, implementing assessments, and so forth.

The TESOL Domain 4 has been exemplified by this artifact. To take a closer look at the case study paper, instead of gaining a merely superficial acquaintance with my participant, I have dug deeper in his background by contemplating some potential social and cultural

factors that have significant impacts on his English acquisition. In other words, I have placed and evaluated his SLA within a more complex context. With abundant information from the participant, I have noted the way in which his learning as well as learning expectations have been shaped by some sociocultural factors, such as the trend of international communication, his family and community, as well as Chinese cultures like Confucian philosophy. To illustrate, I mentioned how Confucius' attachment of a person's success to his/her own hard work has shaped my participant's attitudes and motivation towards learning. Meanwhile, I accentuated in the paper his rote recitation learning method as well as his reluctance to turn to teachers for help, which might also result from the influence of Confucian philosophy (see Figure 1). Another aspect is that when analyzing his performance in regard to oral and written language, I have underscored the possible influences of my participant's first language on his SLA and have offered recommendations like contrasting similar words by listing their collocations, which leverage his linguistic assets (see Figure 2, 3, & 4). In this sense, I was able to recognize the importance of knowing my students as learners and understand how their learning has being shaped by their linguistic and cultural heritages. Nevertheless, this paper failed to provide insights into context's impacts on identity formation as well as identity formation's influences on learning. The paper also fell short of demonstrating how my lesson planning, instruction, and assessment would be informed by the participant's cultural background. Given a second chance, I would probably utilize tools like an identity map to gain more insights into his identity and better support his SLA. Figure 5 is an example of mapping the learner's identity using the Visual Thesaurus map. I would also adapt the specific instruction plan part by taking into account his cultural background.

Drawing on my theoretical framework, I believe that this artifact demonstrates the features of Student-Centered Teaching (SCT). The reason is that the case study has attached

lots of importance to understanding learners by recognizing and fostering individual differences. To be more specific, the paper looks into the participant's educational background, personal interests, family, culture, and beliefs. Also, having measuring his language ability through interviews and performance tasks, the paper provides an instruction plan, which has been tailored to the developmental level and special needs of the participant. To illustrate, when analyzing his performance in regard to pragmatics, I drew the conclusion that the participant demonstrates weakness in the maxim of manner, and recommended that he can participate in some role-play activities. Suggestions like this address the specific learning needs, interests, as well as linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the learner, thus conforming to the descriptions of SCT mentioned in my teaching philosophy: "a student-centered classroom is a place where we take into account the needs of learners and encourage them to actively participate in the learning process". With level-appropriate and differentiated instruction, the participant will be more motivated, as he won't repeat practicing what he already knows or learn content that is too difficult for him.

As mentioned, professional teachers must understand that learning and developmental patterns vary individually, and that students bring unique individual differences to the learning process. In addition to students' identities and contexts, we also need to be familiar with effective pedagogical approaches, and we must understand the learning process so as to better support learners' SLA. This is relevant to another TESOL domain: Learning.

### TESOL Domain 6: Learning

*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.*

The artifact that illustrates the TESOL Domain 6 is the SIOP lesson I planned in the Methods and Materials for Educating English Language Learners course. I designed this lesson plan for a grade-eight ELL class during my practicum at the Wright Middle School. Required by the Wright Middle, the lesson centers on an anchor text — the poem "Daffodils" written by William Wordsworth. In light of central concepts learned from my course texts, I aligned the lesson with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as well as WIDA descriptors, derived the language and content objectives from aforementioned standards, designed an array of scaffolded activities, and developed several tasks to assess students' learning.

The lesson plan exemplifies the TESOL domain of *learning*, for I was able to form my own understanding towards the language learning process based on the pedagogical theories and concepts learned in the methods course. This understanding has been demonstrated in the lesson plan, which elaborates on the lesson's rationale — that is, the reasons for doing this lesson and for choosing activities — in a consistent way (see Figure 6). For instance, the rationale reveals that students' language learning would take place in unrehearsed and meaningful communication. This statement exemplifies my knowledge of language learning. Equally important, I was able to plan activities and leverage resources to better support the students to achieve the language objectives. To illustrate, one language objective is that "SWBAT determine the meaning of key vocabulary of meaning and phrases in the poem." In order to support students to meet it, I designed an activity, in which they visualize their understanding of the vocabulary wealth by drawing a relevant object, share their example with shoulder partners, and discuss some forms of wealth that are beyond currency. This activity is rooted in my knowledge of language learning, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Scaffolding, which have been explained in the rationale.

Given my theoretical inclination, what stands out to me here is the incorporation of CLT

into instruction. Throughout the lesson, most time is designed to be spent on teacher-student and student-student interactions, which is consistent with my statement of teaching philosophy. For instance, Think-Pair-Share activities provide students with opinion gaps as well as choices vis-à-vis choosing what to say and how to say it (see Figure 7). These activities offer opportunities for negotiating meaning and giving feedback. The instructional conversations in this lesson boost learners' understanding of the text. Furthermore, there are various participant structures, including individual work, pair work, group work, and whole-class work, in which students receives different levels of support and develops their communicative competence. For instance, in the comic strip activity, students have to communicate with their group members and introduce their products (see Figure 8). Meanwhile, as mentioned in my philosophy, they would learn from each other and "receive valuable assistance and instruction from their peers".

**Professional Knowledge Area 2: Learning Contexts**

In addition to learners, learning is also affected by the factors external to learners within a learning environment. Hence, to improve learning quality, it's of vital importance to choose appropriate contexts for learning. To put it in other words, we need to establish situations where learning is most likely to take place, leveraging the instructional factors that would influence learning.

### TESOL Domain 2: Instructing

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

Instructing plays a pivotal role in establishing favorable learning contexts, as teachers

have a great amount of choices in terms of the teaching materials, the use of media and

technology, the group configurations, and so forth. Highlighting *supportive environments*,

*purposeful learning*, and *respectful interactions*, this TESOL domain has been exemplified by

one of the lessons that I have delivered at the Wright Middle School during my practicum.

The lesson was situated in a unit where students read literacy and informational texts to

understand the role of the narrator and point of view. In the lesson, students engaged in a

Socratic Seminar to discuss how the concept of *perception versus reality* plays out in the unit

texts. Having been placed into three groups according to their individual differences, students

were expected to actively speak and respectfully listen to their classmates, to cite the textual

evidence during seminar, and to discuss the following three questions:

- How does the narrative point of view create suspense and unknown for the reader?

- What ideas do "Treachery of Images", "The Tell-Tale Heart", and "The Ransom of
  Red Chief" say about *perception versus reality*?

- How does the way the narrator speaks influence his personality?

Although the students had already participated in the Socratic Seminar before, they were

reminded of the basic rules, overall goals, and general procedures before they started.

Learners had to participate in the task and monitor their own performances. Given three

chocolates, they were asked to place one chocolate into their own cups, whenever they have

expressed their own ideas, have cited evidence from the texts, and have built on and/or

challenged their classmates' ideas (see Figure 9). Sentence stems have been provided and

briefly introduced (see Figure 10). They have facilitated the students' participation in the

academic conversations, thus creating a supportive environment for the instruction.

This artifact has typified the elements of TESOL domain 2, as I created a safe and

supportive learning environment for the students. To be more specific, I not merely provided

the handy materials to assist them, but set the stage and explained how I appreciate their participation during the seminar. Also, I demonstrated an enthusiastic and positive demeanor throughout the whole class. For instance, I kept using questions like "What else?" and "What do you think?" to encourage more ideas, as well as uttering expressions like "I love it!" and "Great!" to increase students' willingness to take risks. I leveraged amiable body gestures and friendly facial expressions to engage more students and motivate contributions. In this sense, a safe and welcoming environment has been created. The positive classroom atmosphere has also been further fostered by my clear expectations, which were shared to the whole class at the very beginning of the lesson and were self-assessed by learners at the end of the class using an exit ticket (see Figure 11). Knowing the learning objectives, the students were able to orient their own learning during the task and reflect on their own performance after the seminar, thus being engaged in more purposeful learning. Some students shared with me that they should have prepared more for the seminar, while many wrote that they should speak louder next time. Additionally, the TESOL domain 2 has been demonstrated by this artifact, for I repeatedly emphasized the significance of maintaining a sense of belonging and respect. Silence was sanctioned in the classroom, as I set aside enough time for students to finish their thoughts and ponder over appropriate expressions. Without predetermined "right" answers, all students' views were heard and valued. Learners were invited to elaborate on their own responses and extend comments. The respect and inclusiveness have been enhanced by the design of the task as well. To take a closer look at the responsibilities of the students in the outer circle, they entered into cooperation with the students in the inner circle by whispering their ideas or handing their own post-it notes to them. To conclude, this artifact has well exhibited my abilities to establish supportive environments, which promote engagement, generate purposeful learning, and create a respectful classroom atmosphere.

This artifact connects to my philosophy of teaching because the Socratic Seminar has spawned abundant student-student interactions, which aligns with the core of CLT: language is acquired through communication. During the Socratic Seminar, learners raised questions, shared their opinions, and supported their ideas with prepared textual evidence within groups when they were in the inner circle. Those who were in the outer circle frequently whispered to students engaged in the dialogue. All my students' participation was guaranteed and self-monitored by their use of cups and chocolates. What stands out to me here is that students were provided with a bunch of opportunities to negotiate meaning and correct misunderstanding using techniques including paraphrasing and uttering clarification questions. This is precisely what I would expect to see because it has undoubtedly developed learners' communicative competence, especially their strategic competence, which requires them to use techniques to modify text for an audience as well as to achieve conversational fluency. Therefore, being extremely "communicative", the Socratic Seminar in this artifact has well exemplified the CLT approach mentioned in my philosophy of teaching. Additionally, it is obvious that my role during the task was more like a facilitator and sometimes a co-communicator. Learners' needs have been taken into consideration, and they actively engaged in sharing their opinions. In this sense, learners, instead of the teacher, were the center of teaching, which also aligns with the SCT. Nonetheless, although the legitimization of students' voices reveals the "caring" of CRC, this artifact falls short of displaying the utilization of learners' cultures to support their language learning.

The professional knowledge of both *learning contexts* and *learner* is consequential for conducting effective instruction. Nevertheless, more efficient instruction, which brings about expected learning outcomes, would occur if the curriculum has been well-developed. The next professional knowledge area will elaborate on my abilities in regard to lesson planning, as

well as demonstrate my understanding of the content of a language course.

**Professional Knowledge Area 3: Curriculum**

The design of a curriculum requires cooperative efforts from administrators, researchers, and teachers. Teachers' impact in curriculum design matters more than people think, for the reason that they take the responsibilities of translating abstract educational goals into concrete classroom activities, instructional materials, and measurable learning outcomes. A curriculum identifies, in addition to learning outcomes, the standards and core competences that students will display before progressing to the next level. In this sense, a well-designed curriculum will give rise to more efficient teaching and more effective learning.

**TESOL Domain 1: Planning**

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

A curriculum helps teachers plan the education process and enables us to break down large learning goals into more specific ones. Lesson planning is the phase where teachers set detailed learning objectives for students and make modifications to generate more successful instruction in the future. The artifact that exemplifies this TESOL domain is a lesson plan created for my internship at Wright Middle School. Same as the one mentioned in PKA2, this lesson belongs to the unit where learners develop their skills in terms of understanding narrators and points of view. Focusing on a short story written by O. Henry, this lesson begins by showing students a movie trailer, which is followed by a reading activity, some post-reading academic conversations, a plots-summarizing activity, a rewriting activity, and a final self-assessment.

The TESOL Domain 1 has been exemplified by this lesson plan, which starts with a clear presentation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), unit goals, and specific language and content objectives (see Figure 12). According to Common Core State Standards Initiative (2020), the research- and evidence-based CCSS strongly support learners to meet the college and career expectations, thus rooted in learners' educational needs. The lesson plan was developed to enhance learning and meet learner goals, as the planning process followed the "backward design", an approach that enables me to closely align the learning objectives with the CCSS (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p.14). The lesson plan enhances learning, engages learners, and assures learner achievement, for the reason that it keeps high expectations while providing enough supports. To take a closer look at the activities, I planned the plots-summarizing activity to enable students to tease out the storyline, thus preparing them for rewriting the scene. Meanwhile, the language objective "SWBAT use vocabulary from the word bank to describe the character's feelings" would be achieved, as the process would generate myriad academic conversations where the teacher and the students co-construct meaning. The lesson plan incorporates *questioning* to evoke learners' ideas and to provide cued elicitation for them whenever they get stuck. For instance, the teacher would ask questions like "Who has narrated the story?" to assess learners' understanding of the text and provide corresponding supports, thus further promoting learning. During this activity, students would not only be involved in summarizing, but participate in learning actions including identifying, paraphrasing, interpreting, analyzing, and even judging. In this sense, higher order thinking skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and applied in the future, can be fully honed (see Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Moreover, during the modification ahead of lesson delivery, multimodalities have been included into the lesson plan to accommodate diverse learning styles and lower learners' affective filters. To illustrate, a video clip is added

to activate learners' background knowledge and to warm up before teaching (see Figure 13). It's worth mentioning that there are several following comprehension questions, which form a basis for the summarizing activity (see Figure 14). In other words, the learning outcome for the first activity would support students' accomplishment for the next one. Therefore, learning would be quite likely to occur, whereas pressure from learning would be tremendously eased, as the lesson enables students to move step-by-step to eventually complete a more challenging task.

Given my theoretical inclination, what stands out to me here is that this artifact has attached great importance to establishing situations likely to promote communication as well as cognitive learning. For instance, there would be rich teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions in the plots-summarizing activity. Hence, the designed instruction is rooted in CLT, which expects frequent classroom interactions. The artifact has also exhibited some features of SCT, as I have involved multiple modalities to accommodate different learning styles and intelligences. Another reason is that students do not passively listen to the teacher. Instead, they would participate in lots of meaningful discussions to interpret the texts, to examine the authors' purposes and attitudes, and to analyze rhetorical devices. In addition, at the end of the lesson, students would self-assess their performances, which increases learner autonomy. Students, instead of the teacher, take more control and responsibility for their own learning. Such teaching is a departure from the traditional teacher-centered lecturing, for it has shifted the focus from the teacher to the learners.

This subsection has elaborated on how I have planned lessons to support my learners to achieve the learning objectives, and on how the lesson plan has aligned with my philosophy of teaching. Next subsection will detail my understanding of the content of a language course, which is another aspect of the design of a curriculum.

**TESOL Domain 7: Content**

*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.*

The TESOL Domain 7 has underscored the significance of internalizing a language by practicing it in authentic contexts. To put it differently, it accentuates that a language should be acquired in a much more natural way, aiming to use language for diverse real-life functions. Traditional teacher-centered instruction sacrifices learners' autonomy, self-directedness, and intrinsic motivation. Moreover, students who can do well in language tests may not really be able use the language. In this sense, cultivating their communicative skills and strategies is of great consequence with regard to SLA. In essence, learners are supposed to understand the differences between registers so as to use the language appropriately in a particular situation. Hence, language learning at school should serve for academic purposes, which in turn benefits learners' learning in terms of various academic subjects.

This domain has been demonstrated by a mini lesson delivered by Professor Shannon. I and other classmates participated in this lesson by playing the role of her adult ELL students. The lesson started with a fairly communicative discussion in which students talked in pairs, in small groups, and within the whole class about the essential traits of good friends. Students were asked to select top five traits within groups, in larger groups, and eventually in the whole class. Then, students listened to a song to figure out its main purpose, reordered song lyrics, participated in open cloze, chose their favorite lyrics, explored grammar, practiced linking

verbs by making sentences, and co-composed a new poem of the same topic in groups.

This artifact has demonstrated the TESOL Domain 7. One reason is that students have been involved in a variety of tasks which required them to listen to, to discuss, to read, and to write about traits of good friends using English. This common and popular topic made students more likely to produce more genuine and natural language. It's noteworthy that these tasks have created a great number of communication opportunities in the classroom. Meanwhile, they have given rise to the frequent practice of certain expressions useful for other subjects. For instance, in order to choose the top five traits of good friends, learners have uttered many expressions that help express their opinions, including *in my opinion*, *to my mind*, *personally*, and so forth. Such expressions are register-appropriate, and they can be transferred to other lessons and subjects. In this sense, the use of transferrable academic language has been effectively incorporated into the learning process. Nevertheless, this lesson has been identified with some characteristics of traditional drills, as it required learners to complete the close cloze according to what they had heard. Linguistic features seem to have been more emphasized during the process. Instead of simple peer correction, one alternation is having learners further explain their reasons and negotiate meaning using think-alouds to their peers.

This artifact has aligned with my theoretical preferences, for it has leveraged different group configurations and various communicative tasks to elicit authentic language from students. In the class, they negotiated meaning so as to prioritize certain traits, to cooperatively reorder song lyrics, and to co-compose a poem. Diverse language functions have been performed. To illustrate, to decide the top five words that best describe good friends, learners asked for opinions, gave opinions, asked for reasons, and so forth. Also, fluency carries more importance than accuracy, though the mini lesson has spent some time

honing learners' grammatical competence to deepen their understanding of the knowledge of language code, such as vocabulary and syntax. Hence, the lesson was grounded in CLT, which insists on acquiring languages in authentic communicative contexts. In addition, the lesson was student-centered, as Professor Shannon has carefully taken into account learners' interests and needs. The topic "good friends" was quite relevant to students. Multiple learning styles have been considered, for the reason that learners were engaged in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and presenting. Unlike traditional instruction where teachers give lectures, the students in this mini lesson actively and autonomously took part in the tasks rather than passively listening to the lectures or reciting their notes.

These two subsections have highlighted my professional knowledge vis-à-vis lesson planning and lesson content. It's noteworthy that to yield more effective instruction and better learning outcomes, it's crucial to measure learners' progressive development and accurately interpret the results. Next section will shed light on my knowledge of conducting assessments and make instruction adaptions based on an array of assessments.

**Professional Knowledge Area 4: Assessment**

To set appropriate instructional objectives and individualize effective supports for students, it is essential for teachers to have learners demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter as well as their abilities of using the L2s. Also, assessments evaluate whether the educational goals are being met and provide teachers with some insights into possible changes that they can make so as to yield better learning outcomes. Hence, this section will zoom in on *assessment*, buttressed and exemplified by an artifact produced in the assessment course.

### TESOL Domain 3: Assessing

*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 performances 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.*

TESOL domain 3 has cast light on how assessments enable teachers to glean evidences of learners' performance, needs, knowledge, as well as the effectiveness with regard to certain teaching methods or approaches. Assessing learners, in this sense, is a way of teacher self-evaluation. It helps teachers to scientifically determine what is working for the learners, what modifications need to be made, and what directions to go next. What surprised me is that this domain has foregrounded the importance of the involvement of learners in and after assessments. In other words, the domain uncovers another facet of the functions of assessing learners: student self-evaluation. The artifact that epitomizes this domain is the analysis project which investigates into the student Esthefanny's linguistic and cultural background, her current educational setting, as well as her English language proficiency (ELP) level.

The TESOL domain 3 has been exemplified by this artifact. As shown in the analysis project paper, I value exploring learners' history/herstory and evaluating their performances (see Figure 15 & 16). Also, I am able to collect and interpret information about students' learning. To take a closer look at measuring Esthefanny's ELP, her oral language has been measured through comparing the results from a self-designed observational protocol with those from the WIDA tests (see Appendix B). Both of the two results have placed her at ELP level 2- Emerging, while the authentic assessment has provided more detailed insights into her

oral language use. To illustrate, her performance during the authentic assessment indicates that most of her utterances use quite basic and simple vocabulary. In addition, a running record, followed with several comprehension questions and a summarizing task, has been conducted to look into her reading (see Appendix C). The analysis of her writing has been based on a writing sample obtained in her English Language Art class (see Appendix D). Hence, I am capable of utilizing assessments to measure learners' performances, as well as to interpret the results, combining the information gathered from both standard tests and authentic assessments. My abilities to interpret test results can also be seen in my evaluation of the validity and reliability of the WIDA ACCESS tests. For instance, I did recognize the influences of some student-related factors on the reliability of test results and did realize the significance of leveraging multiple assessments (see Figure 17). Besides, I am able to offer instructional recommendations based on the interpretation of test results from an array of assessments. To illustrate, according to Esthefanny's performance in the reading assessments, I recommended that she should acquire some morphological knowledge so as to better decode unknown vocabulary (see Figure 18). Nonetheless, this artifact failed to involve or recognize the importance of involving Esthefanny in determining what to be assessed. I haven't shared her assessments results or my recommendations with her, either.

Given my theoretical framework, I believe that this artifact has exhibited some characteristics of CLT. The reason is that authentic assessments, in which oral language has been elicited in unrehearsed dialogues, have been leveraged to diagnose the aspects that the participant needs to develop. To take the self-designed protocol as an example, the participant was engaged in a non-directive pair introduction, a pair decision-making process, and an informal debate, all of which were completely interactive (see Appendix B). Having choices on what to say and how to say it, the two students negotiated meaning and gave feedback to

each other during the tasks. For instance, after being asked why she wanted to go to the supermarket, Esthefanny uttered "We can buy the lunch there.", which enabled me to gain some insights into both her vocabulary and syntax. Also, this artifact aligns with the SCT, for it serves for understanding the learner and aims to provide better instruction for her. For example, I mentioned in the Instructional Recommendation section, "One effective way to be aware of the mistakes and learn from them is recording her own voice, recognizing errors by repetitively listening to it, keeping a journal of the mistakes, and reviewing them regularly." Another reason is that the assessing process has tried to lower the participant's affective filter. To illustrate, Esthefanny was allowed to either note down her answers or say out aloud the responses in the reading assessments. Such flexibility accommodated her learning styles and eased her burden, thus yielding more accurate results. One shortcoming of this artifact is that it could have been administered in Esthefanny's L1 and L2 to look at her as a whole, thus hedging the interference resulted from language barriers.

## Applications to Practice

### TESOL Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism

*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 broad teaching community, and communities at large, and use their understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.*

Simply put, this domain underscores the significance of continued reflection and professional development of a teacher, as well as the importance of teachers' lasting

contribution to this field. In the light of the TESOL Domain 8, the final section reflects my overall teaching practices, explores the type of teacher that I want to be in my future career, identifies possible challenges that I might face during my practices, and provides a direction for continued professional development.

**Implications**

### Self-Reflection on My Pedagogical Practices

My philosophy of teaching rests on three salient pedagogical theories, including Student-Centered Teaching (SCT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and Culturally Responsive Caring (CRC). Following the TESOL Domain 8, I will reflect on how my pedagogical practices at Vanderbilt University have generally aligned to my beliefs, as well as how they fall short of meeting some valuable elements of the aforementioned theories.

My philosophy foregrounds the idea of taking into account learners' needs as well as their interests, while my learning products and teaching practices clearly demonstrate this core essence behind the SCT. For instance, the SLA paper exhibits my willingness as well as abilities in terms of understanding the learners. This idea is also evident in my lesson plan of the *Tell-Tale Heart*, which accommodates learners' interests and learning styles by leveraging multimodalities. In addition, having students self-monitor their learning and self-assess themselves conforms to the principles of SCT, for the reasons that the students took more responsibilities for their own learning and my role in the classroom was more like a facilitator. It's noteworthy that my role as a facilitator is also a typical principle of CLT, which places more emphasis on teachers' efforts in promoting communication in class. Noticeably, all my lesson planning and delivery have established abundant situations for meaningful and unrehearsed communication, where fluency overrides accuracy. Furthermore, I have

employed principles of the CRC in my teaching. I actively supported students to fulfill my high expectations towards them. The lesson objectives, which had been developed on the basis of state standards and WIDA standards, were the same for all students. In other words, I did not lower my expectations towards those who are of a lower ELP level. Instead, to take the Socratic Seminar class as an example, extra scaffolding such as sentence stems was provided to support them to successfully participate in the discussion. This also proves that I not just "care about" the students, but "care for" them, which according to Moll et al. (2008), stands for taking conscientious actions to support learners.

Nonetheless, there exist several areas that I need to improve. In view of the CRC, although I am able to identify learners' differences and respect them, I could have made learning more meaningful and accessible for them, thus increasing their intrinsic motivation and improving the learning outcomes. One way to do this is to differentiate instruction utilizing students' cultural backgrounds. Also, learning should be allowed to be showcased in multiple ways; that is, diverse forms of products can be accepted. Another shortcoming lies in my neglect of family and community involvement in my lesson planning. The greatest difficulty of establishing such collaboration is building mutual trust and understanding between students' parents/communities and me.

### Teacher Identity

All of these reflections are centered on imparting knowledge. Nevertheless, it is neither my only responsibility as a teacher nor my sole career goal. With the image of the teacher who has deeply impacted me haunting my mind, I am eager to become a teacher who brings positive life-long influences to my students. Such influences may result from my teaching of certain vital learning strategies, which students can transfer to other subjects at school and use

during their whole lives. For instance, self-reflection, which my students have already practiced a lot, would benefit them with regard to developing a better understanding of their own egos, weaknesses, directions, and so forth.

In addition to strategies, I hope to pass on some precious values, which help students develop and practice healthy atitudes and behavior. To illustrate, I want my students to learn to respect individual and cultural differences. One way to do this is to establish classroom norms, to model attitudes for students, and to encourage students to learn them. However, I should be careful about the way I communicate these messages and avoid lecturing them condescendingly. Also, I should be cautious about my selection of the values, as it is possible that conflicts may exist between these values and some values from certain cultures. Such conflicts can impair learners' confidence and self-esteem, thus having negative impacts on their identity formation.

My third career goal is to help students develop their own identities in a healthy manner. Aligned with my philosophy, this goal can be achieved by promoting autonomy, cooperation, and student voice in the classroom, by cultivating diversity as a resource, and by establishing a caring classroom atmosphere.

### Potential Challenges

There are two main challenges that I may face in my career. First, I need to increase learners' in-class participation. Although many Chinese students have high motivation for their learning, they might be reluctant to participate in classroom activities, especially in those different from the Initiate-Respond-Evaluate (henceforce IRE) model. In this sense, student engagement in classroom activities can be one of the thorny problems to solve. In order to encourage participation, I will first learn about the learners by conducting

surveys/questionnaires, by paying home visits, and by carrying out informal interviews with both students and their parents. Also, I will make efforts to enhance learners' intrinsic motivation. I will apply useful techniques like establishing a reasonable classroom reward system to motivate students. Tools like a KWLH chart will be used to help my students notice their own learning goals and interests. Furthermore, I will endeavor to lower students' affective filters via the use of multimodalities, the legitimization of student voices, and the establishment of a sense of community in the classroom.

The second challenge is dealing with the relationship with parents. I hold the firm belief that parents do care about their children, and that a good relationship with parents will generate a teacher's enthusiasm for her/his career. To create and maintain a healthy relationship with parents, I will show respect to them and boost mutual understanding through frequent communication. A letter at the beginning of the semester will be sent to parents to welcome parent-teacher cooperation, as well as to inform them of my expectations of the students. Follow-up teacher-parent conferences and individual meetings will inform parents about general educational issues relevant to their children's academic achievement, as well as communicate individualized advice and guidance on their child's language development.

**Future Considerations**

To further my professional growth, I will be a reflective practitioner, that is to say, always reflecting on my own instruction while accumulating teaching experience. Considering the supersized class in China and my limited teaching experience, there are two areas that I still need to work on: classroom management and lesson delivery. As a novice teacher, I will not only seek advice from my mentor or other experienced teachers, but also imitate them to learn

some effective techniques and strategies concerning teaching, classroom management, and getting along with students. Moreover, I will examine my philosophy and theorize a more optimal one by keeping case reports, analyzing critical incidents, and adjusting future teaching according to my self-reflections and students' evaluations. In addition, I will launch/join a novice teacher group, within which all the new teachers can benefit from advice exchange, peer-assessment, and cooperation. Last, but certainly not least, I will keep reading current research articles in this field from journals like *TESOL Quarterly*, and will attend district, regional, national, or international conferences.

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Appendix A: Artifacts

Figure 1

Chao's English proficiency may be affected by Confucius' philosophy as well. According to Huang and Renaldo (2007), Confucius attached a person's success to his/her own hard work rather than the aptitude. This belief may have led to Chao's success in the Chinese College Entrance Exam after a three-year assiduous preparation. Nevertheless, some researchers argued that the phenomenon of teacher-centered classroom in China, which stems from Confucius education, leads to Chinese students' rote learning (Parry & Su, 1988). Chao's superficial understanding of some vocabulary may result from his rote recitation of the glossary on textbooks. The authority of teachers in the classroom also hindered Chao from seeking advice from his English teachers when he was depressed by English learning.

Figure 2

As a native Chinese speaker, Chao has some problems with English pronunciation in terms of both vowels and consonants. He mixed up the long [i] and the short [ɪ] in some words. To illustrate, he articulated /ˌɛkspəˈdiʃən/, /biˈfɔː/ and /it/ in words "expedition", "before" and "it". Likewise, he struggled in distinguishing the long [u] from the short [ʊ]. For example, the [u] sound was frequently heard in words such as "should" and "put". Problems like these can be traced back to the differences between Chao's native language and English. Duanmu (2007) stressed that most Chinese words are full syllables with tense vowels. Therefore, Chinese learners of English might fail to produce the lax vowels which occur more commonly in English words. As to the consonants, Chao has the problem of final obstruent devoicing. For instance, he pronounced the word "cards" as /kɑrts/. This can also be influenced by his first language (L1) as well, and there are two main reasons. First, Best (1995) proposed that sounds in a second language (L2) are possible to be assimilated to an existing sound in the L1 of learners. In other words, some of the Chinese leaners tend to unconsciously choose the most alike sound in Chinese to replace the new sound that they encountered in English. According to the Chinese IPA consonant chart (see Appendix B), the consonant [z] does not exist in Chinese while other similar consonants [tʂ], [ts] and [ʐ] can be found. In this sense, Chao's pronunciation of "cards" becomes more understandable. The second reason is that all the endings of Chinese words are vowels. It actually imposes more difficulties for him to pronounce words like "kids", "yards", and "tads". However, unlike his counterparts in China, he articulated the totally new sounds [θ] and [ð] fairly accurate. Overall, Chao successfully produced most phonemes in English.

Figure 3

When it comes to syllable level and word level, Chao was able to combine phonemes into syllables and incorporate syllables into words. This may be informed by his previous learning experience at school in China. In elementary schools, after acquiring vowels and consonants, Chinese students are instructed to articulate characters, that is the combination of "consonant + vowel", such as mā (妈). And then they are taught to pronounce words which are composed of characters, such as xiāng jiāo (香蕉). The ways to combine phonemes into higher units in these two languages are quite similar. In this sense, Chao might greatly benefit from his metalinguistic skills, which were gradually developed when he was learning his L1. Moreover, Chao placed stress on the correct syllable for most words, even for multi-syllabic words. For example, he stressed the first syllable of "shuffle" and the third syllable of "expedition". To take a closer look at one of his a few mistakes, instead of stressing the first syllable of the word "discard", he placed stress on the second syllable. Duanmu (2007) ascribed such problems to the occasional unclearness of stress judgement in English, which baffles both English native speakers and English learners.

Figure 4

**Contrasting similar words.** Chao can also differentiate words which have similar forms, pronunciations, and meanings by deliberately contrasting them. For instance, "make (做)" and "do (做)" have no difference in Chinese and seem to be the same to Chinese English language learners. To better comprehend their nuances, Chao can list the collocations of them and then compare the meanings. In this way, he will acquire the collocations as well as the relevant words.
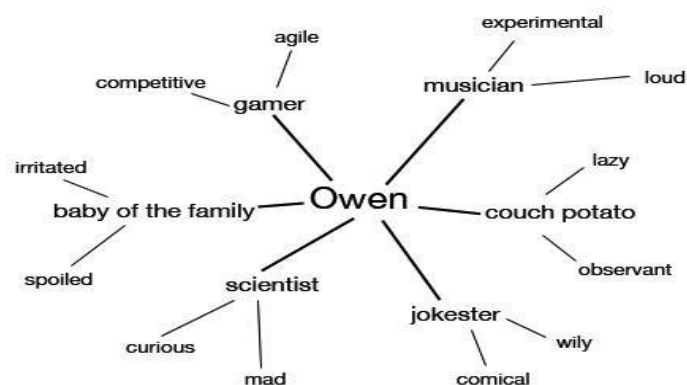
Figure 5

Figure 6

**RATIONALE:**

Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT) will be employed throughout the whole class which involves lots of Teacher-Student and Student-Student interactions. The embedded activities/tasks will help students develop communicative competences in unrehearsed contexts and focus on meaningful communication in real world. During the activities/tasks, students will leverage their grammatical knowledge and cohesive devices to organize language, tap their sociocultural knowledge to use utterances appropriately, as well as utilize their strategic skills to sustain communication (Dörnyei & Thurell, 1995). Therefore, they are likely to develop all four communicative competences- grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence. Moreover, this lesson provides students with opportunities to examine some complex concepts and questions, thus encouraging creative and critical thinking. Working as coinquirers, teacher and students collaboratively generate new interpretations of the third stanza in *Daffodils*, and evaluate their interpretations by finding supporting evidence from the poem. In this sense, teacher leverages Dialogical Teaching to co-construct meaning with learners and provoke their higher order thinking (Reznitskaya, 2012).

When it comes to the phases of the lesson, teacher shares objectives with students to orient their learning (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). The lesson associates new information to what is already known, and establishes connections between the lives of learners with this lyric poem. To illustrate, at the beginning of the lesson, students will demonstrate their diverse understanding of 'wealth', according to their own life experiences and backgrounds. Language will be pre-taught. The learning outcome for each activity serves as the constituent for the new activities. As to the shifts in participant structures, incorporating individual, pair, group, and whole class work into the lesson enables teacher to provide different levels of support for students (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). With high independence, the pair and group work challenge students to explore, to produce, and to develop. Overall, this lesson will provide well scaffolding which supports students' cognitive process and language learning.

Aligned with Common Core State Standards, the clear objectives enable students to examine language and to investigate content through dialogic classroom interactions and meaningful activities. It's noteworthy that the sixth WIDA principle is shown in this lesson. To take the comic strip task as an example, students need to reread and interpret the lines in the poem, negotiate with their peers, as well as draw and write to produce their works. In this sense, multiple modalities are intentionally integrated into this activity.

Figure 7

a) T-Teacher encourages students to think by themselves, "Try to think about other forms of wealth. It can be something or someone important to you. It can also be some precious memories or experiences." [Students write down their answers on the worksheet.]

b) P-Teacher asks students to discuss and negotiate in pairs.

c) S-Teacher invites several students to share and summarizes their responses OTB using a thinking map.

Figure 8

**PRACTICE/APPLICATION 2:**
(Meaningful activities, interaction, strategies, practice/application, feedback)
*20 mins*

1. Teacher distributes paper and color pencils.

2. Teacher asks students to work in groups and to turn the third stanza into a comic strip version.

3. Teacher draw the following example on the board, and reminds students that they need to present the senses of 'company' and 'show' in their products.
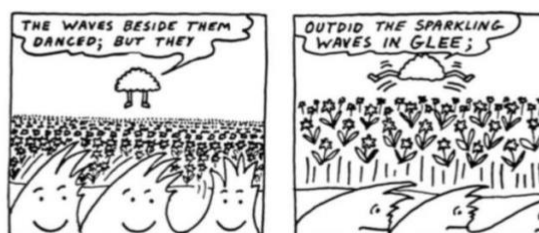


4. Teacher monitors while students are creating their own comic strip, and assists students if necessary.

5. Teacher invites students to share within the whole class and comments on their products.

6. Teacher exhibits student work on one wall of the classroom, thus enabling everyone to have a look.

Figure 9

Figure 10

**DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION**
*Louisiana Believes*

**Conversation Stems[1]**

**Clarifying**
- Is it your position that...
- To be clear, you're saying that...
- I'm confused when you say X. Can you elaborate?

**Paraphrasing**
- Put another way, you're saying...
- So you're saying that...
- Is it fair to say that you believe...
- I hear you saying that...

**Agreeing**
- ___'s point about ___ was important because...
- The reasons you provided support what I am saying because...
- You and I are coming from the same position.

**Disagreeing**
- I see it differently because...
- The reasons and details ___ provided better support ___ because...
- There is no evidence to suggest that is true.
- I agree that ___, but we also have to consider that...
- We see ___ differently.

**Elaborating**
- ___ mentioned that...
- Yes, and furthermore...
- Adding to what you said,...
- I agree, and I want to add that...

**Summarizing**
- Overall, what I'm trying to say is...
- My whole point in one sentence is...
- More than anything else, I believe that...
- Ultimately, my goal is to demonstrate that...

**Revising**

- Before I thought ___, but now I think ___ because...
- I still think ___, but now I wonder...
- My new thinking is...

Figure 11

**Name:**_____

**Self-Reflection of the Socratic Seminar**

Reflect on your own performances during the Seminar, and answer these two sentences:

One thing that went well was_____

One thing that I need to improve was_____

Figure 12

## SIOP ® Lesson Plan

**TEACHER:** Jiagian Chen

**UNIT:** Tell-Tale Heart

**STANDARDS:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.A: Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.6: Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

WIDA Descriptors: Recount by completing sentences using word banks.

**UNIT GOALS:**

Students read literary and informational texts to understand the role of the narrator and point of view.

Students also understand how the narrative voice of a text can blur the line between fact and fiction.

Students express their understanding through writing in different points of view and examining motives and bias in various media.

**OBJECTIVES:**

**LANGUAGE**

SWBAT use vocabulary from word bank to describe the characters' feelings.

SWBAT use written language to describe about characters' feelings and desires with the help of some sentence starters.

**CONTENT**

SWBAT rewrite a scene from "The Ransom of Red Chief" from a different point of view.

SWBAT examine how changing the narrative point of view impacts the meaning of the text. (if time)

**MATERIALS:**

An anchor text ("The Ransom of Red Chief"); Two worksheets; A PowerPoint; A video

Figure 13

**MOTIVATION:**

(Building background)

*5 mins*

T activates Ss background knowledge by showing them a trailer of the story
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfA-NoU-734).

Figure 14

After watching the video clip, T asks Ss the following questions and puts the names of characters OTB:

1.  Who has been kidnapped in the story? (Johnny/a boy)

2.  Who are the other main characters? (Bill, Sam/"I")

3.  Have the kidnappers received the ransom (el rescate) that they want in the end? (No, they paid $250 instead.)

Figure 15

According to Herrera et al. (2007), the teacher's efforts to explore student histories/herstories often result in success with culturally and linguistically diverse (henceforth CLD) students. In other words, learning about students' background enables us to understand and accommodate their educational needs. Corresponding classroom adaptions and instructional accommodations have positive influences on CLD students' academic performances. The sociocultural factors in the second language acquisition include aptitude, learning styles, personality, motivation and attitude, cultural identity and Ethnic Group Affiliation, learner beliefs, students past schooling, cross-cultural conflicts, and subordinate status in the minority group (Pray, 2019). Pray (2019) also concluded some aspects of linguistic background: first language development at the time of second language acquisition, language distance, access to the language, peers and role models, quality of instruction, functions of L1 and L2 use within the community, attitudes toward L1 and L2, and social and psychological difference between L1 and L2 speakers. Some of these features will be examined and discussed along with the interpretation of an interview and several assessments in Part A.

Figure 16

**Part II**

Esthefanny has been placed at Level 2-Emerging when it comes to her Speaking proficiency. This decision is made on the basis of a recently-administered standardized assessment WIDA ACCESS, an oral language assessment conducted by me, and an informal interview given by me. The Part II will fist elaborate on the protocol used for the oral language assessment, the decision based on the assessment, some reflections on the whole procedures, and some evidence from the informal interview. Then, it will provide the evidence derived from the standardized language assessment as well as some analysis of the reliability, validity, and test bias of ACCESS for ELLs.

**Oral Language Assessment**

In order to gain some insights into Esthefanny's oral language proficiency, I assessed her using a self-designed observational protocol, which consists of three tasks. I started by inviting her and another student, a boy from Esthefanny's ELL class, to greet each other. I briefly introduced the accessors, the purposes of this observational assessment, and the main procedures of it. They were informed that their voices would be recorded. During Task 1, they were asked to introduce themselves and share with each other about their culture, country, hobbies, and interests. A tool was provided to help them brainstorm some topics that they'd like to talk about (see Appendix L). Task 2 asked them to plan for a day trip together by looking at a map which was placed on the table within reach of both of them (see Appendix M). Task 3 is an informal debate, where they chose a side and brainstormed on some reasons to support their own side. The topic for debate was: *Should students wear uniforms at school?* A picture with students wearing different uniforms were provided to boost their understanding of this topic (see Appendix N). A bubble map was distributed to assist them generate some ideas (see Appendix O). After the three tasks, students gave some comments on each other's performances as well as their own performances. Finally, I thanked them and assured that they had done well.

Figure 17

test administration reliability, and test reliability (Brown, 2019). Brown (2019) noted that **student-related reliability** can be influenced by students' physical or psychological factors, test-wiseness, and the strategies that have been employed in the tests. As such variables differ from participant to participant, this reliability cannot be judged according to the nature of the tests. **Test administration reliability** is closely related with physical environment, which

Figure 18

systematically learned the morphological knowledge. There are several recommendations with regard to developing her reading skills. One recommendation is that when introducing new vocabulary, the ELL teacher can explicitly teach some morphological knowledge such as affixes and affixes, conduct modeling, and engage her in guided practice. To illustrate, Esthefanny may find it helpful to learn how the part of speech changes by certain inflectional affixes. Also, the teacher can instruct her to hone the skills of guessing meaning from contexts by showing her how to identify text clues like synonyms, examples, and antonyms. For instance, she can guess the meaning of "stew" by recognizing its synonym in this sentence "I was cooking at home and I stewed some cabbages." Some strategies in terms of

Appendix B: An Oral Language Assessment Protocol

## Assessment Protocol and Rubric

Jiagian Chen

1. Getting started:

Briefly introduce the assessors, the purposes of this assessment, and the procedures. Set the students at ease and inform that the whole assessment will take them up to 30 minutes. Let them know assessors will take notes and their voices will be recorded. The assessment will be based on the WIDA rubrics (see Appendix A).

2. Task 1: Non-directive pair introduction (about 5 min.)

Ask each student to introduce himself or herself for a few minutes. Encourage students to talk with each other about topics like their hobbies, home country, cultures, favorite food, favorite star, favorite movie, favorite animal, and favorite music. Encourage them to interact with each other by asking questions and making comments. If little is conveyed in this part, I might consider asking them if they like Nashville and the reasons.

3. Task 2: Pair decision-making process (about 10 min.)

Explain that the pair has 7 to 8 minutes to reach consensus on a plan for a day trip (see Appendix B). Read instructions to the students and place the map on the table within reach of both of them. Let students discuss and plan for a day trip without intervention. Give them a warning when time is almost up. Have students report on their decisions.

4. Task 3: Informal debate (about 10 min.)

Explain that they are going to debate on the topic: *Should students wear uniforms at school?* Give them a picture of uniform and prepare some paper and pencils for them. Ask them to choose one side. They will be given 2 minutes to brainstorm on the reasons why students should (not) wear uniforms at school. Then, they will be asked to debate with each other by providing their reasons. Give them a warning when time is almost up. After the debate, ask if they like uniforms.

5. Thank all participants. Assure them that we enjoyed meeting them and they did well.

## Appendix C: Reading Assessments

**I Am Still The Greatest RUNNING RECORD**

Student Name: Esthefanny                        Date: 11/7/2019
Level: WIDA ELP level 2                          Recorder: Jiayan Chan

| E=Errors   SC=Self Correction   M=Meaning(Semantics)   S=Structure(Syntax)   V=Visual | E | SC | E M S V | SC M S V |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I Am Still The Greatest | | | | |
| By Muhammad Ali | | | | |
| I have always believed in myself, even as a young child growing up in Louisville, Ky. My | 2 | 0 | 0 1 1 | 0 0 0 |
| parents instilled a sense of pride and confidence in me, and taught me and my brother that | 2 | 0 | 0 1 1 | 0 0 0 |
| we could be the best at anything. I must have believed them, because I remember being the | 1 | 0 | 0 0 1 | 0 0 0 |
| neighborhood marble champion and challenging my neighborhood buddies to see who | 0 | 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 |
| could jump the tallest hedges or run a foot race the length of the block. Of course I knew | 0 | 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 |
| when I made the challenge that I would win. I never even thought of losing. | 0 | | 0 | |
| In high school I boasted weekly—if not daily—that one day I was going to be the | | | | |
| heavyweight champion of the world. As part of my boxing training, I would run down Fourth | | | | |
| Street in downtown Louisville, darting in and out of local shops, taking just enough time to | 3 | | 2 | |
| tell them I was training for the Olympics and I was going to win a gold medal. And when I | | | | |
| came back home I was going to turn pro and become the world heavyweight champion in | 1 | | 1 | |
| boxing. I never thought of the possibility of failing—only of the fame and glory I was going | | | | |
| to get when I won. I could see it. I could almost feel it. When I proclaimed that I was the | 1 | | 1 | |
| "Greatest of All Time," I believed in myself. And I still do. | 1 | | 1 | |
| Throughout my entire boxing career, my belief in my abilities triumphed over the skill of | 4 | | 4 | |
| an opponent. My will was stronger than their skills. What I didn't know was that my will would | 2 | | 2 | |
| be tested even more when I retired. | 1 | | 1 | |
| In 1984, I was conclusively diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Since that diagnosis, my | 1 | | 1 | |
| symptoms have increased and my ability to speak in audible tones has diminished. If there | 2 | | 1 1 | |
| was anything that would strike at the core of my confidence in myself, it would be this | | | | |
| insidious disease. But my confidence and will to continue to live life as I choose won't be | 1 | | 1 | |
| compromised. | | | | |
| Early in 1996, I was asked to light the cauldron at the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, | 1 | | 1 | |

Handwritten notes (bottom right):
2 ...... ....
9 simple vs simple
   past    present
1 comparatives superlative
3 plurals

Georgia. Of course my immediate answer was yes. I never even thought of having Parkinson's *challenge* or what physical challenges that would present for me.

When the moment came for me to walk out on the 140-foot high scaffolding and take *realize* the torch from Janet Evans, I realized I had the eyes of the world on me. I also realized that *realiz* as I held the Olympic torch high above my head, my tremors had taken over. Just at that moment, I heard a rumble in the stadium that became a pounding roar and then turned into *reminding* a deafening applause. I was reminded of my 1960 Olympic experience in Rome, when I won the gold medal. Those 36 years between Rome and Atlanta flashed before me and I realized *have coming* that I had come full circle.

*was* *is* Nothing in life has defeated me. I am still "The Greatest." This I believe.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | |
| 2 | 2 | |
| 1 | 1 | |
| 2 | 2 | |
| 2 | 2 | |

15  15

Accuracy Rate: __93.8%__    Error Rate: __6.2%__    SC Rate: __0%__
AR = (TW-E) / TW          ER = E / TW           SCR = SC / (E+SC)
        500.                      3| too

| Category Discriptions | Accuracy Rate Range |
|---|---|
| Easy enough for independent reading | 95-100% |
| Instructional level for use in guided reading | 90-94% |
| Too difficult and will frustrate the reader | 89% or below |
| STUDENT TALK (to reinforce and praise self-correction) | |

Comprehension Questions:
What does the heading mean? Why did he say "still"?
Who is Ali?
What does "boast" mean?
What does "a deafening applause" mean?
What are some characteristics of Ali?

Please summarize the main idea.

Ss wrote down

Ss Responses Notes:
1. He is the best of anyone in the world. / He believe in himself.    offered
2. The writer. (After hints: The person in this story he wants to be the champion of the weight)
3. I don't know. (After several guesses)
4 like defending? (The S doesn't understand)

(5). 1) He only believe by himself
Ss wrote down   2) he was creido
3) He only think in wining
4) He don't stop doing things if he love a disease

Spring

**I Am Still The Greatest**
By Muhammad Ali

Mon.

I have always believed in myself, even as a young child growing up in Louisville, Ky. My parents instilled a sense of pride and confidence in me, and taught me and my brother that we could be the best at anything. I must have believed them, because I remember being the neighborhood marble champion and challenging my neighborhood buddies to see who could jump the tallest hedges or run a foot race the length of the block. Of course I knew when I made the challenge that I would win. I never even thought of losing.

Tues.

In high school, I boasted weekly — if not daily — that one day I was going to be the heavyweight champion of the world. As part of my boxing training, I would run down Fourth Street in downtown Louisville, darting in and out of local shops, taking just enough time to tell them I was training for the Olympics and I was going to win a gold medal. And when I came back home, I was going to turn pro and become the world heavyweight champion in boxing. I never thought of the possibility of failing — only of the fame and glory I was going to get when I won. I could see it. I could almost feel it. When I proclaimed that I was the "Greatest of All Time," I believed in myself. And I still do.

Throughout my entire boxing career, my belief in my abilities triumphed over the skill of an opponent. My will was stronger than their skills. What I didn't know was that my will would be tested even more when I retired.

Wed.

In 1984, I was conclusively diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Since that diagnosis, my symptoms have increased and my ability to speak in audible tones has diminished. If there was anything that would strike at the core of my confidence in myself, it would be this insidious disease. But my confidence and will to continue to live life as I choose won't be compromised.

Thurs.

Early in 1996, I was asked to light the caldron at the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta. Of course my immediate answer was yes. I never even thought of having Parkinson's or what physical challenges that would present for me.

Friday

When the moment came for me to walk out on the 140-foot-high scaffolding and take the torch from Janet Evans, I realized I had the eyes of the world on me. I also realized that as I held the Olympic torch high above my head, my tremors had taken over. Just at that moment, I heard a rumble in the stadium that became a pounding roar and then turned into a deafening applause. I was reminded of my 1960 Olympic experience in Rome, when I won the gold medal. Those 36 years between Rome and Atlanta flashed before me, and I realized that I had come full circle.

Nothing in life has defeated me. I am still the "Greatest." This I believe.

1. He only believe by him self

2. He was creido

3. He only think in wining

④ He don't stop doing things if he have a disease

5

6

Appendix D: A Student Writing Sample

Esthefanny Maria d.

1 the are beautifull flower that have
a shine color of golden daffodils and
they apart in a lake and a shire beautiful
star and the flowers are dancing
5 withe the breeze of the air that
is william wordsworth he feel have
wealth with that flowers because
they make hur to be special and
relaxing for him some people have to
10 have a litter of temi relaxing with
see flowers with their breeze of the air
and the daffodils a still popular in
america because they make people to
relax and their beautifull color of
15 golden people want to stay more
in the forest them home because
the forest make people to relax with the
breeze and in home is boved because only
19 they see the same things again and again.