

Capstone ESL Portfolio

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Abstract

This ESL Portfolio demonstrates my understanding of how to become a qualified teacher to best serve culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) English language learners (ELL). I reflect upon the theoretical knowledge that I have learned during the two years' study at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University and also my practical teaching experiences. With the reflection, I develop my vision of teaching that help ELLs achieve academic success.

This Portfolio consists of three parts: 1) philosophy of teaching, 2) TESOL standards for ESL/EFL teachers and 3) implications, challenges, and final reflections. In the first part, I state my philosophy of teaching under the theoretical framework of Vygotsky's sociocultural view of learning. In the second part, I address the TESOL standards in seven domains, which are planning, instructing, assessing, identity and context, learning, content, and commitment and professionalism. For each domain, I demonstrate my understanding by explaining and evidences from the artifacts that I created for my course work. In the last part, I present my ideal vision of my future classroom, identify the challenges I will meet in real teaching, and also how I will make efforts to meet the challenges.

This Portfolio not only shows my understanding of the knowledge I have gained through course work, but also my passion and efforts to become a successful ELL teacher.

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Philosophy of Teaching

Before I attended Vanderbilt University, I knew I would be a different teacher for my students and I would not teach English in the way I was taught. I wanted to provide authentic contexts for my students to improve their listening and speaking skills through conversations. I did not want to be the person speaking in the front of the classroom all the time lecturing them grammar and vocabulary. I wanted them to be able to communicate in English rather than just learn the language. I used to believe these were only my wishes. However, after two-years course study, in addition with classroom observations, practicum experiences, now I have theorists, theories, and practical experiences supporting and guiding me, which will help me become a different teacher after I graduate.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural View of Learning

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of human learning claims that learning is a social process and the origination of human intelligence lies in society or culture. This theory has become the overarching theory for my philosophy of teaching. I will present it in two tenets: sociocultural dimension for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students, and learning through collaborative environment and scaffolding.

Sociocultural Dimension for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Students

According to Vygotsky (1978 cited Lantolf 2000), the sociocultural environment shows the child with diverse tasks and demands, and in the mean time engages the child in his own world through the tools. The tools are created under specific cultural and historical conditions that can be used to help the child solving problems. These tools carry their own characteristics of that specific culture. This idea appeals the importance to get to know my students' sociocultural

background. The students I will teach in America are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) English language learners (ELLs). Sociocultural dimension plays a significant role in CLD students' learning since it "consists of the social and cultural factors that influence students learning" (Herrera, et al, 2010). In order to maximize the learning results, I will collect information in the following three aspects to connect my teaching to students' sociocultural background.

First is the "historical background of the family". "The more insight educators have into the historical backgrounds of their CLD students, the better equipped they are to use this information to enhance their instructional practices" (Herrera, et al, 2010). The newly arrived CLD students have more pressures from their parents because they want them to achieve academic achievement as soon as possible and parents may also discourage the use of native language at home to promote the acquisition of English. "Understanding the family goals, beliefs, and values provides educators with valuable insight into the behaviors and learning patterns of their CLD students" (Herrera, et al, 2010). As a result, I will firstly use a family brochure to gather information about the family and the learner's goal in order to integrate them to make beneficial instructions for the learner. Students can use any form to write or draw about any information of their family. In addition to family brochure, I will also have a home visit or an individual meeting with the parents before school year starts to collect the family background information from parents' perspective of view. This will help me get the information of students' overall background such as their language, their life experience, their acculturation experience, their strengths and so on. The funds of knowledge (Moll, et al, 1992) of the learner through these activities will become valuable resources to be used in future class instructions.

Second is the "literacy resources". Learners from different cultural backgrounds may have

developed different tools to improve their literacy skills. Most CLD students enter school with no formal instructions on how to read or write. However, they may have their own experiences and exposures to literacy. “When literacy instruction builds on the background knowledge and experiences of CLD students, these students are able to make valuable connections to texts as they construct meaning” (Marzano, 2004). Therefore, I should have a clear view of students’ former experiences and strategies of literacy to combine students’ ways of learning with the class instructions. To do so, at the beginning of the class, I will make a survey with questions regard to learners’ literacy backgrounds to build a literacy file for each learner. This file provides me a clear and useful information of students’ prior level of reading, own reading strategies, experiences of reading and so on.

Third is the “perceptions”. CLD students enter schools with their own perceptions of the new environment. “Cultural discontinuity describes the internal conflict a CLD students may experience when his or her cultural background or social value conflict with those taught in school or demonstrated by teachers” (Herrera, et al, 2010). Assessing learner’s level of acculturation is crucial (Herrera, et al, 2013). When a CLD student is in the stage of hostility, he or she may hold negative perceptions towards school, peers, teachers, and even the whole new culture. Hence, it is important for me to realize the cultural discontinuity so that I can successfully deal with it when it appears. I will hold pre-assessment to gather information on learner’s current level of acculturation. Getting to know what works for them, what bothers them and what I can do to help them is important to make instructional plans for the learners. I will provide authentic but adapted texts for learners who are lack of literacy experiences to encourage them to become readers. More importantly, these texts will be culturally responsive in order to increase their interests and also make them feel that their cultures are valued.

Learning Through Collaborative Environment and Scaffolding Vygotsky's (1978)

sociocultural theory advocates that leaning is a semiotic process in which participating in socially mediated activities is essential. It emphasizes the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) that is beyond learner's actual develop level should be tied to careful instructions and scaffolding to be achieved.

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) One approach that I will use in my future class will be Task-based Language Teaching. Learning is gained in the process of interactions with others. To accomplish this, I would like to use the strong version of Communicative Approach that is to acquire English through communication (Howatt, 1984). TBLT belongs to the strong version of Communicative Approach. "Tasks are meaningful, and in doing them, students need to communicate. Tasks have a clear outcome so that the teacher and students know whether or not the communication has been successful" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.149). By communicating in English to finish tasks, students will be fully engaged especially when the task requires physical movements. For example, I might want them to find out a best time for classes to begin in the afternoon. To achieve this, they have to make a survey with a time sheet and communicate with other classmates to see what they think about this question and they should give their reasons. By doing so, students keep talking with each other to convey meanings. Also, moving around to do the survey engages them in the task. Students create their knowledge and communicate with each other in a safe and emotionally supportive environment. What's more, I will carefully choose the tasks for my students. "The tasks are meaningful and relevant so that the students see the reason for doing the task and can see how the task relates to possible situations in their lives outside the classroom" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.156). This

is essential for me since I want my students to access the authentic language being used in everyday life. I will try my best to use the tasks that are meaningful and suitable for students' current level.

Gradual Release of Responsibility Model As Vygotsky (1978) claims, ZPD is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers.” In order to help students achieve this zone and gradually internalize the learning to work on their own, I will employ Pearson & Gallagher’s (1983) Gradual Release of Responsibility Model. This model emphasizes “instructional scaffolding” through which teachers explicitly model for students, guide students to practice together and gradually lead students to become independent learners. It contains “I do it” “We do it” “You do it together” “You do it alone”, which provides me clear guidance. At the beginning of a task, I will model for my students first, explicitly; then we will practice the task together to get familiar with the task; next, I will assign them into groups with more proficient peer in each group, they will carry out the task together; finally, they should be able to do the task alone and internalize the new skill and knowledge. Though my students are mainly ELLs, I would not hold lower expectation on them. The tasks will be challenging for them in order to provoke high-order thinking, however, by using GRR Model, they can gradually accomplish all the tasks on their own, reach and maintain their ZPD.

Using Technology in Classroom Teaching “Language is changed through use. It is a dynamic and evolving entity” (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.208). I, myself, also as an English language learner, cannot use the most up-to-date authentic language without accessing to the Internet. Technology helps me provide authentic materials such as YouTube videos, online

journals, blogs, images, etc. However, I should also be eclectic with the materials I want to use. Sometimes, up-to-date materials can be tricky since they include slangs that have totally different actual meanings from what they literally mean and also situations that students are not familiar with. Without further explanation for the slangs or situations, students may feel confused and misuse the slangs. Therefore, I will choose the materials more carefully and purposefully. Moreover, I would include online tasks in my future classes to motivate students' interests, increase their language awareness by using English to communicate and also enjoy autonomy choosing their own topics and contents to learn (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013). I learned how to use twitter to write details, feelings, and summarizations within 140 words and also use hash tag to highlight the meaning to be conveyed in Dr. Hundley's class. Making a video book trailer, creating a multimedia story, creating a collage, and so on are all great activities for students to do to accomplish reading tasks. Through carefully scaffolding, students will feel engaged and finally be able to complete on their own.

Conclusion

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and other theories are supporting my believing in teaching ELL students, which makes more confident in implementing them into practice. In my future teaching, I will always reflect on these valuable theory support and gain new understanding through teaching in real classroom.

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TESOL Standards

Domain: Planning

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

Teaching is all about meeting **learner** needs and goals. Planning means to me that teachers should plan their lessons and instructions to assure that learners can achieve their goals after the class. Planning provides teacher opportunities to align objectives and instructions with state standards. In order to meet learner goals, teachers would first get to know their individual needs and integrate them into lesson planning. What's more, teachers should consider students' cultural background, language proficiency, and prior knowledge to activate their background knowledge. More importantly, planning helps teacher make objectives and content relevant to learners and comprehensible to their current level. In addition, planning physical movement activities will engage students in class activities and promote **learning**.

The artifact I chose for this domain is my rationale and calendar for a unit plan (see Artifact A and Artifact B) for 4th grade English language **learners** to learn narrative writing through reading culturally relevant picture books. I wrote this for Teaching Writing and Multimedia Composition. Dr. Hundley wanted to see exactly why I chose these materials for these particular learners at this time and how I plan for everyday objectives, lesson activities, and assessments to ensure that learners will achieve the goal I set for them.

My **learners** are ELLs who belong to the "traditional marginalized groups" (Jimenez & Rose, 2010). In order to engage these particular **learners** into class discussions and make them feel involved, I will use three Chinese American juvenile fictions---*Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding* by Lenore Look, *Hannah Is My Name* by Belle Yang, and *Shanghai*

Messenger by Andrea Cheng as materials to teach narrative writing. The cultural relevant books have main characters that share the same experiences with my **learners**. While reading these books, I will encourage **learners** to share in order to active their funds of knowledge (Moll, et al, 1992). As a result, when they read the mentor texts, they will have a clear connection with the characters, see what they are going through, and how are they expressing their feelings. Then, my **learners** will build on their own writing with the support from the mentor text.

The **learning environment** I plan for this unit is very safe and engaging. **Learners** have chance to read out loud, analyze characters and more importantly, make connections between themselves and the characters. We will work on building on a bank for their own special experiences that they can write for narrative prompts. Through sharing with each other, they can build on their experiences and have more to write for their own narrative writing assignments. In Artifact B, every week, **learners** will use various charts to collect information from the book and add details to their journals, which I will model first. Through everyday reading mentor texts, sharing experiences, mini lessons on skills, and also class discussions, **learners** internalize these steps and develop their own strategies for future writing.

Curriculum ties closely to the state standards. As English Language Arts Standards Grade 4 require for reading, students will be able to “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions)”. Through the unit, **learners** will work on reading, summarizing, analyzing and describing the story, the characters. At the mean time, **learners** will draw on details in the story to make story charts, flipbooks and F. I. T Charts to form their habits of paying attention to details while reading and realizing the importance of adding details into their own writing. The 4th grade English Language Arts standards sever as the guiding objective that my **learners** will

achieve after studying the unit. In addition, in Artifact B, I plan specific objectives based on everyday goals to engage **learners**. According to my specific objectives, I plan different activities for **learners** to create an engaging **learning environment**.

In Artifact B, I plan a formative **assessment** everyday to keep track on **learners'** achievement. I give them a writing assignment every night relating to the topic we read during class time and it also closely relate to **learners'** own life experience. The next day I will collect the writing and **assess** if they use the content that we learned yesterday. At the end of the unit, I plan a final project for learners to write a narrative writing using their own experience as long as they show their knowledge on how to write details, which is our learning goal for this unit. It is not a matter that a learner can write a perfect narrative writing piece. What matters to me is that through all his or her writing assignments along the unit with the final project, I can **assess** his or her improvement and gaining the content knowledge.

Domain: Instructing

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

Ellis (2000) claims that sociocultural theory assumes that learning arises in interaction rather than through interaction, which shows the importance of promoting a successful classroom interaction. Creating supportive environments means to me that I shall make my content culturally relevant to my English language **learners** and instruct activities that engage them in active communication. More importantly, through interactions, they **learn** to value their peers' cultures.

The artifact I chose for this domain is a lesson plan (see Artifact C) introducing names, its cultures and identities for Teaching Second Language Literacy. ELLs feel more engaged in the classroom when **learning** is closely related to what they already know, what they have experienced and what they value. I choose a book called *The Name Jar* about a Korean girl whose name was pronounced wrongly when she first arrived America. ELLs always have names in their native language. My practicum experience in McMurray Middle Prep made me realize that it is so hard to pronounce their names correctly at first several days. I believe most of my ELLs may have the same experiences as Unhei, who is the main character in the book.

To reduce the affective filters (Krashen, 1985), I will share my own story of my name first. I want them to know that each name has a story that shows parents' expectation and cultural values. This is the part when "I do" for the learners. Then they will firstly share in a small group about their names and how they are mispronounced by others. After they feel ready, I will call on someone to share with the whole class. This are the parts of "You do it together" and "You do it alone". Through this GRR Model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), learners actively participate in

the interaction. The classroom environment I create is safe and supportive because I scaffold at first, then let them practice, and finally they perform the task on their own. One important goal for this lesson is for them to value peers' cultures. During the interaction, they get to know each other and will be able to promote a respectful interaction.

The **curriculum** is helpful for engaging **learners** since I include a culturally relevant book, a topic that relates to learners' life experience, a video clip that provides background information on name stamp appearing in the book, and many following-up questions that acquire higher-order thinking. My class includes reading out loud together, small group discussion and whole class discussion. **Learner** interactions are stressed throughout the whole class. By communicating with each other, they learn the knowledge about their peers' cultural conventions, their story of first time settling in America, and how they face the difficulties. They do not only become knowledgeable in the interaction, but also become supportive and value each other's diverse background.

Assessment for this lesson will be carried out throughout the whole semester. Learning goal for this lesson is more than achieving knowledge. **Learners** will be able to appreciate their identities, maintain their identities, and show empathy to newcomers. As their teacher, I will keep track on their behavior all the time to **assess** their understanding of this concept. When I see some misbehaviors, I will provide feedback instantly and also give another mini lesson to the whole class if necessary.

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 for me never means a final exam at the very end of the semester since it does not provide me any useful information except that it makes me realize that I fail to think for my learners during the process of teaching. For me, assessment should happen all the time. Pre-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment are all the assessments that will happen in my teaching. However, in order to lower the affective filter (Krashen, 1985), I shall let my learners know that, I will not assess them by grading and I am only doing so to modify my instructions.

The artifact I chose for this domain is Section III (see Artifact D) for my unit plan about teaching 4th grade ELLs how to write narrative with more supporting details. Through the **assessments** that is carried out at every step in the unit, I know what my students already know, what they need to work harder on, what they still do not know, and what needs to be explicitly explained. **Assessment** is also useful for **learners** to know what they still need to work on with. **Informal assessment** such as oral feedback will always be provided instantly during class discussion.

I use a short story writing as my **pre-assessment** for this unit plan. I want to see what they already know about adding details to narrative writing to attract audiences. From their current

level, I can plan how to achieve their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Learners' background knowledge plays a significant role in planning lesson since knowledge that build on what learners already know is more comprehensible. Also, a class discussion will also serve as **pre-assessment** during which **learners** can interact and build on each other's idea.

Formative assessment is a huge part in my unit plan since I believe that tracking on **learners'** progress will help make decisions on instructions. Each week, we will have a small piece of writing relating to the strategy that we learn that week. I **assess** how they use the strategy, what details they add to the writing, and what is still missing. For instance, if still lots of **learners** fail to add dialogues to their writing, I will adjust my instruction and give another mini lesson on adding dialogues. What's more, while we are reading each day, **learners** add details from the book to their charts in their journals. I will walk around to each learner to check if they write down the right detail to make sure they engaging in the **classroom environment**.

Summative assessment for my unit plan is a larger writing assignment, which requires students to write a narrative writing using their own experience and adding different details to make it vivid and attractive. We have been working on this topic the whole unit, reading mentor texts, learning strategies, and discussing in class. Most importantly, I will **assess** their every-week writing along with the final writing to **assess** their improvements. I want to see what they have learned and what they still need to improve instead of only grading their final project. Through **assessment**, I can know what I need to improve so that I can make the **curriculum** better and suitable for them.

Assessment for me is all about them and me making progress together.

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.

The very first thing I learned about how to become a great ELL teacher is that I need to make every effort to get to know my **learners**, which including their cultural backgrounds, native languages, communities and families. Knowing these is not the goal, but valuing them and implementing this knowledge to create a supportive **classroom environment** and make culturally relevant **curriculum** to involve ELL students into mainstream classroom is.

The artifact I chose for this domain is my Community Literacy exploring paper (see Artifact E). To know learners' community better, we explored Nolensville Pike where Hispanic people formed a large community. Through observing and collecting community literacies, I realized how different learners' communities can be from classroom environment. The advertisements are written in Spanish, the name of the supermarket is in several languages, the products are mainly for Asians and Hispanic people, and people speak Spanish with each other. Then what should I do to make **curriculum** and school life more relevant to my ELLs?

“Minority students are more likely to make progress in school when teachers understand and incorporate their home and community literacy practices as opposed to attempting simply to impose school-like practices (e.g., book reading) in the home” (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009). The importance of engaging **learners** in learning and making progress makes me come up with the idea of using a Spanish advertisement to start the conversation. A Spanish speaker needs to

read and explain for the class. If he or she finds it difficult, other **learners** who share the same language can help them. Then the whole class will discuss what does the author mean and what does the author want. If it is a job, **learners** need to come up five qualities one needs to have to get this job. **Classroom environment** is active since learners are talking about authentic materials from their community and the topic relates to their life experience.

As a teacher, it is important for me to help **learners** understand that they need to maintain identities and cultures rather than assimilation. In order to do this, I will include topic that **learners** feel proud about their own cultures. A world market like K&S exists because immigrants are missing their own culture and are making traditional foods. Kids love food and talking about food so that I will ask them to bring their favorite snack at home. Each of them will tell their group what the food is and why he or she likes it. Then they should try one of the snacks and still discuss how they feel about the snack. After they feel prepared, they will give a short presentation on the taste, whether they like it or not, reasons, and whatever they want to talk about. When the **curriculum** is interesting and related to learners' culture and life, the **classroom environment** will become more engaging and the affective filters will be reduced.

“The other goal for the use of transnational and community literacies in schools is to provide a way for students from a variety of backgrounds to learn more about one another” (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009). In Artifact E, to achieve this **learning** goal, I collect three flyers writing about the same thing but in Spanish, Chinese and Korean. I divide **learners** into small groups according their native language so that each group contains students who speak different languages. They will translate the flyer one by one. Then they will discuss the parts they translate differently and try their best to explain why. In this process of interaction, they make transitions from language to language, make comparisons among languages, learn knowledge about other

languages and also English.

“These discussions should direct students to consider word choice, idiomatic expressions, and the cultural values involved in the interpretation and presentation of ideas” (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009). Through this meaning negotiating and engaging interactions, **learners** from diverse backgrounds learn how to value each other language, cultural values and identities. This is a very significant achievement in a culturally diverse classroom.

The more I know about my ELLs, the more I understand the importance of adjusting **assessment** for them. **Assessment** for these particular **learners** should also relate to cultural backgrounds, and their funds of knowledge. For my daily informal **assessment** in classroom, I would also allow native language responses since a supportive **classroom environment** is more helpful for a successful interaction.

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.

I cannot become a sufficient English teacher if I do not have knowledge of English. Acquiring a second language is different from learning the native language, which requires me to know the theories to instruct and assess my learners. Consequently, it is essential for me to also have the knowledge of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, so that I can help me make purposeful instructions to promote my learners' learning outcome.

The artifact I chose for this domain is the Case Study of a Non-Native English Speaker (see Artifact F) for my Educational Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition class in the first semester. In this project, the **learner** I observed and analyzed is a Physics PhD student at Vanderbilt. I interviewed **learner's** previous education experience, used oral and written samples to assess his level of Characteristics of English Language Proficiency and current stage of SLA, and more importantly, made specific instructional plans to best meet learner goals.

In the case study, I introduced my **learner** through his prior education background, learning goals, and sociocultural interactions after he arrived in America. He was exposed to Grammar-Translation Approach through his past English learning experience, which results in a solid knowledge in the language rather than fluency in communication. During our interview, I know that his primary **learning goal** is to improve his oral English proficiency so that he can chat with his American peers.

Using the linguistic knowledge that I learned from the course, I analyzed his oral and written abilities in aspects of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Through this

information, I know how his native language influences his pronunciation and sentence structures. After carefully **assessment**, his Characteristics of English Language Proficiency (Pray, 2014) in oral proficiency is between Level 3 and Level 4 while written proficiency is between Level 4 and Level 5. Cummins has developed the idea of Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). The former was defined in terms of "the manifestation of language proficiency in everyday communicative contexts," whereas CALP was conceptualized in terms of the manipulation of language in decontextualized academic situations (Cummins, 1991). It is clearly that my **learner** is more proficient in his CALP than BICS due to his former explicit grammar learning. This leads me to plan my instruction in a total different way.

Based on my analysis, **learner's** goal for improving oral English proficiency, and SLA theoretical framework, I will provide a student-centered **learning environment**. Improving BICS requires many student interactions since through communicating with each other, learners practice speaking skills. In this student-centered **learning environment**, **learner** will be given authentic speaking tasks. "In context-embedded communication the participants can actively negotiate meaning (e.g., by providing feedback that the message has not been understood), and the language is supported by a wide range of meaningful paralinguistic and situational cues" (Cummins, 1991). **Learner** will interact with native English speakers to talk daily topics. To make it more authentic, I will add slangs and idioms to the curriculum, with explanations to make them comprehensible for the **learner**. The more he practices in this sociocultural interaction **learning environment**, the more he will be able to improve his oral proficiency and become confident in daily conversations.

I will **assess** the learner by observing his everyday participation in interactions and authentic

language usage. Moreover, I will interview often to gather information on his learning goals, improvements, and suggestions on my teaching. Thus, I can plan instructions according to his goals and current level.

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.

As I have mentioned in my philosophy of teaching, my goal for my **learners** is that they can communicate in English fluently. Furthermore, this learning should happen through communication. Creating a **learning environment** full of authentic listening, speaking and writing tasks where **learners** can improve abilities by accomplishing these tasks. To me it means promoting learners content knowledge through engaging in purposeful meaning making interactions. This works well with English language **learners**, especially the contents are relevant to their experiences and daily usage.

The artifact I chose for this domain is a conversation lesson plan (see Artifact G) for Teaching ESL/EFL course. The ultimate goal for this lesson plan is teaching **learners** “How to Order a Meal in America” by engaging them in conversation making. This topic is an authentic daily setting, which **learners** will encounter in real life. **Learners** are learning English for a genuine communicative purpose.

My **learners** are 7th grade Chinese ELLs. In a EFL setting, **learners** are more likely to learn English ignoring cultural differences. First, I ask **learners’** own experiences of ordering a meal in Chinese restaurants to activate their background knowledge. In order to help **learners** know that learn knowledge of the language does not mean being capable of communicating in that

language, I share my own embarrassing experience of ordering my first meal in America.

Curriculum is led by the **learning** objective that **learners** can make conversations to order a meal in America and also **learners** can identify the differences between China and America's cultural in ordering food. These goals provide **learners** an authentic **learning environment** full of interactions with the teacher and peers. After sharing my experience, I will show a video clip of American people ordering food in a restaurant. Listening to mentor texts to hear how native speakers produce daily conversations creates a **learning environment** where **learners** can have access to materials in discourse level rather than sentence level. Thus, **learners** will realize how to organize sentences to make sense while communicating for genuine purposes.

Then I give them a transcript of a conversation for them to read out loud. It is their task to find out the useful sentences and vocabularies that they can use to make their own conversations. **Learners** are put into groups of three to read, discuss and make their own conversations. By making their own conversations, learners learn that when language is used for communication, it is not complicated in structure, but is full of meaning making negotiations.

As for **assessment**, I divide it into individuals and groups. First, I will ask them to write a short conversation using the authentic sentences people use in ordering a meal to **assess** if they have internalized the content for their own use. Second, for groups, I will ask them to form a new group to make a new conversation in the setting of a restaurant. During their preparation time, I will walk around to **assess** how they make conversations and also make sure they are on task. Finally, I will ask two groups to perform their conversations for the whole class to **assess** their oral output.

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.

Teachers are also learners, who learn from teaching experiences, self-learning, professional development, experienced peers and students. The National Staff Development Council (2007) included content knowledge and quality teaching, research-basis, collaboration, diverse learning needs, student learning environments, family involvement, evaluation, data-driven design, and teacher learning into standards that professional development should follow. These are crucial aspects that teachers should continue to learn throughout the teaching career. Thus, they can improve their curriculum, instructions, teacher-student relationships, and the whole teaching community.

I chose two artifacts for this domain, which are my midterm paper (see Artifact H) and end-of-semester update (see Artifact I) for Teaching EFL/ESL course. These two paper show how I improve my teaching approaches in teaching English as a foreign language through course readings, seminar, mini lesson presentations, and peer feedbacks. Combining these two papers, I can see that my insistence on teaching English for communication, using Chinese as a tool for Chinese ELLs, and creating a **learning environment** with authentic discourse level materials, which are helpful to keep learners in interactions.

Learners in China are learning under Grammar-Translation Method because the pressure of College Entrance Exam determines that the learning goal is high score rather than communication. In order to combine this goal with my teaching goal, I need to combine explicit

grammar teaching with authentic speaking, reading and writing materials and tasks. I will use discourse-level contexts (R. Ellis, 2002) such as listening to extended dialogues and talks, watching movies and videos, having meaning-focused conversations, doing multi-paragraph readings and writing essays and journals (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). As Biber and Rappen (2002) suggested that “material developers should use corpus analysis to determine the frequencies of grammatical structures in authentic language and be careful to reflect there these frequencies in the materials they design” (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Therefore, I will analyze the corpus to choose materials have authentic language expressions, such as newspaper, transcripts of videos and movies, song lyrics, novels and so on. For grammar teaching, I will use grammar consciousness-raising tasks that require learners to communicate directly about grammar structures by generating a rule for their use (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). In this **learning environment**, learners are learning rules by interacting and negotiating meaning with each other.

In Artifact I, after few weeks’ study, I understand that teachers should be eclectic and active decision-makers and they should make their pedagogical choices by “drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs” (Borg, 2003, p. 81). It is hard for teachers to make **curriculum** choices and choose teaching approaches. However, these can always base on **learners’** individual differences and learning goals since they are the main lead to my differentiate instructional plans.

For **assessment**, it mainly comes within the process of **learner** interactions. For example, I want to teach them past tense. Firstly, I will provide them a passage that I choose from a newspaper. The past tense verbs are all bold as suggested by the contextual enhancement approach. Then, **learners** will be able to pay attention to the grammatical form. After reading, they are expected to utilize intellectual effort to understand the targeted feature (Ellis, 2002).

During this process, I will observe any problems and difficulties they have and provide explanations when necessary. Next, they need to make conversations in pairs to talk about what they did in the past. At this time, I will walk around to provide feedback by using repetition (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Because they have already noticed the grammar form, I expect that they can self-repair after I repeat the error. Finally, I will let them write a letter to a friend to describe their summer vacation. In this way, they not only have input enhancement (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) but also have lots of opportunities to produce output. In this whole process, I use informal **assessment** and provide oral feedbacks to help them make self-correction. The **learning environment** is low of affective filter and they are not affected by the **assessment**. After I collect their letters, I will **assess** their content knowledge of past tense to decide whether they already learn this knowledge or we need to revisit later.

My improvement on these aspects is a result of a continuous study, which strengthens my belief that I will become a life-long learner to become a better teacher.

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Implications, Challenges, and Final Reflections

My vision for future classroom

I used to have my only belief of what kind of teacher I will become for my students. After two years' study at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, along with my practicum, class observations, and other opportunities in the teaching community in Nashville, Tennessee, I now have a clearer vision for my future classroom. With continuing learning opportunities and experience gaining, I will be able to build an ideal learning environment for my English language learners. Following, I will describe my future classroom in the aspects of classroom environment, students, and myself as a teacher.

As a ELL teacher, I know how hard for them to learn new content while they are still learning the language. I want to create a welcoming, supportive and student-centered learning environment for them. Considering students' diverse cultural background, we will have "welcome" sign in all their native languages hanging on the wall to make them feel that they are welcomed to come everyday. As long as students follow school's dress code, they are encouraged to wear their traditional clothes to school. When they wear something special, I would encourage to share about the clothes. By doing this, students can get to know each other well and also value diverse cultures. In addition, I allow using native languages in my classroom. During student interaction time, they can use their native language to explain difficult concepts in the new content as long as they are on task. They can translate classroom rules for me to the newcomers, which is a great way to practice translanguaging. As I have mentioned in my Philosophy of Teaching, sociocultural dimension plays an important role in students' school success. In my classroom, students' prior knowledge, funds of knowledge of the family, literacy resources, and

their perceptions towards the current environment are all included to create a supportive learning environment. To make the classroom student-centered, I will only give instructions when needed and always be there to provide instant feedback but not correcting errors all the time. Most of the time is student-student conversations.

My students are eager to learn and engaging in the tasks I give them. They enjoy reading out loud and expressing their opinions confidently. I will also prepare higher-order thinking questions to push them to think further and think critically. Students will accomplish tasks by exchanging information, ideas, and negotiating with each other. Students will learn how to use graphic organizers so that they can organize their ideas clearly for future tasks. Students are the owner of their learning.

I, myself, as a teacher, will first make my curriculum culturally relevant and materials relating to their prior knowledge. More importantly, I have to make sure I make efforts to cover all cultures of my students in teaching. Second, planning multiple activities to engage learners, especially physical movement activities, is important to improve the learning outcome. Third, I will work hard to build a carer and cared-for relationship with my students (Noddings, 1992). In this relationship, I genuinely care about my students, not only academically, but also their emotions, socio activities, families, and language needs. In return, they will show me that they feel the care and they will respond me by becoming better students. Everyday, I will write the content objectives on the board, so that we can work together to achieve this goal. While baring the language objective in mind, I will provide language support to make academic language comprehensible for them. Next, with carefully modeling and scaffolding, they will gradually be able to accomplish any tasks on their own. Finally, I will use formative assessments during our whole leaning process to collect useful data to make adjustment on instructional plans and also

differentiate instructions for different level learners.

Challenges I will encounter in my future teaching

I have an ideal vision of my future classroom. However, real life teaching will never happen exactly as the theory suggested. Through my own teaching experience, practicum experience, and classroom observations, I realize that there are still challenges on my way becoming a qualified ELL teacher.

It has been well accepted that “teachers teach the way they were taught”. I also believe this is true especially after my own teaching experience in China last summer. I taught high school freshmen with extremely low English proficiency. My mentor teacher was very glad to hear that I am learning teaching English in America and expected me to teach those students with the new teaching strategies. However, I failed. I observed several classes, which were exactly the same as I was taught when I was a high school student using Grammar-Translation Method. At that time, I told myself: “I will never teach like that.” However, when it was my opportunity to teach in real classes, it turned out that I only felt comfortable with and confident in using Grammar-Translation Method. Another reason was that my students had really low proficiency, which required me to explain grammar rules explicitly and translate all the passages into Chinese. As a result, the whole class section was me lecturing all the time. No student-student talk happened at all. This is my first challenge since this will be a great hindrance for me to create a students-centered classroom environment. It might be challenging for me to balance the teacher talking time and student-student talking time in classroom.

Due to the diversity of my students’ cultural backgrounds, languages, and economic backgrounds, it might be challenging for me to form a close relation with parents. Parents’ involvement plays an important role in students’ academic achievement (de Jong, 2011). The

students from a different community may feel difficult to accommodate to a new environment and a new language. As a result, parents should get more involved in their children's education. And as a teacher, it is my responsibility to get families participate more in classes or after school homework. It won't be difficult for me to plan home visits before semester starts to collect information on students' cultural background, linguistic background, prior education experience. However, how to continue this bond and involve parents all the way through the semester, is still very challenging. If the parents do not speak English and if they are very busy with making a living, how can I communicate them frequently and get them participate children's school work?

Starting from 2001, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) becomes the dominant rule for education in America. This reflects the desire that government wants every child to meet the standardized test to meet the requirements regardless of their language and groups. Under this circumstance, more attention is paid to ELLs because they have to meet adequate yearly process (AYP) with their low proficiency in English and poor academic performance. However, NCLB eliminates bilingual completely and stresses skills in English only. (Garcia, E. 2005, p. 98) At this time, bilingual education and cultural diversity are no longer valued since these might become hinders for students to meet the standardized test which reflects English proficiency and academic performance dominate education. In my ideal classroom, I would like to provide many opportunities for my students to use their native language and to practice their translanguaging ability. The English only policy has become another challenge for me.

How I will meet the challenges

Whenever we have challenges, we need to make efforts to overcome them. Not to mention I am a teacher who teach students how to overcome challenges and difficulties to achieve success. To meet the challenges, I will keep on studying theories that promote English language learners'

academic learning, observing and learning from experienced peers, working on professional development, and reflecting on my own teaching.

To overcome my challenge in teacher-centered instruction, I will video tape my own teaching and analyze the way I teach. By watch my own teaching, I can reflect on what went well and what did not go well. More importantly, I will pay attention to students' participation and analyze what kind of instructions and activities can engage them the most. Through analyzing and reflecting on my own teaching and my students, I can plan more engaging activities and pay more attention to my actions to create a student-centered classroom environment.

After two years' study at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, I have read many articles and books regarding to teaching English language learners. In addition, professors' lectures and peers' in-class discussions have provided me precious theoretical framework that I can use in my future teaching. "From a sociocultural perspective, language classrooms are not only a place for the direct instruction of efficient strategies, but also a social arena in which L2 learner strategies emerge and develop as learners who continuously participate in the values, beliefs, and behaviors of a community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991). From my prospect of view, while teaching language, it is very important to know how the students feel about the learning community, whether they feel involved or marginalized to that teachers can judge the strategies that they are using are facilitating or impeding their study. In order to make them feel cared and involved, the community literacies, prior knowledge, their first languages and funds of knowledge are all materials that I will use in my future class to make these minority students feel the care.

It is very essential to develop a rapport with students (Jimenez & Gamaz, 1996). Teachers should first build a relationship with their kids to earn their trust and make them feel that they are

being cared and what teachers are trying to do is nothing other than helping them develop skills that may influence their future life. With the base of this valuable relation between teachers and students, they can work hard together toward the goals of achievement. To build up this rapport, I will make all the ideas that I write down in this portfolio into practice. More over, I will create my own model in my classroom where follows the “language-as-resource” and “language-as-right” orientation (de Jong, 2011). Students’ native languages are really helpful when it is used to explain complex content concepts. I will pay attention to use language as a resource under the lead of law.

Thinking out loud, making connections, approaching unknown word, asking questions, and making inferences will become important procedures for my lesson plans for future teaching (Jimenez & Gamaz, 1996). These steps are helpful to instruct students’ comprehension of reading step by step and also some strategies students can use on their own in future reading independently as long as they grasp these skills. For teachers, it is more significant to teach skills and strategies that help students become independent learners than teach them how to learn.

Final Reflections

In this portfolio, Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of learning serves as the theoretical framework for my philosophy of teaching; two years’ projects at Peabody College shows my professional understanding of TESOL standards; my vision of an ideal future teaching is presented; the challenges I will encounter in the future, and how I will meet these challenges are clearly stated.

I have gained theoretical framework and practice experiences with the support of professors, advisors, and peers. All these precious learning and practicing experience are equipping me with ideas and abilities to become a better teacher. Now, I am ready to become a caring ELL teacher.

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Appendix

Artifact A: Rationale for Unit Plan

Rationale

English Language Learners are usually minority students who are normally the 1.5 or second generation of immigration and they belong to the “traditional marginalized groups” (Jimenez & Rose, 2010). These students are either born here or abroad but they have spent most of their life in the United States. They haven't lived in their parents' country of origin and they seldom bring their first-language literacy skills to the task of learning, which usually results their lower academic performance in U.S. schools. (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001)

“If students' home language is incorporated into the classroom, students are more likely to experience academic success” (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It is important to involve ELLs into classroom learning by using materials that are related to their cultural backgrounds. Using culturally relevant materials to draw on students' prior knowledge and home language is helpful to engage them into class discussion, analyzing and understanding of the materials. With a better understanding of the content and ELL friendly instruction language, I believe I can engage my fourth grade ELL students in learning and writing.

I am approaching this unit from teaching narrative writing by using three Chinese American juvenile fictions---*Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding* by Lenore Look, *Hannah Is My Name* by Belle Yang, and *Shanghai Messenger* by Andrea Cheng. These are all picture books with well written words for 4th graders to read and develop their reading skills. All the three books describe the protagonists' own experience on a wedding, waiting for green cards or visiting the “stranger” family members in Shanghai. Many minority students may have experienced these in their life, which makes them bond to the content tighter. By reading these

stories, students will draw on their own experiences and have opportunities to share and write their own experiences. This culturally relevant stories can draw students' attention and engage them in reading and talking, since they have the similar experience to talk about.

As English Language Arts Standards Grade 4 require for reading, students will be able to “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions)”. Through the unit, we will work on reading, summarizing, analyzing and describing the story, the characters. At the mean time, we will draw on details in the story to make story charts, flipbooks and F. I. T Charts to form students' habits of paying attention to details while reading and realizing the importance of adding details into their own writing.

Gaining the ability to adding details to students own narrative writing works is the main goal of this unit. As the overall writing standard requires that students will be able to “write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences”. By providing strategies and skills, students will connect the reading and their own experiences to write their own stories. With the “banking” experiences, students will draw on their Level 2 and Level 3 experiences that can be developed into original stories. Using kernel essays, flipbooks and F. I. T Charts is helpful in the way of making structures clear and adding vivid details to show their stories. The standard also mentions using dialogue, sensory details to write students' narrative works, which is also a skill we will develop through out this unit.

As for the class process each day, we will read out loud in class each day, summarize the story, and analyze the character's changing in thoughts and experiences. More importantly, based on the events happened in the story, students will discuss and share a similar experience of

their own, which is beneficial for adding their list of “bank” experiences. After reading and discussing, students will work on activities in groups to draw details from the reading to fill in charts. In the process of doing this, students will have a sense of what details help make the stories clear and vivid. Analyzing these details can give students a better understanding of what they can add to their own writing. Then, students will work on their own writing. We will write one prompt each week and through out the unit, students can add more details according to what we learned during class time and have opportunities to revise their writing everyday. By doing this everyday, students can form a habit of thinking about details as they write every time. They will think about whether they should add details to make their audiences clear about what they are trying to say.

ELL students will engage more when the reading materials are relevant to their home culture and language. When they feel interested in reading and have confidence to share their own experiences, they will learn the academic content better. That’s why I choose these three books as reading materials for my ELL students at this time. Through this unit, my students will be more confident to draw on their prior knowledge and experiences to discuss in class and to write their own narrative stories. Most importantly, they will form the habit to add details when they write with the help of analysis of these mentor texts and practices.

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Artifact B: Calendar for Unit Plan**SECTION II****Unit Title: Teach Narrative Writing with Cultural Relevant Materials**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	<p>Introduce the “banking” experience (Crunch Time, 2009).</p> <p>Discuss the four levels of experience with the whole class.</p> <p>Homework: Write down a list of personal experiences related to family events and traditional culture events.</p>	<p>Introduce the book <i>Uncle Peter’s Amazing Chinese Wedding</i></p> <p>Discuss students’ own experience.</p> <p>Read</p> <p>Homework: Draw an experience from the list made yesterday and write a Kernel Essay.</p>	<p>Share kernel essay.</p> <p>Read</p> <p>Fill in story chart.</p> <p>Mini lesson: dialogue.</p> <p>Homework: Add dialogues for the Kernel essay they wrote yesterday.</p>	<p>Read</p> <p>Fill in story chart.</p> <p>Mini lesson: How would we add thoughts too our writing?</p> <p>Homework: Add thoughts to the essay wrote yesterday.</p>	<p>Read</p> <p>Fill in story chart.</p> <p>Mini lesson: Introduce how to add images and things they saw with their eyes to their writings.</p> <p>Homework: Add images and things they saw with their eyes to their writing. Finish reading the last part of the story, summarize and prepare to share with the whole class.</p>
2	<p>Summarize the whole story.</p> <p>Finish the story chart.</p> <p>Mini Lesson: Add senses to the writing.</p> <p>Homework: Add senses (smells, sounds, tastes, etc.) to their writings and write a final draft of their story. Due</p>	<p>Introduce the concept of flipbook.</p> <p>Introduce a new book <i>Hannah Is My Name</i>.</p> <p>Make a flipbook for the story and another for their own writing.</p> <p>Homework: Ask parents about their own experience dealing with the</p>	<p>Review the previous part of the story and retell the story.</p> <p>Read.</p> <p>Add details to flipbook of the story.</p> <p>Homework: Add details to the flipbook with what is shared in the class.</p>	<p>Review the previous part of the story and retell the story.</p> <p>Read.</p> <p>Analyze the story.</p> <p>Add details to flipbook of the story.</p> <p>Homework: Add details to the flipbook with more details and add feelings to the</p>	<p>Review the previous part of the story and retell the story.</p> <p>Read.</p> <p>Analyze the story.</p> <p>Add details to flipbook of the story.</p> <p>Homework: Add details to the key event in your flipbook and finish the whole flipbook. Turn it into a whole</p>

	Friday.	green card and prepare to share with the class. Draw another event that is a life changing moment of your family or an extremely happy moment of your life. Write a kernel essay on your flipbook and bring it to class.		flipbook.	story and copy to paper. Due Monday.
3	<p>Introduce the F. I. T Chart</p> <p>Introduce the book <i>Shanghai Messenger</i>.</p> <p>Read.</p> <p>Make an F. I. T Chart for the story and another one for their own writing.</p> <p>Homework: Write an experience that you had totally different thoughts and attitudes toward some place or someone after you had some enjoyable or terrible experiences.</p>	<p>Draw on notes to retell the story</p> <p>Analyze the story.</p> <p>Share their own experiences.</p> <p>Add experiences to “bank” experiences.</p> <p>Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details.</p> <p>Homework: Write the next part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the next eight pages of the story and make notes. Prepare to retell</p>	<p>Draw on notes to retell the story</p> <p>Analyze the story.</p> <p>Share their own experiences.</p> <p>Add experiences to “bank” experiences.</p> <p>Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details.</p> <p>Homework: Write the next part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the next eight pages of the story and make notes. Prepare to retell the story tomorrow.</p>	<p>Draw on notes to retell the story</p> <p>Analyze the story.</p> <p>Share their own experiences.</p> <p>Add experiences to “bank” experiences.</p> <p>Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details.</p> <p>Homework: Write the ending part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the last page of the story and summarize the whole story. Prepare to share the summarization of the story</p>	<p>Summarize the whole story and analyze the changes of the character.</p> <p>Share thoughts on the story and family.</p> <p>Add experiences to “bank” experiences.</p> <p>Reflect on the content learned through the unit.</p> <p>Homework: Collect all the information on the F. I. T Chart and copy on paper to write a whole story about an experience that you had totally different thoughts and attitudes toward some place or someone after you had some enjoyable or terrible experiences.</p>

	Fill the F. I. T Chart with the beginning of the story and read the next eight pages of the story and make notes.	the story tomorrow.		tomorrow.	Due on Monday. Final project for this unit: Choose one experience from your “bank” experiences using what we have been working on these weeks to write a narrative writing. No limitation on length. Show clear structure and details.
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Unit Title: Teach Narrative Writing with Cultural Relevant Materials

Week	Day	Topics/Learning Goals	Procedures
Week 1	Monday Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will draw on their prior knowledge about the traditional weddings in their own culture. Students will learn the “banking” experiences (Crunch Time, 2009). 	<p>Small Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing their experiences of a traditional wedding of their culture. Draw a picture of the most impressive scene. Report out to class. <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the four levels of experiences in class. Brainstorm a list of their own experiences that fit Level 2 and Level 3. Discuss which level do the experiences they shared just know fit. Introduce Kernel Essay. Introduce Exit Slip.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn Kernel Essay. • Students will make a list of their level 2 and level 3 experiences. 	<p>Small Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share with group members the list of their personal experiences • Group members will check to see if their topics are truly unique to write. (Crunch time, 2009, p.9) <p>Homework: Write down a list of personal experiences related to family events and traditional culture events. We will revisit this list for the rest of the unit.</p>
	<p>Tuesday Day 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will make predictions about the book only by reading the title and book cover. • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. 	<p>Introduce the book <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i></p> <p>Whole class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions about what is going to happen in <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i> according the book cover and the title. • Recall their own experiences that they shared yesterday about a traditional wedding they have attended with the whole class. • Read the first seven pages of <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i> • Vocabulary (squeeze, bride, scramble, squish) <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in the story chart

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will complete a story chart with details from the story. • Students discuss and learn the kernel essay with text structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model first, the characters are uncle Peter, his bride, me and maybe some other family members. • The chart includes the following questions in each square: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters, where are they and what are they doing? • What is the first thing that happens? • What is the second thing that happens? • What is the last thing that happens? • What are the feelings of the characters? <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss as a whole class for their story charts to check any differences and add details into the charts. • Introduce the concept of Kernel Essay and a line chart to help them plan for their own stories. • Exit slip. <p>Homework: Draw an experience from the list they made yesterday and write a Kernel Essay.</p>
	<p>Wednesday Day 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their Kernel Essays first with the whole class. • Read next six pages of <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i> in class loud and describe pictures. • Students recall the predictions they made yesterday and discuss the story.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students fill in the story chart to internalize the structures and details of the story. • Students will add dialogues to their kernel essays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary (bargain, jawbreaker, scrap, yikes, cartwheel, unwoven, aurora, borealis, hoop) <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in the story chart • The chart includes the following questions in each square: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters, where are they and what are they doing? • What is the first thing that happens? • What is the second thing that happens? • What is the last thing that happens? • What are the feelings of the characters? <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini lesson on dialogue in the story. • What talk you might hear during the situation you were in? • Model for adding a dialogue into my kernel essay <p>Homework: Add dialogues for the Kernel essay they wrote yesterday.</p>
	<p>Thursday Day 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read next seven pages of <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i> in class loud and describe pictures. • Vocabulary (incense, ceremony, sneak, chrysanthemum, insist, drape, poke) <p>Groups</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students fill in the story chart to internalize the structures and details of the story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the story chart The chart includes the following questions in each square: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characters, where are they and what are they doing? What is the first thing that happens? What is the second thing that happens? What is the last thing that happens? What are the feelings of the characters? <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini lesson: How would we add thoughts? Discuss the thoughts of the character and what works well. Model, she is disappointed and she thinks she has to do something to embarrass Stella. <p>Homework: Add thoughts to the essay wrote yesterday.</p>
	<p>Friday Day 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read next six pages of <i>Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding</i> in class loud and describe pictures. Vocabulary (mumble, banquet, feast, disguise, slurp, tapioca, fertility, gulp, groom, shimmy). <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the story chart

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students fill in the story chart to internalize the structures and details of the story. • Students will add images and things they saw with their eyes to their writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chart includes the following questions in each square: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters, where are they and what are they doing? • What is the first thing that happens? • What is the second thing that happens? • What is the last thing that happens? • What are the feelings of the characters? <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss that without the help of the pictures, what can they see from the written words. • Mini Lesson: Introduce how to add images and things they saw with their eyes to their writings. • Model for them: She gives a long list of the dishes in the wedding. Let's look at the list and see if we can image that in our head. • Discuss how they think this will help to add details. • Exit slip. <p>Homework: Add images and things they saw with their eyes to their writing.</p> <p>Finish reading the last part of the story, summarize and prepare to share with the whole class.</p>
Week 2	Monday Day 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the summarization of the last part of the story. • What happens and why things change?

		<p>themes to provide conjectures about story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students fill in the story chart to internalize the structures and details of the story. Students will add senses (smells, sounds, tastes, etc.) to their writings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary (bouquet, intercept, cranky, dash, flutter). <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the story chart The chart includes the following questions in each square: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characters, where are they and what are they doing? What is the first thing that happens? What is the second thing that happens? What is the last thing that happens? What are the feelings of the characters? <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel with the sounds of the story? Can you see it with the words? Can you smell the things described in the story? Introduce how you use senses and add smells, sounds, the other senses to their own writings. Model for them: I was starving last night when I got home. As soon as I opened the door, the smell of Kong Bao Chicken was like lightning striking my head. I felt like I was happy to death. <p>Homework: Add senses (smells, sounds, tastes, etc.) to their writings and write a final draft of their story. Due Friday.</p>
	<p>Tuesday Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explore words, images, 	<p>Whole class</p> <p>Introduce the concept of “Flipbook” and how to make a</p>

7		<p>dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students make a flipbook for the story and their own writing. • Students summarize key events, character roles in this story. • Students predict character actions in the next part of the story. 	<p>flipbook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the book <i>Hannah Is My Name</i>. • Students make prediction first about the story. • Explain the concept of immigrants waiting for green cards. • Read six pages <i>Hannah Is My Name</i> out loud in class and describe the pictures. • Vocabulary. <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a flipbook for Hannah Is My Name • Characters, where are they and what are they doing? • What happens first? • What happens next? • Next? • Next? • What happens last? • Final thoughts. • Make another flipbook for their own writing. <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the story details they have added to the flipbook. • Recall concepts from last week about the dialogue, thoughts, images, senses and connect to this story.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students take notes on readings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw on evidence about the details supporting those details. <p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask parents about their own experience dealing with the green card and prepare to share with the class. Draw another event that is a life changing moment of your family or an extremely happy moment of your life. Write a kernel essay on your flipbook and bring it to class.
	<p>Wednesday Day 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. Students discuss and analyze story by adding details to the flipbook. 	<p>Whole class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students review the previous part of the story using the flipbook and retell the story. Read six pages <i>Hannah Is My Name</i> out loud in class and describe the pictures. Vocabulary <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add details to the flipbook for this part of the story. Summarize the story. Analyze the personality of Hannah. Discuss what you will do during difficult times in your life and prepare to share. <p>Whole class</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students analyze the personality of Hannah. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share students’ analysis of Hannah. • Share their own experiences of facing difficult times in life. • Discuss what to add on their own flipbook. <p>Homework:</p> <p>Add details to the flipbook with what is shared in the class.</p>
	<p>Thursday Day 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. • Students discuss and analyze story by adding details to the flipbook. • Students share their own experience of 	<p>Whole class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students review the previous part of the story using the flipbook and retell the story. • Read six pages <i>Hannah Is My Name</i> out loud in class and describe the pictures. • with words together. • Vocabulary <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add details to the flipbook for this part of the story. • Summarize the story. • Analyze the feelings of Hannah right now in the story. • Share your own experience of leaving a very good friend or anyone you are closed to. <p>Whole class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share students’ analysis of Hannah’s inner feeling right now in the story and how it is showed in the story.

		<p>leaving a good friend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their own experiences of leaving someone really close to them. • Discuss what to add on their own flipbook. <p>Homework:</p> <p>Add details to the flipbook with more details and add feelings to the flipbook.</p>
Friday Day 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. • Students discuss and analyze story by adding details to the flipbook. • Students retell the whole story. 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students review the previous part of the story using the flipbook and retell the story. • Read last eight pages <i>Hannah Is My Name</i> out loud in class and describe the pictures. • Vocabulary • Read the whole picture at the last and describe it as detailed as they can and make connections to previous stories. • Discuss the life changing moment of this family. <p>Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the final part of the story to the flipbook. • Try to retell the story and decide what are the key events that must be included? Who are the people? What is the turning point? <p>Whole Class</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students create a final draft of the flipbook for the story. • Students will reflect their experience with the flipbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell the story together. • Share their experience with the flipbook and how do they think this will help them construct their own writing. • Exit slip. <p>Homework: Add details to the key event in your flipbook and finish the whole flipbook. Turn it into a whole story and copy to paper. Due Monday.</p>
Week 3	Monday Day 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn the F. I. T chart (Crunchtime, 2009, p. 78). • Students add experiences to their “bank” experience list. • Students collect information to fill in the F. I. T Chart and create an F. I. T 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction the F. I. T Chart • Introduce a new book <i>Shanghai Messenger</i> • Share their own experience of a family reunion especially with some relatives they have never seen before. • Read the first eight pages of Shanghai Messenger out loud in class. • Draw on prior knowledge of the details in a story such as dialogue, thoughts, images, senses, etc. • Vocabulary. <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an F. I. T Chart for the story first and fill in the chart with information from the book. • Discuss their information and check if they fit the chart.

		<p>chart for their own writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make another F. I. T Chart for later use for their own writing. <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take their experience list they made on the first day of this unit and choose one experience that has a mind changing experience • Discuss with the whole class. • Discuss how can we use F. I. T Chart to organize this experience into a story. <p>Homework: Write an experience that you had totally different thoughts and attitudes toward some place or someone after you had some enjoyable or terrible experiences. Fill the F. I. T Chart with the beginning of the story and read the next eight pages of the story and make notes.</p>
	<p>Tuesday Day 12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. • Students analyze the changing of 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on their notes and retell the story with as many details as possible. • Analyze the events and the changes in Xiao Mei's thoughts. • Share one experience of yourself that someone or something that made you feel comfortable to stay in a strange place. • Add experiences to their "bank" experience.

		<p>feelings of the character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students add experiences to their “bank” experience list. • Students draw on details to fill in the F. I. T Chart. • Students begin revise their chart. 	<p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details. • Discuss and check if their information fits the chart. • Discuss what they can add to their own F. I. T Chart chart and revise their chart. <p>Homework: Write the next part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the next eight pages of the story and make notes. Prepare to retell the story tomorrow.</p>
	<p>Wednesday Day 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. • Students analyze the changing of 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on their notes and retell the story with as many details as possible. • Analyze the events and the changes in Xiao Mei’s thoughts. • Share one experience of yourself that you were sick but your parents were not around and how were you feeling. • Add experiences to their “bank” experience. • Vocabulary

		<p>feelings of the character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students add experiences to their “bank” experience list. • Students draw on details to fill in the F. I. T Chart. • Students revise their chart. 	<p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details. • Discuss and check if their information fits the chart. • Add details to the next part of their own story to their own F. I. T Chart and revise their chart. <p>Homework: Write the next part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the next eight pages of the story and make notes. Prepare to retell the story tomorrow.</p>
	<p>Thursday Day 14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explore words, images, dialogue and themes to provide conjectures about story. • Students analyze the changing of 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on their notes and retell the story with as many details as possible. • Analyze the events and the how Xiao Mei’s thinks about the family in Shanghai right now and draw on evidence from the story. • Share one most special gift you have ever received from others and explain why it is special to you. • Add experiences to their “bank” experience.

		<p>feelings of the character and draw on evidence from the story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students add experiences to their “bank” experience list. • Students draw on details to fill in the F. I. T Chart. • Students revise their chart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary. <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add information to the F. I. T Chart with the details. • Discuss and check if their information fits the chart. • Add details to the next part of their own story to their own F. I. T Chart and revise their chart. <p>Homework: Write the ending part of their story using the F. I. T Chart, and add more details. Read the last page of the story and summarize the whole story. Prepare to share the summarization of the story tomorrow.</p>
	<p>Friday Day 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write script and song lyrics for their musical version of Macbeth. 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their summarization of the story and discuss what key events, characters need to include to show Xiao Mei’s changes during the whole story. • Share your thoughts about the story and how they think about family bound.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students enact plan for their inquiry project. • Students continue researching target areas in media center using online and print resources. • Students identify support for inquiry paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to connect to their own experiences and find appropriate ones to add on to their list. • Add experiences to their “bank” experience. • Vocabulary. <p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add information to the F. I. T Chart of the story with the details. • Discuss and check if their information fits the chart. • Add details to the ending part of their own story to their own F. I. T Chart and revise their chart. <p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the “bank” experience list they have made. • Discuss what details to add when write a story of their own experiences. • Reflect how the kernel essay and the flipbook can help to construct the structure of their writing. • Discuss how the F. I. T Chart would help them add details and revise their story. <p>Exit Slips</p> <p>Homework: Collect all the information on the F. I. T Chart and copy on paper to write a whole story about an experience that you had totally different thoughts and attitudes toward some</p>
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			<p>place or someone after you had some enjoyable or terrible experiences.</p> <p>Due on Monday.</p> <p>Final Project: Choose one experience from your “bank” experiences using what we have been working on these weeks to write a narrative writing. No limitation on length. Show clear structure and details.</p>
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Note: learning segment

Artifact C: Introductory Name Cultures & Names and Identities**Content Objectives**

1. SWBAT understand the different names of their peers' various culture backgrounds.
2. SWBAT relate names to the minority students' backgrounds and identities by writing a short paragraph about one of their peers' name story.
3. SWBAT list five ways for new comers to adopt aspects of the new culture while maintaining cultural identity.
4. SWBAT show empathy to differences and newcomers by writing a description of "How to treat newcomers in my class" or "How to treat friends from other countries".

Language Objectives

1. SWBAT describe the stories of their names.
2. SWBAT identify the connections between names and identities.
3. SWBAT write a letter or a card to show their emotions to a family member or a friend who has not contacted with them for a long time.

Introductory Activity

1. Share my own name story, how I felt when I first came to America and how I struggled between my Chinese name and American name.
2. Name Game: Hand out a small questionnaire card with questions: What is your full name? (Write in both English and your native language, if applicable) Do you know the meaning of your name? Why did your parents choose this name for you? Let them read and write for two minutes then talk to their shoulder partners about the answers. Share their name stories with each other.
3. Bring the groups together and ask questions:

- 1). Who thinks that your partner's name has a very interesting or meaningful story?
- 2). Whose name is pronounced wrongly most of the time by the person you meet for the first time or your classmates? (Ask the student to come in front of the class to write his/her name on the blackboard in both languages and explain the pronunciation and meaning.)
4. Discuss together: Would you ever want to change your name? If you could, what new name would you choose? How would you feel if someone else decided that you would change your name?
5. Provide background information of an important item in the book. The wooden block with the name carved in it is a name stamp. Provide the introduction of the culture of using name stamp in Korea and China with pictures and a short video (<http://youtu.be/OPQOIMFxRIs>).

Lesson Activities

1. Ask students to read "The Name Jar"

(There is a letter in the book written in Korean, I will ask a Korean student to read it and let him/her to explain the meaning to the class and then the whole class read it together.)

2. Group discussion: In small groups of 3, 4 people to discuss how Unhei feels when she first starts school and why she does not want to introduce her name to her classmates. Why does she want to have an American name at first? Is she different from her classmates? Is it a good thing or bad thing to be different? What does Unhei's name mean in Korean? How does her name connect to her Korean culture? If you were in her position, would you make the same decision as the Unhei? Would you prefer to keep your name, or change your name if you move to another country using the totally different language system?
3. Bring groups back together, let them share their answers and bring the following questions during the class discussion to let them discuss the motion of Unhei and compare

- themselves with Unhei. A). Have you ever moved to a new house or school? Was it easy or difficult to make new friends? What did you miss about your old home/school? B). Has anyone ever made fun of you because you were different? How did that make you feel?
5. In small groups, list several ways for new comers to adopt aspects of the new culture while maintaining cultural identity. Bring groups back together to come out a list.
 6. Class discussion. Bring up the following questions to help students discuss the difficulties Unhei faces and build up empathy towards new comers. Did anyone help Unhei in the book? What did they do to help her feel better? Have you ever helped a new student feel more comfortable? What did you do?
 7. Connecting the name stamp to the culture with the following questions. Why is the name stamp important for Unhei? If you were moving to a new country and you only could bring one suitcase with you, which 5 items would you bring? Why are they important to you?
 8. Ask how they feel about the letter that Unhei's grandma wrote in the book. Share their feeling about missing the family members or friends who are living far away now. Write a short letter or a card to them.

After class assignments and activity:

1. Bring another questionnaire back home to do it with the parents. Compare what they thought their names mean in the class. Bring the questionnaire to class next time to share name story.

Questionnaire:

- 1) How did you pick up my name?
- 2) Does my name have any personal meaning?
- 3) What other names were you considering?
- 4) What does my name mean?

2. Bring home another reading “My Name is Yoon” to read with parents and discuss how Yoon deals with her identity and the new culture.
3. Classroom design. Putting their names in both languages on the wall for a week to let them remember the name stories and get to know each other better.

Artifact D: Section III of Unit Plan**Assessment**

Assessment is a very important procedure for both me and my students. Through assessments during every step in the unit, I will know what my students already know, what they need to work harder on, what they still do not know, what needs to be explicitly explained, etc. Assessment is also useful for students to know what they still need to work on with. However, in order to let students know that, I will not assess them by grading. For their discussion in class, I will provide instantly oral feedback. For the writing work, I will also collect their draft tools, their revised writing and the final draft to assess what stage they are in to use this skill and what progress they have made, which will help me address more specific instructions in future classes.

Pre-Assessment

At the very beginning of my unit, I will let my students write a short paragraph to tell me what details they think a story should contain in order to attract audience's interest. By collecting this writing piece, I will have a clear idea what my students already know about details in stories. If they only respond with answers such as time, place, person, etc., I will know I have to explicitly explain good details for stories. They should include dialogues, thoughts, images, senses, actions, etc. What's more, we will have a discussion about how to describe a story orally and what details need to be included to retell a story. The discussion will also inform me with what students already know about retell or summarize a story. With these two activities, I will bare in mind their prior knowledge about details in stories and I will have a focus on what to teach during the unit to help them learn to add efficient and sufficient details to their own narrative writings.

Formative Assessment

One of my formative assessments during my unit is finishing a writing piece at the end of

each week. This writing piece is a writing we started to work on with at the first day of each week when we start a new book. It is a narrative writing piece of students' own experiences.

Each day we will work on reading one of the story books and collect details from the stories, which support the strategy and skill we learn that day. We will first discuss in class both in small groups and with the whole class to check the understanding of the concept and then fill in the chart that we work on to learn the concept. These are in class assessment that I can focus on to give instant feedback on and also adjust the next step in class time.

At the end of each week after we have fully learned the strategy and skills through reading mentor stories, discussing in class and adding on details each day to their own kernel essays, students will hand in a final draft of their narrative writing piece. Since we have been working on the draft for the whole week according to content we learn during class, these writing pieces can show me directly whether they have gathered what we've been working on that week. If they know how to add dialogues, when to add thoughts, etc. If their writing has shown their gaining of knowledge on that part, we will move on to the next skill next week. However, some of them still have difficulty adding details into their writing, I will revisit this content the next week with these students.

It is very important to assess students' progress rather than the final work. Through their hard work during the process, I can have a better view that their hard work outweighs the final writing piece that they hand in at the end.

Another formative assessment tool I use in my unit is exit slip. I use exit slip at the end of each week and also on the day we introduce some new concepts. In my exit slips, I will give some questions for them to write to see if they have mastered what we have been working with the whole week or if they understand the new concept. This will allow me to have a clear view of

their level of the knowledge and skills which will help me adjust my teaching plan.

Summative Assessment

The ultimate goal for this unit is to let students learn how to write narrative writings with details to make their stories clear and vivid to their readers. We've been working on expanding their "bank" experiences for future use when face with new prompts. As a result, my final project as the summative assessment is giving them a prompt as "Choose one experience from your 'bank' experiences using what we have been working on these weeks to write a narrative writing. Please use any strategies or skills we've learned in this unit as a draft tool. No limitation on length. Show clear structure and details. Demonstrate your knowledge of the skills." By giving them more freedom to choose their own experience to write, students may feel more comfortable with writing.

When I collect the writing pieces and their drafts, I will combine the two to check if they have already mastered the usage of the skills and strategies to develop their writing into a better one. If some of the works still show lack of ability to use these tools, I will use them further in future classes; and for those who show a great improving in their writing, I will provide more sophisticated strategies and prompts to help them learn further and deeper.

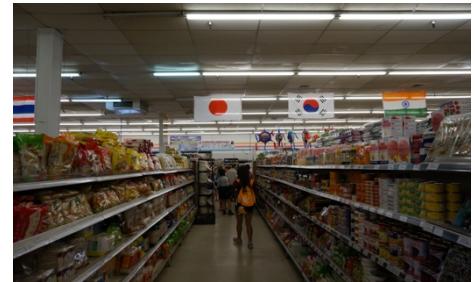
Artifact E: Investigate Paper

During my field trip in a local small home-owned market, I met a nice boy who introduced the store to me though he thought us were here for a special event called “Inter-nash-nal”. He is the storeowner’s son and he is not like others in the store cause he has no accent at all. He told us a lot about how his father and other staff here made traditional food from their own country. I can tell that he is proud of his own culture and the food. This trip reminds me that as a future ELL teacher, I need to know what my students are like, basically, their nationality, cultural background, linguistic background. Knowing these parts of a student can help the teacher plan curriculum more closely to diverse culture which will make the student feel much more comfortable with class and have the feeling of being cared other than ignored.

In order to have a clear view of the local communities, my classmates and I went to a field trip to some communities to observe people living there and community literacy that can help us to form a better understand of these communities and find materials that we can use in teaching classes. First, it will describe what I saw combined with my lesson plan using community



literacy projects and other cultural diversity. Then it will describe some barriers I met during the



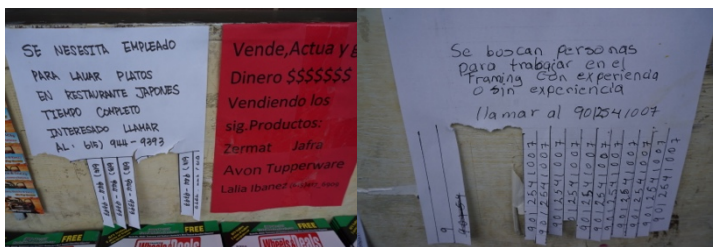
trip and how I will face with these barriers. Finally, it will give some other possible activities to help teachers become familiar with local communities.

First, we went to K & S World Market. Simply by looking at the brand outside, I could tell that it is a multi-culture community. It has several other languages representing “K&S World Market” which is a surprise for me to experience a cultural diversity.

When I looked around, I found some advertisements written in Spanish as the following pictures show. Lots of Latinos should also live in this community since advertisements written in Spanish are in a large amount. These words are so different from what I have already learnt which becomes an important reason for me to explore the local community since I need to know what kind of environment my students are living in and what language they speak at home.

“Familiarity with the documents and other literate forms found within students’ communities allows teachers to learn about their social, cultural, economic, and political lived realities(Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009).”

These advertisements can also become great resources for me to bring to class. I can let Spanish-speaking students choose one from them and explain the meaning in English to all the classmates. Other classmates may help him/her find a precise expression in English if he/she does not know the exact word. Describing and analyzing what dose the author mean and what



dose he/she want by putting on this advertisement. Minority students are more likely to make progress in school when teachers understand and

incorporate their home and community literacy practices as opposed to attempting simply to impose school-like practices (e.g., book reading) in the home. (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009)

By doing this, these immigrant students may build up confidence cause they know something others do not know. And also with the help of their classmates, they will remember the correct way of speaking these words in English.

Going into the market, products form different parts of the world are arranged in different

isles with a country flag in front of every isle. Judging from the look and how they dress, I think the staff working there are mainly from Southeast Asian countries. While I was wandering around the market, I saw most of the customers were Asians and Latin Americans. K&S is a great place for them cause they can buy almost everything they need to make their food.

Immigrants miss their home country no matter they leave it willingly or unwillingly. Food is a perfect way to ease homesick and I believe that is why there are food products from all over the world no matter how far the country is. And also that is the reason such a huge market existing for this immigrant community. I find interesting products that I have never seen before and I still cannot know it since there are no English words on it. However, these products with only its original words on it are my useful materials for students to do presentations in class.

With the food products' help, my lesson can be planed as follow. First, each student should bring his/her favorite snack or any food product from his/her home country. The best situation is that there are no English words on the package so that students can describe it all in their own knowledge of English. They will be divided in groups with diverse background so that they can practice English as much as possible. Let them try every snack and food. Second, after group



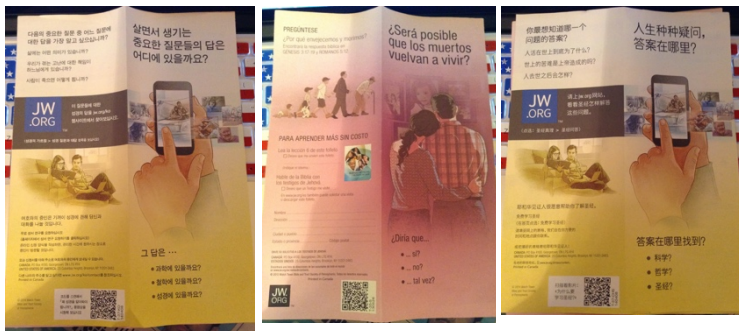
discussion, they will give a presentation to the whole class but with each other telling one product other than their own. They

should also describe how the snack tastes like. Food is an interesting topic especially for young kids. Students will learn English and culture at the same time with joy and snacks.

I went to the other K&S several days after the field trip and in that market I found more fliers and magazines written with no English at all. An advertisement for the same website

written in three different languages which should be familiar to one community but totally strange to another. The other goal for the use of transnational and community literacies in schools is to provide a way for students from a variety of backgrounds to learn more about one another. (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009)

After scrutinizing all the fliers, I found that they were mainly advertising for Christian. Religion is another major life forming part for immigrants since they, to some degree, need some spiritual dependence when they live in a totally different country. For these religious



advertisements, I will bring them to class and hand out to students.

Divide them into different groups but each group with students who speak and read Chinese, Korean and

Spanish. Let them have a group discussion and explain to each other. The advertisements are actually the same content only in different languages. During this progress, maybe Korean students and Chinese students will have different translations in the same part. These discussions should direct students to consider word choice, idiomatic expressions, and the cultural values involved in the interpretation and presentation of ideas. All of these activities have the potential to increase students' abilities to appreciate diversity in language as well as their metalinguistic understandings of two or more languages. (Jimenez, Smith & Teague, 2009) This is a good chance for them to learn from each other and get to know each other. In addition, I would like to let students ask their parents to tell them a religious story or a myth of their own native country. Their parents can tell in either English or their native language. The next day, students should present their story to the whole class in English. I believe this will be a good opportunity

for them to practice English using their own cultural background.

After K&S World Market, my partners and I went to a home-owned market which seemed to sell everything that people from that country may want to buy. It is a grocery store selling fresh making bread ever day and even electronic products. The characters outside the window are totally strange for me but I guess it is Arabic. When we went in the small market, we saw a man making strange bread and he was so nice that he allowed us to take pictures. And then I met the boy I mentioned at the beginning of the paper. Kids are so proud of their own ethical background and love their own food and culture which makes me have more confidence in using food as a topic for students to talk. Assuming this little boy were my student, I might organize a family event for my class. On a weekend, children along with their parents come to this interesting market with some homemade food. They can learn how to make the strange bread and talk and play together. A great way for parents to get involved while students learning English with fun and diverse culture content.

The man making bread has a strong accent which makes us still confused about his nationality. After searching through the Internet, I finally know they are from Middle Eastern and it is a Kurdish tradition market. The adults in the market all have strong accent. They may only speak their native language with each other even they are living in America. Most of the families here in America still have a strong bound with other family members in their home



country. Earning more money and sending money back are their main purpose here. Different banks have different ways of calculating fees for transporting money from country to country. This is a close part of students' daily life and also a good method for them to know money and calculation. I may ask them to ask parents for help at

first cause they have to investigate the charging fee of sending money from America to home of origin. Then asking their parents to give an estimated amount of money they send each time and the total times a year. Bring all the numbers to class and calculate the number with a group discussion. Students should help each other to get a total amount of money each family send and teach others when they have troubles. At last, they should find calculating money interesting and realize the close bound between their family and their other family members in their home country.

During my whole field trip, the biggest problem I met was the strong accent of that Middle East man which resulted in a poor communication and I failed to know more about his country and other information he gave me. That was such a pity because he tried to talk to me and wanted to tell me more about his bread. But I believe next time, this won't be a problem since I can ask that boy to be my interpreter. Even in my future community field trip as a real teacher, I will always ask my students to be with me. This is a great opportunity for me to get to know their community and also a good chance for them to practice English. Serving as an interpreter is also pretty cool for a child so they may feel more confident in their English learning. This is a win-win choice that every teacher should try to use.

Keeping in touch with parents from different communities is very important for teachers. Whenever they have any activities, teachers should think about using these activities into class curriculum to help students form minority groups. These are always helpful to get to know the community and to talk with parents about students, school life, home life and lots of other information about kids. Giving more attention to multi-lingual materials representing various communities and getting to know them. Using these sources into class will increase students' interests and make them feel more comfortable about class and school. Bringing transnational

and community literacies into the classroom also makes it possible to build on students' prior knowledge by identifying ways to connect this knowledge to literacy standards that have been identified as vital in school. Perhaps most important, ELLs may become more fully engaged in their literacy and content learning when these practices are incorporated into the traditional curriculum (Heath, 1983).

Reference:

Heath, S.B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms.*

Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Jiménez, R.T., Smith, P.H., & Teague, B.L. (2009). *Transnational and Community Literacies for*

Teachers. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy 53(1) doi:10.1598/ JAAL.53.1.2

Artifact F: Case Study

Part One Introduction to the Learner

My participant is a 23-years old Chinese male named Peng and he is a first-year PHD in Vanderbilt University now learning Physics. He is quite an intelligent student since he got National Scholarship in a very famous university in China and always ranked the first in his class during his undergraduate study. Besides intelligence, diligence is another good point to describe him. Being his neighbor, I feel stressed sometimes because he is studying every time I visit his apartment. A strong sense of learning is in his blood even though he maybe not a proficient English language user. He is shy to strangers and acquaintances, as a result, he will not talk first unless others talk to him. But essentially, he is not a talkative person. During the time of my interview, I found that he is willingly to learn more about English especially speaking since he is now in America. His present goal is to improve his listening and speaking so that he can understand his American friends' jokes. This is his first time coming to America and he loves it here. In his opinion, people are very friendly and the air quality is pretty good.

He grew up in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, which is famous for the heavy air pollution. Hebei Province is near to Beijing so that he speaks standard Mandarin Chinese as his native language (L1). When I asked him what were the differences between English and Chinese, he said that he believed that they were the same or at least very similar. He said that in Chinese we call our mother "mama" while in English we call mum. This was the simple example he could come up with which made him think that English and Chinese are the same. A reason two languages may look similar is that "they have completely coincidentally hit upon similar ways of expressing the same meaning" (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011). And also "these similarities are purely coincidental and independent: the two languages are not related to each other in any way,

nor had there been any contact between them” (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011). Chinese belongs to Sino-Tibetan language family while English is Indo-European language family, which results in significant differences in these two languages. His insight of the two languages is really a shock for me.

My participant did not start to learn English (L2) until secondary school, which is a little bit late for second language acquisition. However, at that time, he had already found a solid L1 knowledge. He can speak and write Chinese fluently. As I have mentioned above, English and Chinese belong to totally different families, which causes great challenges for native Chinese speakers to learn English. In his memory of his former English classes in China, he recalled that his English teacher only taught grammar and words during classes. As a result, even though the second language instruction was pretty poor back in China, he still learned the basic knowledge in English, like vocabulary, pronunciation, writing, and grammar. Chinese students learn English mainly for high school entrance examination and college entrance examination instead of using it for communication with native speakers. This kind of exam-oriented pattern makes teachers pay little attention to students’ spoken English or other practical skills of English. Vocabulary and grammar are considered as the most important parts in learning English. Consequently, Chinese students usually have poor pronunciation including my participant. In his past experience, he used Chinese all the time in daily life communication and school study while he used English only a little and mainly for reading, practices in textbooks, and exams. Even for now, there are still few native English speakers live and teach in China, which leads to a lack of exposure to native speakers for Chinese English language learners. Also lots of schools in China cannot afford foreign teachers so that students do not have any speaking practice at all in ordinary schools like my participant. Teachers start to teach right after they graduate from normal school,

which means most of them do not have teaching experience so that they teach students exactly based on what they have been taught. This is actually a pernicious circle for Chinese students to learn English as a language. The poor instruction and little attention to students' pronunciation and speaking also cause the losing faith for many students who want to learn English well.

Now he is living and studying in America, however, due to the living environment --- the community he lives in, his roommate and neighbors are all Chinese --- he still has to speak his first language everyday. Consequently, English (L2) here is still not being fully used for communication. He told me that one day, he was walking on the street and he smiled to a stranger because he heard that people in America are friendly and they smile to strangers. To his surprise, the stranger did not smile back which leaves the unfriendly impression of Americans. Besides this, he has also experienced many other cross culture conflicts. For example, he does not trust storeowners as he believes that they may charge more than what he spends using his credit card because the storeowners do not give him the receipt. I told him that he could ask for the receipt and I believe that this misunderstanding is caused mainly because he does not understand whenever the cashier asks "Do you have your receipt?" Fortunately, these cultural shocks do not weaken his enthusiasm living in the states and my participant still holds an optimistic attitude towards English learning and using. He prefers speaking English because he wants to practice his spoken English (L2) desperately. During the interview, he showed a strong will of learning and speaking English. He now only has one Chinese classmate in his class, which means that he can always speak English when he is at school. After class, he likes joining lunch with his native speaker friends to talk with them. With this exposure to English, even though difficulties may occur all the time, he still feels positive with his speaking and he is filled with enthusiasm.

Honestly speaking, he describes his English ability as low. He knows that he still has lots of problems in speaking and writing based on his past schooling and English learning experience. At present, even though he can follow his professors during classes, he finds it difficult to communicate with his American classmates after class. Because he cannot speak English fluently and sometimes he cannot get the point why everyone else is laughing. Sometimes his peers will correct his errors while speaking and help him come up with words he does not know how to translate from Chinese into English. With these help and his strong attitude to practice English, he will try to talk more with his native classmates and staff to practice and enhance his speaking skill. Additionally, what really shocks me is that he got twenty-nine in his TOEFL reading test while only nineteen in speaking test. Twenty-nine in reading means he has a certain amount of vocabulary in English and an excellent reading comprehension skill, however, nineteen in speaking is in pretty low level for students who want to study in America. He said that because he could practice reading all the time whereas it was just so difficult for him to practice speaking English in China.

All in all, my participant is an excellent student who has been performing outstandingly in his past education experience. Even though he still has lots of problems in English (L2), he will try his best to become a fluent English speaker for the next five years in America.

Part Two Descriptions of Learner's Oral and Written Language Abilities

2.1 Phonology

2.1.1. Oral

Most aspects of the English phonological system cause difficulties for Chinese learners. Some English phonemes do not exist in Chinese; stress and intonation patterns are different (The differences between English and Chinese, 2014). As a result, many Chinese English learners cannot pronounce these phonemes correctly including my participant. As I have mentioned above, my participant did not get correct instructions when he started to learn English pronunciation, so that he pronounces consonants in the way he feels comfortable instead of paying attention to the place of articulation.

He has the most common problems while pronouncing consonants like most of Chinese students, for example:

- a) He cannot pronounce the sound /θ/ for th- in words *think, with*; the sound /ð/ for th- in words *the, this, that, they, them*. These consonants belong to interdentalals, which are made with the tip of the tongue protruding between the front teeth. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) Due to the inexistence of these phonetic sounds and his little attention to the position of the tongue, my participant has formed a habit to pronounce these sounds without placing his tongue between his teeth. Consequently, /θ/ for th- always sounds like /s/ sounds for s- in *sink*.
- b) The labiodental consonant /v/ which is made with the lower lip against the upper front teeth (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) is also a difficult one for him since this sound is not exist in mandarin either. He cannot pronounce the sound /v/ in words in *very, driving, even* and

Vanderbilt. All these /v/ are pronounced like sound /w/ in word *we* because he should have bitten his under lip to pronounce /v/.

English has more vowel sounds than Chinese, resulting in the faulty pronunciation of words like *ship/sheep*, *it/eat*, *full/fool*; diphthongs such as in *weigh*, *now* or *deer* are often shortened to a single sound. (The differences between English and Chinese , 2014) My participant's pronunciation of vowel sounds is a huge problem of his oral English since most of the sounds are to some degree incorrect. However, I cannot say that he speaks them wrong because I can still understand his words. So the problem is that most of his vowels are poorly pronounced and the diphthongs are not fully pronounced. The low vowels like the /æ/ in *sat* are pronounced with the front of the mouth open and the tongue lowered. Mid vowels like the /ε/ of *set* are produced with an intermediate tongue height. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) Due to the lack of proper instruction and practice, his mouth is not in the right shape and his tongue is not in the correct position to pronounce the low vowel /æ/ like in *map*. However, he tends to speak /ε/ sound like in *better* with a larger mouth shape.

Another major problem is with the common final consonant in English. This feature is much less frequent in Chinese and results in learners either failing to produce the consonant or adding an extra vowel at the end of the word. (The differences between English and Chinese , 2014) However, as for my participant, he is accustomed to putting the /r/ sound like in word *card* behind almost every vowel in words like *them*, *China*, *yourself*, *America*, and so on. Because in mandarin Chinese, “儿” that sounds like /r/ is added to many words, which may cause him to also add /r/ sound to the English word.

In mandarin Chinese, tone can make a difference in the word's meaning. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) And also mandarin does not have stress in words, nevertheless, English has stress

in words that have more than one syllables. Unfortunately, my participant did not learn the rules of stress in his past schooling and he was lack of connection from L1. As a result, he is unable use the correct stress in multi-syllable words, which results his oral English in a strong Chinese accent.

Even though he has many problems in English pronunciation, there are still some aspects that he does well than other Chinese English learners. Due to mandarin Chinese has lots of /f/ sound like in word *fish*, /tʃ/ sound like in *church*, /dʒ/ sound like in *judge*, and can speak quite standard mandarin, so that he does not have any problems in pronouncing these consonants. However, lots of Chinese students may pronounce these sounds like /s/ in word *soap* and /z/ in word *zip*.

2.1.2 Writing

After collecting his writing sample, I found some spelling mistakes related to his pronunciation errors. He has a problem of fully pronouncing vowels and diphthongs like /aɪ/ in word *buy* which leads to the misspelling in some words.

“ I don’t know what U am afrid (afraid) of.”

In addition, adding vowels to a consonant is also another speaking habit of him. Actually, many Chinese students tend to have this problem since I have realized that during my undergraduate study. One of my classmates always added an extra sound / ə / like in word *among* to almost every end of the word after the consonant, like *elephant/ ə /*, *think/ ə /*, *but/ ə /* and so on. My participant has this common error as well. Under this influence, some spelling errors occur in his writing.

“ The excitament (excitement) of coming to a new place have faded down.”

He spells excitament instead of excitement because he thinks letter *a* in words sounds more like / ə /.

2.2 Morphology

Morphology is the component of mental grammar that deals with types of words and how words are formed out of smaller meaningful pieces and other words. It tries to describe which meaningful pieces to language can be combined to form words and what the consequences of such combinations are on the meaning or the grammatical function of the resulting word. A morpheme is typically defined as the smallest linguistic unit with a meaning or grammatical function. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) It usually contains things like plurals, suffixes and prefixes.

In mandarin Chinese, morphemes also exist to form word meaning and to change a word's part of speech. For example, “不” in mandarin serves the same meaning and function as un-, in-, dis-, im-, and so on. Because English has so many negative prefixes to change words into the opposite meaning and Chinese only have one “不”, which makes it difficult for Chinese students to remember which one to choose for the correct form. “舒服” means comfortable and “不舒服” means uncomfortable. “方便” means convenient and “不方便” means inconvenient.

In my participant's oral English, he may sometimes use the wrong prefix.

“The air is fresh but it is really inconvenient to buy something because the supermarket is really far from the place where I live.”

However, in his writing, he can write in a correct way using the right prefix.

“Another inconvenience (even though he spelled it incorrectly, he chose the right prefix in- to be added in front of convenience) is that the supermarkets (another misspelling) are very far from our home.”

Mandarin does not have to add suffix after words to become the plural form of nouns as

English does except that those word which have the same plural form as the original words. Consequently, my participant frequently forgets to add –s or –es to the nouns when the amount is more than one. In his oral English, this error occurs very often.

“ 1) There are lots of Chinese, my neighbor, so we speak Chinese everyday.

2) I think, I, I don't think there are so many difference, I think they are the same?”

Also forgetting plural suffix happens in writing English as well.

“1) And I think the difference (he uses differences in the former sentences) may vary between different majors.

2) They just sit in their office waiting for you to hand in.”

Another problem is that he may misuse the –s and –es when add them to words to stand for the plural form in his writing.

“It has been nearly two monthes since I came to America.”

In oral English, because forgetting suffix happens so frequently that this is a point that he has to improve. He has to pay attention to –s and –es morphemes.

There is another big difference between my participant's L1 and L2 is that mandarin does not need to add suffixes to verbs to represent past tense whereas most of English verbs need suffixes like –ed, -d to become past tense verbs except some special changing forms. The difference has caused the insensitive awareness of my participant when facing past tense both in oral and written English.

“ (oral) While we walk, and we met few people.

(writing) It is really beautiful looking above Hong Kong.”

My participant also uses suffixes representing an occupation in a wrong way sometimes. In mandarin Chinese, an occupation usually has its own word instead of adding a suffix to the end

of a verb. While in English, there are *-er*; *-or*; *-ress*, and so on. However, after analyzing the writing samples, I realize that this should not be counted as error either since he wrote *profossers* once in one passage while *professors* all right in the other passage. So I believe that it may be caused by his carelessness instead of errors.

Even though he may use some morphemes in a wrong way, he still uses most of them correctly both in oral and writing English.

“(oral) And in China when you see a car in the street, you usually (derivational suffix *-ly*) have to wait for the car to go first.

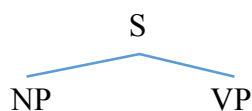
(writing) So far, I have joined (derivational suffix *-ed*) two volunteer works (inflectional suffix *-s*) and I meet lots of people and I think it’s very helpful (derivational suffix *-ful*).”

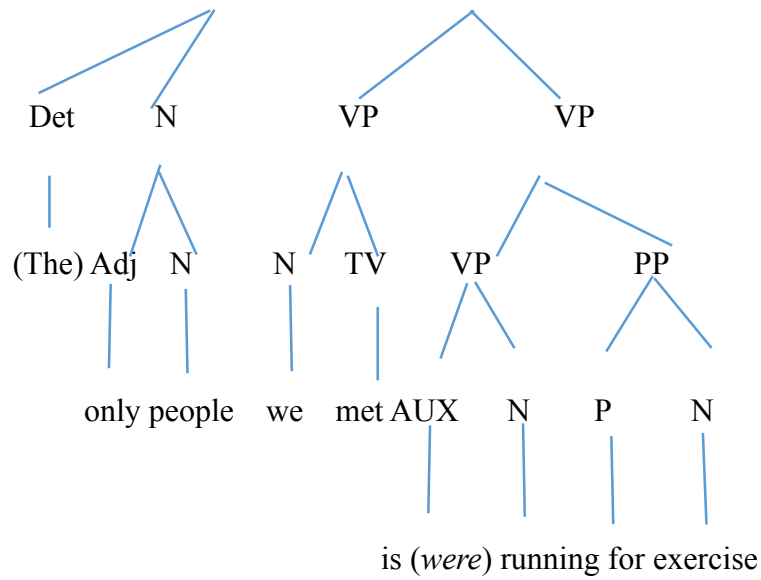
2.3 Syntax

Syntax has to do with how sentences and other phrases can be constructed out of smaller phrases and words. It is the component of grammar that deals with how words and phrases are combined into larger phrases. Words and phrases are all linguistic expressions. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) Every language has its own structural rules that arrange these linguistic expressions into a grammatical sentence. In English, there are also certain rules that govern the ways that a group of words can be structured into a sentence.

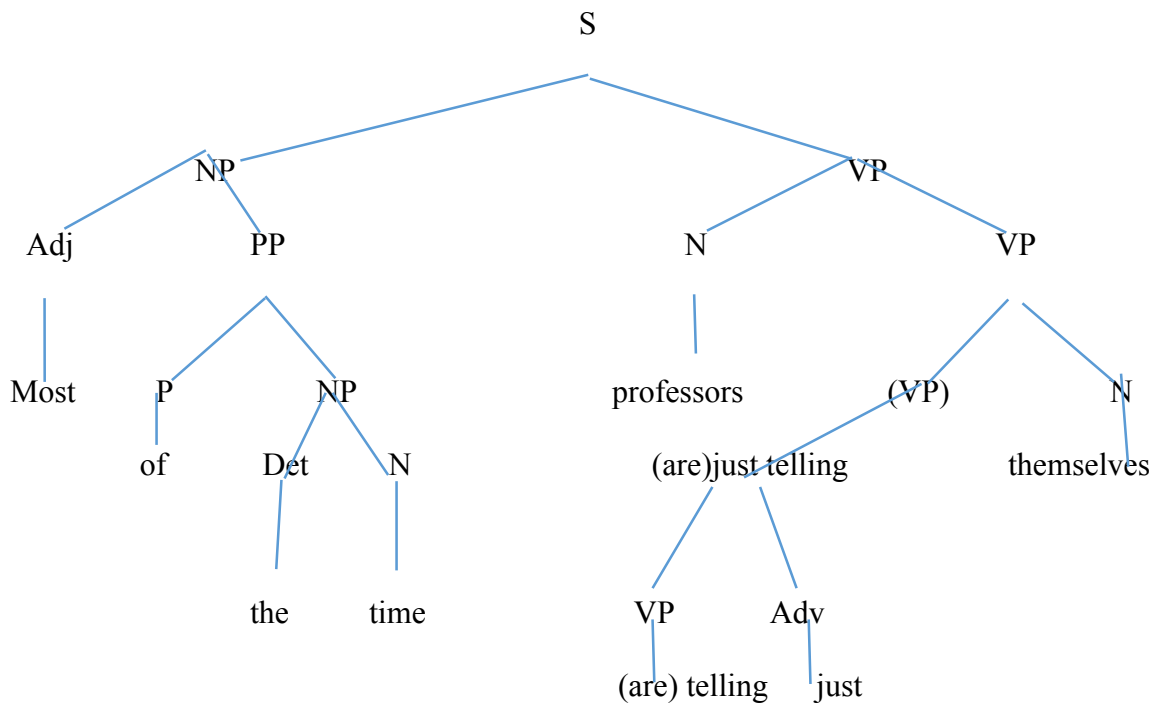
Fortunately, my participant’s L1 and English do not have many differences in words and phrases orders in order to construct a grammatical sentence. As a result, he does not have many errors in sentence structures however mistakes still exist.

“(oral) Only people we met is running for exercise.”





(writing) Most of the time, professors just telling themselves.



As can be seen from the sentence structure trees, my participant sometimes eliminates the determiner *the* which does not exist in his native language. What's more, he also misuses some verb tense or forgets to add the copula to form the tense because as mentioned before that mandarin does not have verb tense. Nevertheless, he can still make sentences right most of the time as long

as he pays attention to his speaking and writing. He can make some complex sentences correctly as well.

“(Writing) To my disappointment, there are also some kind of teachers in US who just read according to the textbook.”

In this example, all the word tenses are correct and also the attributive clause is in the correct form, which make the sentence syntactically right.

2.4 Semantics and Pragmatics

Semantics studies linguistic meaning and how expressions convey meanings. It deals with the nature of meaning itself. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) Semantics includes lexical and compositional semantics while both of them are required to understand the meaning of sentences. My participant sometimes cannot find the exact words or expressions that refer to the reference. However, he may use other words and phrases to substitute for what he cannot come up with. And with the assembling of lexical words together forming phrases, words and sentences’ meaning can be understood.

“(oral) And second is that Americans drink the water form the, the, what? How to say? And they even don’t heat the water to, to boiling. In china we usually have to heat water to one hundred and then drink.”

This conversation is interesting for me because I can understand exactly what he wanted to refer in the conversation. By saying “How to say?” he was trying to come up with the word *tap*, which I know even does not need him to think that word. This is actually related to pragmatics, which I will analyze later in the case study. Also “heat the water to, to boiling” means *boil the water* since said both “heat” and “to boiling” to relate to make water hot. At last “one hundred”

here means the boiling point of water since it refers specifically to 100°C. Even though some of the times he cannot use the exact words to express his meaning, he is able to find some synonyms or some related words to make sentences.

Pragmatics is the study of the ways people use language in actual conversations. It studies both how context helps to determine whether a particular utterance is appropriate or in appropriate as well as how changes to context alter sentences' meaning. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011) My participant tends to use many deictic words in both oral and writing English. His sentences may sometimes difficult to interpret without linguistic context.

“ (writing) So, I have graped (grabbed) every chance to communicate with *them*.

They are told to talk with their partner (partners) nearly through all the classes.”

The word *them*, *they*, and *their* are deictic words and we cannot know who and whom these words refer to without the linguistic context. Within the context, *them* refers to his American classmates and *they* refers to students who study GPED.

“I just try to communicate with American(s) and reading. And the books are English so, I think with *them* and speak to America(ns) can improve my English ability. Read, write and speak I think *that's* enough.”

My participant uses many deictic words in his oral English as well. Very often, the misusing of pronouns can cause misunderstanding of what exactly he wants to express. Even though with the help of linguistic context, listeners may understand his meaning. There are still lots of misunderstandings because he may also use pronouns to refer someone or something he has mentioned long time ago.

In spite of all these weakness in oral and writing English, my participant does a great job considering following rules for conversations. During our interview, he would always give true,

relevant and enough answers to my questions. He still has some troubles following the maxim of manners since his words maybe out of order sometimes.

“W: Do you speak any Chinese dialect?”

P: Chinese dialect? Oh... It’s a little different from Putonghua.

W: Yeah, mandarin.

P: Um, but there are not very much(many) difference(s). Because Hebei is very near to Beijing so there (are) not so many difference(s).

W: So, which language do you speak best?

P: Of course, Chinese.

W: Which language do you prefer speaking?

P: Prefer speaking? I...I prefer speak English because I want to practice English. But I found (find) I can’t communicate very fluent(ly) with American(s) now. I don’t understand why they laugh and I can’t get the point. So I want to practice and I want to communicate with them and make friend(s) with them.”

The above samples show that some errors still exist in his oral English while he tries his best to answer every question to give enough information for the listener. In this way, listeners can understand his words and speech even though there are still many mistakes.

Part 3

Assessment of Peng’s Current SLA Stage and Analyzing His Learning Experience

My participant Peng started to learn English from middle school. Due to China’s unique exam-oriented education system, he has developed an interesting English ability --- a high level in the knowledge of English with a low oral performance. In this part, I will assess his current stage of second language acquisition and provide analysis of his past schooling with an SLA

theoretical framework, which has a strong influence on his current stage of second language acquisition.

3.1 Participant's Current Stage of Second Language Acquisition

3.1.1 Oral English

Peng now can speak English fluently however with some errors and sometimes he fails to follow other's speech or native speakers' jokes, which results in the difficulties to keep on conversations. After collecting the oral sample, I assess his current stage of English acquisition as between Level 3 and Level 4 according to Characteristics of English Language Proficiency. (Pray, 2014)

Overall, he can communicate in English with unfamiliar and new settings (Level 4) however, with restricted vocabulary and simple, comprehensible sentences (Level 3). In addition, he can also give simple explanations and describe things (Level 3). But he has problems with idioms and slangs (Level 4), which causes his difficulties in chatting with his American friends. I assess his oral English in the following aspects:

First, Peng is now in Stage 4 for L2 development of negation. "I don't understand why they laugh and I can't get the point. /When I say hello, they didn't say back, I think it's not so friendly." From the examples we can see that he knows how to use "do" to mark for person, number, and tense, however, there is still errors in person or tense on the auxiliary and verb. (Pray, 2014)

Second, he is in Stage 2 for L2 development of questions by using declarative word order and not using inversion or fronting. (Pray, 2014) For example, "You think it's not enough?" is a question he asked during the interview. He failed to front "do-" and inverse the sentence to "Don't you think it's enough?" However, he was always repeating several words of my

questions to express queries instead of making full questions. Maybe if I provided more chances for him to ask me, he would perform in a higher level since he has studied grammar rules for years.

Third, as for L2 development of relative clauses, I would describe pretty good for his current stage. For example, “Sometimes I go out to eat with them, and I try to, try to tell them what is like in China. / They correct all my errors and sometimes when I can’t find a word in English that correspondent to some word in Chinese, they will give me some hint.” He can use relative clauses while talking even without making mistakes, which shows his well usage in development of relative clause in oral English.

Last but not least, his L2 development of reference to past is in a complicated stage since he is able to use irregular verbs and knows when and how to use past tense. However, whenever he does not pay attention to his speaking, he will make mistakes. “In class, my first English class, the teacher just taught us how to spell the basic words just ABC. And then he teaches us some basic words like apple, and so on.” He knew that he should use “taught” because it was happened in the past while forgot to use in the next sentence. In my opinion, this means his insensitivity to word tense other than his lack of the ability in using past tense.

Based on the former analysis, I assess Peng’s current oral language as between Level 3 and Level 4 since he can express his ideas clearly with explanations and he can use complex sentence structures even though errors may occur. He has gained enough grammar rules to help him make utterances right. However, due to lack of practicing and understanding of social contexts, he is still facing a lot of problems with speaking, which prevents him fully achieving to Level 4--- the intermediate level.

3.1.2 Written English

Different from oral English, Peng is currently between Level 4 and Level 5 for his written English because his past schooling provides him a large amount of practice in writing and a solid knowledge in grammar rules. Consequently, he can write independently for own purposes but he has difficulty with different styles as Level 4 defines. He is also capable of writing on familiar and related topics in academic domains as Level 5 describes. (Pray, 2014) I assess his oral English in the following aspects:

First, Peng is now in Stage 4 for L2 development of negation. From sentences like “ Another reason is that there are many oral words I’m not familiar with” and “ But differences were not so big as I expected” we can see that he is able to use auxiliary verbs to mark for person, number and tense. And in the three writing samples, he did not make any mistakes in negation, which shows his well-developed negation skill.

Second, he has grasped both morpheme acquisition required by Level 4 and Level 5. Peng know how to use auxiliary verbs to form tense like “ I have joined two volunteer work” and “professors won’t staring at you in the classroom during the exam”. In addition, the usage of article is proficient. For example, “There are some differences between China and America in the way of teaching. But the differences were not so big as I expected.” What’s more, he masters well in irregular and regular past-ed words like *expected*, *told*, *were*, *joined*, and *arrived* in his writing passages.

Third, as for L2 development of relative clauses for writing, he is also in a pretty good stage. He can use clauses in different formations in his writing. For example, predicative clause--- Another inconvenience is that the supermarkets are very far from out home. And attributive clause and adverbial clause--- I feel very lucky that I have so many helpful neighbors who can help me when I am in trouble. As I said before, his past grammar-centered learning experience

has provided him with solid knowledge of using clauses while writing, which results in a higher level of using them in writing.

Finally, he performs well in reference to past which is also a result of grammar learning and vocabulary reciting in the past. In his writing samples, he seldom used past tense wrong and he used irregular and regular past forms correctly like I have mentioned in the morpheme acquisition. However, he still sometimes misused past tense when it is not necessary. For example, “ But the differences were not so big as I expected.”

Peng’s written English is better than his oral English. In his writing, he can express his ideas and thought clearly with few errors. Also, he can use different sentence structures with simple sentences and clauses. However, he uses many “ there are...” in his passages, which makes his writing look lower than it should be. All in all, he learned many grammar rules and recited a large amount of words in the past, which becomes a great help for his writing especially when writing is editable before handing to others. As a result, he is in a higher level for his writing than speaking.

3.2 Analyze Participant’s Past Learning Experiences with an SLA Theoretical Framework

Peng received a well-known Chinese way of education in the past sixteen years through elementary school to university. He started to learn English in middle school under a totally exam-oriented instruction with difficult grammar rules and numerous tests, which means that he had been exposed to a context-reduced and cognitively demanding (Cummins, 1991) second language learning environment. According to Cummins’ (1991) SLA theory, this way of language acquisition is not efficient for students to gain a second language and become a native like speaker. Based on my own understanding, I will analyze Peng’s past learning experiences

with Cummins' theory in the next part.

Cummins has developed the idea of Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). The former was defined in terms of "the manifestation of language proficiency in everyday communicative contexts," whereas CALP was conceptualized in terms of the manipulation of language in decontextualized academic situations (Cummins, 1991). The usual sequence of these two is that kids gain BICS before CALP, which causes the notion that proficiency in communication does not mean proficiency in academic language. This suits for both native language and second language acquisition. However, in China, it is a totally reversed sequence that students learn English as their second language from learning difficult cognitive academic language but they seldom have exposures to actual language usage in daily life to improve interpersonal communicative skills.

In China, English education has been focusing on teaching English language knowledge itself --- vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing. The only standard to measure teaching is students test results. Tests often include multiple choices, reading, and writing. When Peng was learning in English school, listening was not included in test while now listening has become part of the test since schools have realized the importance of listening skills. However, grammar, reading and writing are still the most valued parts of English learning.

Another problem of Peng's past schooling experience is that schools and teachers provide English teaching with context-reduced and cognitively demanding materials. Context-reduced communication relies primarily (or at the extreme of the continuum, exclusively) on linguistic cues to meaning, and thus successful interpretation of the message depends heavily on knowledge of the language itself (Cummins, 1992). From the very beginning period of English learning, teachers start to require students to memorize words, sentences, and whatever they

believe is important to acquire. These contents are to some degree incomprehensible for beginners and require much cognition. Usually, students feel difficult and bored so that many of them lose the interests to learn English. More importantly, context-reduced teaching causes the lack of BICS, which means students have difficulties of language use in actual communication in daily life.

Under such educational environment, Peng has developed his CALP. However, he only has a very limited BICS. As I have mentioned above, he first learned English grammar and practiced a lot in reading and writing. Also the learning materials were seldom accompanied with context of actual daily life of native English speakers. Teachers never taught slangs and idioms since they were not required in the syllabus. Consequently, Peng is now facing great difficulties in communicating with his American peers after class instead of understanding his professors in classes. However, in my opinion, the ultimate goal of learning a language is to communicate and speak like the native speakers of the target language rather than only knowing the knowledge of the language. I believe that children should acquire languages from BICS to CALP as Cummins suggests. Thus, China's English teaching methods should change in the future in order to avoid students like Peng who studies abroad in English speaking countries speaking poor and awkward English whenever they communicate with native speakers.

Part 4

Instructional Plans for Peng and Critical Reflection for Future Teaching

After analyzing the ability of Peng's oral and writing English and assessing his current stage of English language acquisition, I will come up with some instructional plans for him based on his weaknesses and past schooling experience. In addition, after a whole semester's study, I will

reflect some critical learning results that I will take back to China for my future teaching, which can help me provide a better English learning environment for my Chinese students.

4.1 Instructional Plans for Peng

Krashen's Input Hypothesis "claims that humans acquire language in only way --- by understanding messages, or by receiving 'comprehensible input'" (Krashen, 1985). He believes that "We progress along the natural order (The Natural Order Hypothesis) by understanding input that contains structures at our next 'stage' --- that are a bit beyond our current level of competence... We are able to understand language containing unacquired grammar with the help of context, which includes extra-linguistic information, our knowledge of the world, and previously acquired linguistic competence" (Krashen, 1985). Based on my former analysis, Peng has developed a higher level in CALP than BICS because of his past learning experience. He needs more input of speaking English to acquire a better BICS.

After the analysis of his English ability in part two in phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics respectively, I have already had a clear view of his current stage of oral English acquisition. In order to help him to enhance his BICS, I will plan classes with more comprehensible materials and deepen the difficulties based on his level to let him acquire the input.

Firstly, a big problem for Peng's speaking English is his pronunciation. I will provide him a large amount of exposures to listening and many interesting practices in speaking. Because his past learning experience merely focused on listening and speaking, he did not receive enough instructions in pronunciation. Consequently, his pronunciations include many shortages. Even though this should not be counted as errors, in order to speak like a native speaker, he should make more efforts to practice speaking. Firstly, I will let him choose the daily news reports from

VOA and CNN that interest him the most to listen to. According to Krashen (1985), the comprehensible input should also be interesting and relevant. So it is better to let him choose his own listening materials based on his own needs. He will have to pay attention to the vowels that are different from what he pronounces in order to know his own problems. Secondly, with his poorly pronounced consonants--- /θ/, /ð/ and /v/, I will give him enough materials and exercises to practice. Tongue twisters like “There those thousand thinkers were thinking where did those other three thieves go through” and “Five frantic frogs fled from fifty fierce fishes” are interesting sentences for him to practice these consonants.

Secondly, the most crucial problem of Peng is that he learned English in a highly context-reduced environment, which causes his difficulties in understanding daily conversations with native speakers. In other words, his low BICS becomes his biggest prevention when he is actually in English speaking society even though he has learned English for ten years. For changing this situation, I will use “context-embedded communication” to teach him. “In context-embedded communication the participants can actively negotiate meaning (e.g., by providing feedback that the message has not been understood), and the language is supported by a wide range of meaningful paralinguistic and situational cues” (Cummins, 1991). In class, I will use daily conversations that occur among native speakers as materials to teach how English is like in real situations. So that he can acquire the oral English words he does not know before. He said that he could not understand the jokes of his American classmates’. For helping him, slangs and idioms will also be added to these conversations. Adding these slangs and idioms into conversations can provide them with cultural background so that they will become more comprehensible to Peng. After class learning is also important. I will ask him to choose a TV series that he likes the most but have to be close to daily language like Modern Family and

Friends. More importantly, he should collect the joking points, slangs and idioms that make him confuse. In next class, I will ask him to communicate with native speakers to figure out the meanings. In these ways, he can remember the usage of these words and sentences better than I teach directly to him.

Thirdly, creating a student-centered classroom environment for him is what I will make more efforts to achieve. In his written sample, he expressed that he would like to have much more conversations and communications during class time as in China he experienced sixteen years of teacher-centered learning. Also the learning materials are also context-embedded as Cummins (1992) claims, “The more context-embedded the initial L2 input, the more comprehensible it is likely to be, and paradoxically, the more successful in ultimately developing L2 skills in context-reduced situations.” During class time, I will provide some interesting culturally relative materials and come up with relevant questions for students to discuss. Arrange the tables into groups so that students can communicate more easily. This will not only help Peng practice listening and speaking English, but also turn these inputs into academic use.

What’s more, Peng still has to improve his writing skills even though he knows the grammar rules and has vocabularies. He cannot write like a native speaker especially when he needs to write more academically for his PHD learning. Krashen (1985) believes that the Input Hypothesis may also apply to the acquisition of writing style. “ A number of research studies show a relationship between reading and writing. Good writers, it has been found, have done more reading for their own interest and pleasure than poor writers, and programmes that get students ‘hooked on books’ help develop writing skills” (Krashen, 1985, p19) Accordingly, I will ask Peng to read more books that interest him and to learn the writing styles, multiple sentence structures and word choices. Taking these inputs to improve his writing for academic purpose.

All in all, the key idea of Peng's instructional plans is providing comprehensible input in context-embedded classroom environment. With the helping of real contexts in actual situations, he will find that more and more knowledge, which he has learned in the past, can finally make sense and be used in daily conversations. Therefore, his BICS will achieve a higher level.

4.2 Critical Reflection for Future Teaching

After a whole semester's study, I have learned a lot in terms of linguistics and second language acquisitions. Linguistics helps me to know the single aspects that I have to pay attention to when I teach my students. The analysis of my participants makes me realize the importance of knowing my students' prior knowledge in order to make specific plans for them to improve their weaknesses. More importantly, the SLA theories let me scrutinize the disadvantages of English teaching in China and provide me with better methods and strategies I can use for my future teaching. The purpose of studying English education in America is all about offering a better English learning environment for my future. And I believe I am one step closer to it.

The most challenging thing for me is that I cannot change the exam-oriented education system and as a result, I still have to teach the language rules. However, based on Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis, "The order does not appear to be determined solely by formal simplicity and there is evidence that it is independent of the order in which rules are taught in language classes" (Krashen, 1985). Consequently, teachers should teach language rules according to students' actual levels instead of restricting the order of teaching grammar rules. More importantly, teachers should provide visual aids and other assistant tools to make the rules comprehensible to students. "We move from i , our current level, to $i + 1$, the next level along the

natural order, by understanding input containing $i + 1$ " (Krashen, 1985). I won't add the next level before making sure my students have acquired the current knowledge.

Students in China who attend normal schools only have access to English during class time. They speak only Chinese after class with classmates and families. And for most of the time, English classes focus on the ability of language knowledge instead of listening and speaking. For my future students, I want them to gain both BICS and CALP. So, I will use context-embedded materials and give them more culturally relative explanations. In class teaching, I will provide many videos, multimedia materials and extra reading to make the use of English in actual daily life vivid to my students. With the help of Internet, many American TV series are available for them to expose to social contexts of real English use. When they have a better understanding of the culture and usage of sentences and words, they will develop BICS even in a non-language background environment. This will also help my students gain the intercultural skills.

Last but not least, I will create a comfortable class environment for my students instead of the teacher-centered lecturing. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, "the 'affective filter' is a mental block that prevents acquirers from fully utilizing the comprehensible input they receive for language acquisition" (Krashen, 1985). As a result, I should try my best to create an environment to make my students feel interested, motivated and confident so that the filter is down. In the ways of group discussion, drama performing, movie reviews and book reviews, which seems to be attractive for students. When they start to learn on their own initiatives, they can acquire the language better and unforgettable.

I feel so happy and proud that I have learned so much in the very first semester. And I will keep on learning to acquire more educational knowledge that can help me become an excellent teacher.

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Artifact G: Conversation Lesson Plan**Planning (5 points):**

1. Age: 13-14

Grade: 7th Grade

Class/course type: EFL English class, conversation focused, ordering food in a restaurant

Setting (cultural, etc.): Chinese middle school students are getting to know the culture of English-speaking countries besides grammar rules.

2. Explain why you chose this topic:

I want my students to learn more than grammar rules. I know many of them considering passing exams as their goals of learning English, but communication is also an important goal for English learning. Providing them with authentic materials and culture related conversations will help them improve communicative competence. Also the sentence structures used in ordering in restaurant can be used in many other situations like shopping, buying tickets, asking directions, etc. It is important to get students to know these real life situations.

3. Objective for this lesson:

SWBAT make conversations to order a meal or ask questions in other situation.

SWBAT identify the differences between China's and American culture in ordering food.

4. Lesson Method

Audio-lingual Method

5. Materials Needed (list):

A video clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I53n7ldcSGo&list=PL-](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I53n7ldcSGo&list=PL-D1WPhQ8_WhPvJUK5YQKdaRC_yFjEqyp&index=3)

[D1WPhQ8_WhPvJUK5YQKdaRC_yFjEqyp&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I53n7ldcSGo&list=PL-D1WPhQ8_WhPvJUK5YQKdaRC_yFjEqyp&index=3) (This is an interesting video clip from Friends and I am using it as a hook up activity. Then I will use a longer video clip showing the

whole process ordering and eating in an American restaurant. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJbw5txb8GA&list=PL->

[D1WPhQ8_WhPvJUK5YQKdaRC_yFjEqyp&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJbw5txb8GA&list=PL-D1WPhQ8_WhPvJUK5YQKdaRC_yFjEqyp&index=4))

A conversation transcript

A list of useful phrase and sentence structures that students can use in many other situations

Teaching the lesson (10 points):

a) How will you **introduce the lesson**? Why did you choose this topic?

1. I will ask how my students order meals in a Chinese restaurant.
2. I will share my own experience in America when I went to the restaurant for the first time to drawn on the importance of knowing how to communicate in daily settings.
3. Show the video clip to students and ask them to notice the differences between how Americans order their food.
4. It is important to learn a language through how native speakers use it in daily conversations. Students will have access to discourses in dialogue level to realize how sentences are making sense in communication.

b) How will you **explain the lesson objective**?

1. Today our lesson is about “how to order meals in an American restaurant.” After we watch a video and have a discussion, you will make a conversation on your own.
2. We will also discover the differences between the Chinese culture and the American culture.

c) How will you **explain the lesson procedure**?

1. I will ask students how they usually order meals in a Chinese restaurant.
2. I will share my own experience ordering meal when I first landed in America. It was a Vietnamese restaurant. I was totally freaked out as soon as I saw the menu. So many strange

words and I must be dreaming. The waiter came and asked “What would like to drink?” and I was out of my mind. I just followed others and said “Water.” Then the waiter came back again and asked “What would you like to order?” I also followed the others “Number 25.” I was afraid to talk in English at that time. I was not prepared to communicate in English through my whole study of English. I want you not to be panic when you go broad and want to eat in a restaurant.

3. I will show the video clip for the class and ask them to focus the differences they can notice from the video clip.

4. I will hand out a transcript of a conversation about ordering meals in a restaurant. I will ask them to read out loud in a group of three people. There are very few new words for them as middle school students.

5. I will hand out a list of useful phrases and sentence structures they can use in conversations like ordering a meal, buying a ticket, asking for directions, etc. They can make their own conversations with a partner.

d) How will you **end the lesson**?

I will ask a group to act their conversation in front of the class and ask students to pay attention to the language they use in their conversation. Then let them discuss what is good and what needs to be changed in the conversation.

e) How will you ask the **students to reflect** on the lesson?

Students will write a dialogue in any settings they think is suitable for making a conversation like ordering a meal and also use the phrases and sentences they have learned from the class.

Students will also write a short paragraph comparing the differences between Chinese and American culture in ordering meals, asking questions, etc.

f) How will you **assess students**?

Individuals: I will collect their written work and check if they have internalized the content we talk in class to make their own conversations.

Group: In the next class, at the beginning, I will ask them to make a new conversation in the setting of a restaurant. I will walk around during the process to check if they can use the content correctly and ask two groups to act out for the rest of the class.

Artifact H: Midterm Paper for Teaching ESL/EFL**My Changes towards A Better Teacher****My Previous Principles for Teaching English in China**

It has been well accepted that “teachers teach the way they were taught”. I also believe this is true especially after my own teaching experience in China this summer. I taught high school freshmen with extremely low English proficiency. My mentor teacher was very glad to hear that I am learning teaching English in America and expected me to teach those students with the new teaching strategies. However, I failed. I observed several classes, which were exactly the same as I was taught when I was a high school student using Grammar-Translation Method. At that time, I told myself: “ I will never teach like that.” However, when it was my opportunity to teach in real classes, it turned out that I only felt comfortable with and confident in using Grammar-Translation Method. Another reason was that my students had really low proficiency, which required me to explain grammar rules explicitly and translate all the passages into Chinese.

Moreover, the ultimate goal for Chinese students learning English is passing the college entrance exam. It does not require speaking skills, which results in a lack of focus on students’ pronunciation and communication. I tried to model the right pronunciation for my students and let them repeat after me. But it seemed work only at class time. When they came back the day after we learned the new words, they failed to pronounce the words correctly.

No matter how hard I tried to change my mindset for teaching English in China, I could not get away with the influence of grammar translation while preparing and teaching lessons. However, even though grammar translation is boring, I still have to admit it useful considering myself as an example. After half of a semester’s study, I realize that there is no single solution for teaching a foreign language well. With so many useful principles and methods, the best way

is to combine the ones I believe that will work in my classroom and the ones that fit my learners' level of proficiency. As a result, I will still use Grammar-Translation Method but with the help of other amazing principles and methods.

The Adoption of Principles and Methods

Even though the goal of English teaching in China is passing exams and students may have goals for themselves, I have my goal for the students I teach. I want them to get to know English-speaking countries' culture, read authentic texts and most importantly, be able to communicate in English fluently, like a native speaker.

First of all, though I have a goal for my students, I will not force and push them too hard to achieve it. Learning another language should be fun and enjoyable. I do not want them to feel stressed in my class because they cannot understand what I say or they are just not ready to speak. "Creating a low affective filter is also a condition for acquisition that is met when the classroom atmosphere is one in which anxiety is reduced and students' self-confidence is boosted (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013)." When students feel comfortable with learning English and they feel they are ready to produce output, they can learn English better.

Second, for my instructional language during class time, I will balance the use of Chinese or English based on my students' proficiency level. "A recent study examined the amount, the purpose, and the reason for L1 use in foreign language concluding that teachers tended to use their L1 most frequently for instructional purposes, including explaining difficult grammatical concepts, translating lexical meanings, and providing instructions for communicative tasks and activities (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011)." This is so true with my situation. However, due to the lack of using English in outside classroom settings, I will use English to communicate with them except explaining abstract grammatical concepts, in order to provide more output opportunities for

them.

As I mentioned earlier, the ultimate goal for my English teaching is that my students can use English to communicate. Therefore, they need to learn English in order to convey meaning. That is to say, they have to have discourse competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980). For achieve this goal, I will use discourse-level contexts (R. Ellis, 2002) such as listening to extended dialogues and talks, watching movies and videos, having meaning-focused conversations, doing multi-paragraph readings and writing essays and journals (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). My learning and teaching experience in China have taught me: sentence-level materials, non-authentic passages or dialogues, non-real life purposes of writing will not result in the ability to communicate in a foreign language even though some of the students have learned it for years. I will definitely not let this happen to my students.

Then, grammar has to be taught. If my students want to speak English like a native speaker, they will have to learn grammatical rules to convey meaning correctly. In my class, I will use grammar consciousness-raising tasks that require them to communicate directly about grammar structures by generating a rule for their use (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). For example, I want to teach them past tense. Firstly, I will provide them a passage that I choose from a newspaper. The past tense verbs are all bold as suggested by the contextual enhancement approach. Then, students will be able to pay attention to the grammatical form. After reading, they are expected to utilize intellectual effort to understand the targeted feature (R. Ellis, 2002). During this process, I will observe any problems and difficulties they have and provide explanations when necessary. Next, they need to make conversations in pairs to talk about what they did in the past. At this time, I will walk around to provide feedback by using repetition (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Because they have already noticed the grammar form, I expect that they can self-repair after I repeat the error.

Finally, I will let them write a letter to a friend to describe their summer vacation. In this way, they not only have input enhancement (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) but also have lots of opportunities to produce output. More importantly, all of the parts are happening in discourse. The grammar learning has a pragmatic goal so that students will be aware of using grammar real-life purposes.

However, choosing materials to use for teaching grammar structures for a communicative purpose is also very important. The grammar structures should reflect real-life usages. As Biber and Rappen (2002) suggested that “material developers should use corpus analysis to determine the frequencies of grammatical structures in authentic language and be careful to reflect these frequencies in the materials they design” (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Therefore, I will analyze the corpus to choose materials have authentic language expressions, such as newspaper, transcripts of videos and movies, song lyrics, novels and so on.

Last but not least, I will improve my skills in providing feedbacks. What I used to do was stopping my students whenever they made mistakes and providing the right form for them to repeat. But I realize that stopping them instantly can mess up their thinking process and also correcting them too often can result in an resistance to speak again. I have developed my own criteria of what errors should be corrected. 1) The frequency of occurrence of the error; 2) Whether the error interferes with the written English; 3) Whether the error hinders communicating meanings. For example, if a student says “teachs” all the time to mean “teaches”, I will repeat it using a questioning tone. I expect him to self-correct. However, if he still cannot understand why, I will explain explicitly for him. One more reason to correct this is that this kind of pronunciation mistake will influence students’ spelling in writing. In addition, when students’ utterances cannot convey the meaning they intend to, I will give them feedback and correct them.

Vaezi (2006) described an ideal language learning environment where classroom rules are

used, the learners are shown what to do by teacher modeling, the lessons are well-planned and consistent, and accuracy is a goal, but not at the expense of a relaxed and motivating classroom atmosphere, with implicit form-focused instruction (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). I believe with the help of all these principles and methods, this ideal language learning environment will become real in my classroom and my students will become successful English language learners.

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Artifact I: End-of-Semester Update for Teaching ESL/EFL**End-of-Semester Update**

As Nassaji and Fotos (2011) suggest that teachers should be eclectic and active decision-makers and they should make their pedagogical choices by “drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs” (Borg, 2003, p. 81). After a few more weeks’ study, this idea becomes more essential for me since there are so many methods and principles that I can use in my future classes in China. “Learners are different individuals with different aptitude, personality characteristics, language proficiency, motivation, attitudes towards learning, and cultural backgrounds” (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011, p.137). As their teacher, I should pay enough attention to their individual differences so that I can differentiate methods and instructions for them while teaching. From my peer feedbacks of the second mini lesson, I found out that my peers appreciated that I used my own personal experience to lower students’ affective filter and connect students to the topic. Also they loved that I combined the culture differences to make students realize that the language they would use in daily life could be different from what they learned in classes. As a result, to most efficiently help them achieve individual achievement, I have to be eclectic in my instructional approaches. With the time spending with my students and experience gained through teaching, I will try my best to become a teacher with best instructional approaches.

One more approach I will use in my future class is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). I still insist the goal in my midterm paper to achieve communicative competence for my students. To accomplish this, I would like to use the strong version of Communicative Approach that is to acquire English through communication (Howatt, 1984). TBLT belongs to the strong version of Communicative Approach. “Tasks are meaningful, and in doing them, students need

to communicate. Tasks have a clear outcome so that the teacher and students know whether or not the communication has been successful” (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.149). By communicating in English to finish tasks, students will be fully engaged especially when the task requires physical movements. For example, I might want them to find out a best time for classes to begin in the afternoon. To achieve this, they have to make a survey with a time sheet and communicate with other classmates to see what they think about this question and they should give their reasons. By doing so, students keep talking with each other to convey meanings. Also, moving around to do the survey engages them in the task. What’s more, I will carefully choose the tasks for my students. “The tasks are meaningful and relevant so that the students see the reason for doing the task and can see how the task relates to possible situations in their lives outside the classroom” (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.156). This is essential for me since I want my students to access the authentic language being used in everyday life. I will try my best to use the tasks that are meaningful and suitable for students’ current level.

Last but not least, I will admit technology in my future English teaching in China, which does not restrict only by using PowerPoint during class time. “Language is changed through use. It is a dynamic and evolving entity” (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p.208). I, myself, also as an English language learner, cannot use the most up-to-date authentic language without accessing to the Internet. Technology helps me provide authentic materials such as YouTube videos, online journals, blogs, images, etc. However, my second mini lesson has taught me that I should also be eclectic with the materials I want to use. For example, the video clip that I chose from *Friends* is not very appropriate to teach my topic since it has many other aspects to focus on, which may confuse my students. Without further explanation for the slangs or situations, students may fail to understand the meanings and believe that this is the real situation for

ordering a meal in America. Therefore, I will choose the materials more carefully and purposefully. Moreover, I would include online tasks in my future classes to motivate students' interests, increase their language awareness by using English to communicate and also enjoy autonomy choosing their own topics and contents to learn. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013). I will still insist what I have wrote in my midterm paper and will combine what I have learned later in the semester. Language teaching has never been an easy thing. I hope that with my further study and experience gaining, I will become a better English teacher for my students in China.

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