From Lesson Plan to Observation to Self-Assessment in a Chinese as a Second Language Class

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ABSTRACT

FROM LESSON PLAN TO OBSERVATION TO SELF-ASSESSMENT IN A CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASS

by

Yu-Shan Lin: Master of Second Language Teaching
Utah State University, 2022

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Department: World Languages & Cultures

This portfolio is a compilation of what the author has learned in the field of Chinese as a second language in the Master of Second Language Teaching program at Utah State University. There are three main sections in the portfolio. The first section contains the author’s teaching philosophy statement, with a focus on the communicative approach, a game-based approach, and alternative assessment. The second section consists of a reflection on a classroom observation. The main paper presents how the author designed a lesson plan and implemented it, as well as her analysis and introspection on a video recording of the lesson.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I must thank Dr. DeJonge-Kannan for her warm, continuous, effective, and patient guidance. She was very aware of the difficulty of writing academic articles as a second language learner and was always to provide supportive guidance. Not only did she actively provide a lot of resources, but she also gave me great advice on my career. I am very grateful for all her contributions, including her time and energy, and because of her, I was able to complete this portfolio and have many unexpected benefits in my final semester. I also learned the qualities of a good teacher from her, which will continue to motivate me in becoming a better teacher.

I am also very grateful to have met Dr. Sung at MSLT, she provided me with a lot of teaching advice using her professional knowledge in teaching Chinese. And always very proactive to help. I would also like to thank Dr. Chen, who is always very gentle with helpful suggestions and timely help. I would like to thank Dr. Albirini, who always provided clear instructions and advice, and never hesitated to lend a hand when I needed help. His humorous attitude and professionalism always inspire me. I would also like to thank all of my peers at MSLT, who are my role models for learning, they are always very supportive and always provide very good advice.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends in Taiwan for their spiritual and other support. The gratitude goes far beyond what can be expressed on paper.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CA: Communicative Approach
DLI: Dual Language Immersion
L2: Second Language
MSLT: Master of Second Language Teaching
TL: Target Language
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: the worksheet for interview activity
INTRODUCTION

This portfolio demonstrates what I have learned in the MSLT program and how I relate it to my teaching practice. Before I entered the MSLT program, I studied Chinese literature as my major at a university in Taiwan, while also taking courses in Teaching Chinese as Second Language and Teacher Education. This is when I first began to notice that there is a huge difference between teaching Chinese as a first language and teaching Chinese as an additional language.

Teaching Chinese as a second language is more challenging and requires different knowledge and skills to make it effective, including awareness of cultural differences, attention to students’ identity, and promotion of confidence in speaking. I also tried to use my own second language learning experience to help my students with theirs. The more I delved into this area, the more challenges I found, making me eager to find methods to help me face those challenges and become a better teacher. After an internship in an elementary Chinese DLI school in Utah, I was very aware of my lack of knowledge, so I enrolled in the MSLT program, looking for answers to my questions.

In the MSLT program, I learned how humans learn language from biological and linguistic perspectives, and I also improved my awareness of different cultures and students’ identities. I learned various pedagogical approaches and techniques, which I was able to apply in the classroom. I became determined to create an environment where students’
communication in the classroom is meaningful and enjoyable, where students are encouraged and motivated to learn, and where assessment is designed for students to demonstrate their learning in ways that they can be successful. Finally, I found the approach that I am satisfied with so far, which is also included in my teaching philosophy statement: a combination of communicative approach, game-based approach, and alternative assessment.

When I studied in the MSLT program, I was also working as a graduate instructor. It was a valuable opportunity to gain practical experience, as the students became my teacher and I could see how my teaching affected them. I learned more about student engagement, class time management, and activity design for meaningful communication in the classroom.

In the main paper of this portfolio, I present my process from designing a lesson plan to implementing it in the classroom and reflecting on how it went. The video recording allowed me to review my teaching systematically and to analyze the design and implementation of my lesson plan. In the process, I focused on practical aspects of putting method into curriculum. I also ways to improve myself classroom practice and become a better teacher.

I used to think that the duty of a good teacher is to teach knowledge, and if a teacher explains well, students can learn well. However, through the MSLT program and my teaching experiences, I came to realize that the protagonist of learning is the student, not the teacher. Specifically, the teacher provides opportunities for students to do the work of learning. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to offer students engaging materials and
activities, guide students to learn by themselves, and supplement relevant knowledge so that they can improve their motivation and reduce the burden when they study.

I am grateful that I had this opportunity to study in the MSLT program, to gain relevant knowledge, and to increase my teaching experience. I’m also happy to have met my MSLT peers with different linguistic expertise, as their opinions and perspectives often provided great perspectives. They have been a wonderful support as well.
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
Professional Environment

Since early childhood, I enjoyed the Chinese language and found it very interesting. In college, my major was Chinese literature, and I also felt a lot of the beauty of Chinese, so I really wanted to help people who learn the language to appreciate its beauty.

So far, I have taught Chinese as a second language in elementary school and at a university. In both settings, I found that most Chinese textbooks, with their focus on grammar and vocabulary, were not well suited for students’ development of communicative abilities. Good textbooks, in my view, provide sufficient scaffolding to help students engage in tasks for using the target language. They lead students to learn the language so that they can use it in communication. In addition, with the development of instructional technology, textbooks and other learning materials may be converted into different formats, so that students can access them in the format that works best for them. I hope that as I gain more experience as a teacher, I will be able to better observe and analyze the relationship between textbooks and students, and eventually contribute to the writing and editing of Chinese textbooks. In light of my experience and my goals, I offer my teaching philosophy below.
Teaching Philosophy Statement

I believe that, to be an effective teacher of Chinese as an additional language, I must design meaningful tasks for communicative purposes, implement a game-based approach, and develop an awareness of alternative assessments. I will expand on these three themes of my teaching philosophy below.

**Meaningful Tasks for Communication**

When I teach Chinese, my eagerness to teach my students everything can sometimes make me forget that language is for communication. Therefore, I put the communicative approach (CA) first to remind myself to pay attention to the students’ interest in learning communication skills. In a second language classroom, even if a student learned a grammar point and could use it in a sentence correctly, it doesn’t mean that they can fully express themselves in a communicative context. The reverse is also true: A person with good expressive skills does not necessarily produce only grammatically correct sentences. I found it is unachievable and also unnecessary to expect students to use the language perfectly. The CA gives students the opportunity to use the language for real-world purposes, thereby building on students’ motivation to learn the language. The CA neither ignores nor emphasizes grammar, but focuses on communication for language teaching. In addition, the CA also allows making mistakes (Demirezen, 2011). I think this is very important. Once students become afraid of making mistakes, they cannot learn a language well. Therefore, it
is very important to encourage students to try bravely. According to Demirezen, the CA uses reality-based materials to improve students’ motivation to learn languages. In addition to reducing students’ anxiety, it also gives students a sense of achievement because they are using the language for real-world purposes. According to Wiyono et al. (2017), the CA can effectively improve students’ communication ability and their social skills. Furthermore, Thamrana (2014) claims that the CA improves students’ ability to perform tasks and solve problems in the second language, for example ordering in a restaurant or asking for directions.

It was only after I came to the United States that I really learned English for the purpose of communication. I found that even if I said something wrong, people often still understood what I meant, and there is not just one correct way of saying something. I also observed my students, and I found that those who speak Chinese bravely learned much faster than those who cared only about being accurate. I think the CA allows me to interact better with my students, and through these interactions we can become a learning community in which everyone grows together. However, Toro et al. (2018) advise that we cannot expect students to make rapid progress in speaking skills by just talking to their classmates in the classroom. It is always important for teachers to design meaningful tasks for students that help them build their proficiency.

One time when I taught the topic of ordering food, I made students do a role-play
activity in class. Some students played the role of servers and others were customers. They had to actually use the language and could use the menu to express what they wanted and body language to convey the words they had not learned. I noticed that in this process students improved their awareness about the important components of ordering food. Having the chance to be servers and customers helped them develop perspective from both sides. Students seemed to like this activity and I think the CA promoted a positive result.

Learning through Games

I believe students can develop communicative competence more effectively when instructors implement carefully chosen games. As Prensky (2003) mentions, certain traits of good students – such as: full of interest, competitive, result-oriented, and devoted to the pursuit of problem-solving – can be observed in successful game players. If we can design learning opportunities for those traits, while not overlooking the needs of those who prefer collaboration over competition, many students will be able to naturally develop the qualities of a good student while learning. Neville, Shelton and McInnis (2009), who investigated the use of a contextualized game for teaching vocabulary, found that using a game that immerses students in a TL environment helps students remember words. Students’ emotions and memories of role-playing games are helpful for understanding and remembering the text.

I designed a game-based learning activity for my classroom, which involved a role-play in the context of a murder mystery game. Students were engaged in the class as they
needed to use the target language to ask other people’s alibis in order to find out the killer. They practiced using the target language to get information from classmates. I noticed that a student who was normally very quiet talked a lot more than usual that day. Through this experience, I found that games support students’ need for repeated practice and can improve their motivation. Games with an interactional component also offer students opportunities for the negotiation of meaning. Tang and Taguchi (2021) and Huang et al. (2018) report that the use of games resulted in more positive attitudes among students. In addition to in-person interactive games, an ever-growing number of virtual games is now available to language learners. Yükseltürk et al. (2018) demonstrate that learning through the use of a virtual game can improve students’ attitudes and self-learning effectiveness. Therefore, I want to implement more game-based learning in my class and create games that allow students to improve their self-learning ability.

**Awareness of Alternative Assessment**

In addition to the communicative approach and the use of games, alternative assessment is very important to me. Assessment should inform the teacher’s instructional plan and the student’s self-perception. This belief is rooted in my experience. In my years of learning English in Taiwan, all assessments were paper and pencil tests. My ability became a score, and my scores were compared with those of others. A lot of times I felt like I was just chasing a good score, but I never thought about what I’d learned while chasing a score. In the
end, I realized that even getting a high score didn’t mean my language level was high. In the MSLT program, I was exposed to alternative assessment, which offers students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and proficiency level by using, for example, a portfolio, self-assessment, and peer-review. According to Brown (2006), while traditional evaluation makes use of a one-time test, including fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice questions, alternative assessment can include an untimed, free-response format and allow open-ended, creative answers. The alternative assessment offers teachers another way to assess student performance through meaningful tasks that allow students to use newly-gained knowledge to solve problems.

Instead of just admiring students who are good at exams, teachers who have learned about alternative assessments know how to use different approaches to test students’ abilities. Traditional assessments may provide teachers with relatively quick numeric data, but they may also be highly inaccurate, mainly because students are prone to anxiety during exams, resulting in grades that do not reflect their ability. Sometimes traditional tests also seem to test students’ memory ability rather than their language ability. Learning about alternative assessment made me realize that we have many different ways to evaluate our students and their abilities. Laing and Kamhi (2003) argue that assessing people from different cultural backgrounds and different language backgrounds should use alternative assessment. Because of the diversity of students, we should also allow students to have more diverse testing
methods. I think that having a broader, more nuanced view of assessment is particularly suitable for language teaching, since students are usually drawn from culturally and linguistically diverse populations (Laing & Kamhi). Alternative assessment reduces students’ anxiety about assessment and helps them to focus more on the learning process. In addition, it can also provide students with different skills and abilities an opportunity to build on their strengths. In the process of evaluation, students can understand themselves better instead of being restricted by evaluation.

In addition, alternative assessments can also facilitate communication between teachers and students, facilitating better understanding between them, potentially addressing barriers to learning, and allowing each student to learn in a way that suits them (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018). Demir et al. (2019) claim that alternative assessments can keep students motivated and increase their creativity. In my classroom, I use various ways to measure students’ speaking ability, for example, using oral exams as well as class presentations and one-on-one interviews, to give students the opportunity to demonstrate their oral abilities in diverse formats. This has convinced me that alternative assessments are beneficial for students.

**Conclusion**

When I was writing my teaching philosophy statement, I kept thinking about my English learning experience from childhood through college. English learning was drudgery until I
moved to the USA and began the MSLT program. When I actually used English in my life, I realized that my previous study had not been a waste of time, but I wish I could have felt engaged from the very beginning, which would have motivated me to keep learning and allowed me to enjoy the process more. The communicative approach can offer authentic tasks and real-world content and allow learners to solve problems using what they have learned. A game-based approach not only offers students opportunities to practice but also a sense of success, which keeps learners motivated. Furthermore, alternative assessment allows learners to use their strengths to demonstrate their understanding. These cornerstones of my teaching philosophy guide my lesson planning and materials design.
CLASS OBSERVATION
I observed a second-grade Chinese Dual Language Immersion (DLI) class in Northern Utah. Utah’s Chinese DLI program is an academic program that requires students to speak only the target language in the classroom as they learn school subjects such as math and science. I observed 50 minutes of a Chinese class. There were 28 students in the classroom. The main focus of the lesson was to read the book 不要玩雪 (Don’t play with snow) together. It is a thin book with a short story and a character list at the end. Each page contained an image and a sentence. The story of this 12-page book is about two children playing in the snow and bringing snow into the house. Their mother is not happy with snow inside the house, so she asks them not to play with snow outside the house. Important phrases in this book include 里面/外面/雪/为什么 (inside/outside/snow/why). The main content of this lesson is to go through the book together, with the teacher clarifying the words and sentences where needed, reinforcing the important phrases, and making sentences with 为什么 (why). Thus, the teacher helps students understand the content of the text through explanation, and strengthens the practice of key words in the textbook. Students should be able to show their understanding of key words 里面/外面 (inside/outside) by finger-pointing the direction and using 为什么 (why) to ask a question.
**Instructional Procedure**

The first thing that struck me was the seating arrangement. There were four rows on the left and right of the classroom, each row had four students, and the four students in the same row formed a group with, eight groups in total. The teacher gave encouragement based on the students' group performance, mainly classroom performance (whether students followed the rules, whether students completed the tasks assigned by the teacher, etc.). In addition, the setting of the classroom also provided opportunities for students to learn. The teacher had put Chinese signs on the equipment around the classroom, such as whiteboards, pencil sharpeners, clocks, etc., so that students could learn the Chinese names of these items.

In the Chinese class, the teacher led the students to read aloud the book (Don’t play with snow). The teacher and the students read the text together at the same time, while the teacher walked among the students to ensure that they were keeping up and participating. When the teacher read some important sentence patterns, he paused and gave the students more example sentences, so that the students could organize the same sentences according to this sentence pattern. A very important sentence pattern in this class was the use of *why* to organize a question, so the teacher asked the students to ask him *why*. About 7-8 students used the *why* sentence pattern to ask the teacher questions, and the teacher answered the questions one by one. This was followed by handwriting practice of some important words in the textbook. The teacher asked the students to raise their hands and use their fingers to write
in the air and follow the correct stroke order he showed. After this whole-class practice, the students practiced writing on their own small white board once.

Switching up the pace and as a transition to the next storybook, the teacher then conducted a game in which he randomly named items in the classroom and asked the students to point to the location of the item or the item itself. To participate, students must know the Chinese names of the objects in the classroom and the configuration of the objects in the classroom. In the beginning, the teacher took the initiative to say the name of the item and let the students point to the location of the item. Later, it was led by the students, and one of the students was asked to name the item and other students had to point to the location of the item. This activity was not related to the content of the book the teacher was teaching but it is a transition between the textbook and the next storybook.

After the game, the teacher quickly led all the students to read a storybook together. This storybook was about time and the concept of time. The teacher projected the content of the textbook on the screen and pointed to the text on it, leading the students to read it together. Before the class ended, the teacher gave out awards to the group that he felt was the best performer in today's class. He placed a symbolic trophy and stickers on the students' desks as a reward.
Evaluation

I saw how this DLI teacher provides students with the opportunity to learn in the target language and encourages students to use the target language to the greatest extent possible. I noticed that students are very accustomed to using Chinese in their daily life, their affective filter is relatively low, they seem unafraid of making mistakes, and they appear comfortable speaking Chinese in front of their peers.

I think this teacher's strength is that he demonstrates strong classroom management skills, which is important for this age group. In addition, he used the target language exclusively, so that students can develop confidence in learning Chinese.

Reflection

I learned a lot from this class observation. The first is the importance of classroom management, which is very important with young learners in a DLI class. Effective classroom management not only provides students with a good learning environment, but also cultivates students' learning ability (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). In this class, I saw the teacher’s technique of refocusing the students' attention. When he found that the students were not paying attention, he would say “eyes, eyes”. All students must say “look at the teacher.” After this little reminder, students immediately focus on the teacher, and through class reminders, the inattentive students can also realize what they should do now. Besides, what I like the most is that the teacher evaluated students' abilities in different ways in the
classroom. For example, in the point-out activity, students can point out objects in the classroom with their fingers, so that the teacher can test the cognitive ability of the students without necessarily asking the students to speak. Demir, Tananis and Trahan (2019) demonstrate that multiple formative assessments can improve students' confidence and stimulate their creativity. Although it was a very simple activity, it allowed students to perform at their best without stress.

In addition, I also noticed the teacher's attention to Chinese writing ability. For young students and beginners, Chinese writing is a big challenge (Knell & West, 2017). The teacher modeled how to write the characters stroke-by-stroke, and asked the students to write in accordance with the stroke order. Shen (2013) states that providing language knowledge can help students learning Chinese writing and deepen students’ memory. I observed that the students, under the guidance of the teacher, first wrote in the air with their fingers, in preparation for writing Chinese characters when they practiced by themselves.

What is also eye-catching is that in the DLI environment, students have a lot more opportunities to communicate in the target language. Whether it is classroom content (Chinese and mathematics) or life content (recess, bathroom, and lunch time), there are many opportunities to communicate with peers and teachers. Demirezen (2011) mentions that the communicative approach emphasizes the ability of language to communicate rather than the use of correct forms. In the context of DLI, students can be observed to work very hard to
communicate using their language knowledge and body movements. For example, a student did not know how to say *marker* in Chinese, but he said, "You can write, here (pointing to the whiteboard)." In such an environment, students are not afraid to make mistakes, and through semantic negotiation, they can understand each other. However, this example shows a weakness of the DLI environment as well. Toro et al. (2018) mention that we cannot expect students to learn a language only through communication, the teacher also has to monitor the output of students and offer corrective feedback. Sung (2022) observed Chinese DLI students and noticed that students’ output does not exhibit much improvement over time. Sung suggests that DLI teachers should focus more on teaching special Chinese grammar features to reduce the students’ use of inaccurate forms, such as classifiers, in Chinese. Therefore, when I teach in the future, I not only need to use the communicative approach to encourage students to speak but also need to pay attention to the output of students and develop appropriate strategies for offering corrective feedback.

In conclusion, this class observation allowed me to learn that different environments have different teaching methods for different ages. It made me realize that teaching should be adjusted according to the needs and learning styles of students.
Introduction

Examining a lesson plan and a video of my teaching allowed me an opportunity to demonstrate what I have learned in the MSLT program. I chose this topic because I was eager to see how I would apply what I had learned to real-world teaching. While I was studying in the MSLT program, of course, I learned a lot about second language acquisition, however, I've always wondered how can use this knowledge to help me become a better teacher.

Before writing this report, I was not very fond of writing lesson plans, because I thought that preparing for the course was already very tiring. I viewed writing a lesson plan as an additional burden. Also, I do not really like watching my own teaching videos, because it makes me lose confidence and judge myself as unqualified to be a teacher.

However, when I actually wrote out this lesson plan in detail, I understood how it could be really helpful to me. Not only can I use the lesson plan to remind myself to target all communication modes, including interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational, but I can also better understand my course structure and time management through the lesson plan. In addition, after the lesson, I can look back at my plan to check whether I am doing well and whether I have implemented it as I meant to.

Furthermore, teaching videos have also provided a lot of help. When I watch my own videos, I can see my teaching from another angle. I notice a lot of things I couldn't see in the classroom as I was teaching, including some gestures, tone of voice, or distance from
students. The video provides a record to analyze. As I watched my video, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of which activities were executed successfully and which were not.

From designing a lesson plan to analyzing my teaching video was a complete process. I have carefully inspected my classroom and analyzed my own teaching with the existing literature, which can better combine methodologies and practice. I learned a lot from this exercise, including how to turn knowledge into power that can help me. Many times, I know certain principles and learn certain techniques, but I do not know how difficult it is to carry out. After this complete experience, I learned how to translate textbook learning into practical action. What I also learned is how to use my own failures as opportunities to get better. In the process of analysis, I found a lot of my own inadequacies; however, I learned that imperfection is not the end of the world, I still have the opportunity to analyze my behavior and use my knowledge to develop better teaching practices.

In my future teaching, I will continue to use this method to become a better teacher. I believe professional development can be pursued on an ongoing basis as I remain informed of new knowledge and constantly reflect on my own teaching.

**Brief Introduction of the Class**

This is a first-semester, college-level Chinese course that meets three days a week for 50 minutes each day. At the time of this recording, students had been in class for about 6 weeks.
Their level is Novice-Low. This lesson is based on the textbook of the course: Chinese Odyssey (2007) Vol.1, lesson five, 你做什麼工作？(What do you do for work?) Besides the textbook, there was a storybook to be used in the lesson, which is a picture book written by Quentin Gréban: 我的興趣可以成為我的工作 (My interest can be my job). This storybook was found on a Chinese website; it is an authentic text because it was written for L1 users, not for L2 learners. The lesson plan is shown in schematic form below.

The Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Level</th>
<th>Chinese 1010 Novice</th>
<th>Class time</th>
<th>50 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers of students</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Class material</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>What is your job?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Interpersonal: Students will be able to exchange information about their job and other people’s family members’ jobs. Interpretive: Students will be able to identify the occupation in Chinese with visual or other information support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| time | activity | mode |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Focus Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>Warm up I</td>
<td>• Interpretive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (3min)| The teacher will lead a review of the pre-class worksheets so that students can learn how to say the names of various occupations in Chinese.  
This worksheet was used for practice in one class before I record. Students need to find out which occupation can match the picture then fill in the number in the grey circle.  
The resource online which can provide pronunciation was also provided for them to support students.  
The teacher will lead the students to check their answers, and will go through each one of the occupations on the worksheet. | • Whole class |
| 3-5   | Warm up II                     | • Interpersonal    |
| (2 min)| After the teacher checks the answers, students will practice in groups of three, they will look through the pictures and practice how to say the Chinese word for various occupations. | • Group |
| 5-15  | Present a story                | • Interpretive     |
| (10min) | Take a look at a picture book together in which puppies are thinking about what jobs they want to do in the future, based on their interests and what they like to do. At this stage, the teacher will not let the students see the text content, only pictures and discussions, and the teacher will keep repeating the target sentence pattern of this lesson: what work does he do. Students can infer the content of the story based on the context of the book. Because students have the worksheet with information they need, they are able to respond in Chinese to the teacher’s questions. |
| 15-22 | Attention |
| (7min) | Based on the content of the story, ask questions to grab the students' attention. The teacher will ask questions at this stage: What kind of work do you want to do? At this time, the teacher will provide three options to fill in the blank (我想要做____的工作), including: a lot of money (很多錢), I like it (我喜歡), not busy (不忙), | • Whole class  
• Interpretive, interpersonal  
• Whole class, group |
therefore the sentence would be I want to do a not busy job （我想要做不忙的工作）. After introducing such options, have students discuss their options in groups. After three minutes of discussion, the teacher will reconvene the class and randomly select one student from each group to present their thoughts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>22-27 (5min)</th>
<th>Co-construct</th>
<th>● Interpretive, interpersonal ● Whole class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First, the teacher will draw attention to the structure which is “what do you want to do for your job?” and demonstrate how it is used. Then, teacher and students practice this pattern with different occupations they have learned.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>27-30 (3min)</th>
<th>Game-step 1: explanation</th>
<th>● Interpretive ● Whole class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher will give each student a personal information card with their job, their father's job, their mother's job, and how many people in their family. At this stage, students will get their own information and have to read their own information. The teacher will confirm that each student has a good understanding of their own information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After students understand their personal information, the teacher will give them a form with the names of other students but with other information blank. Students must find the corresponding student and fill in the correct information.

This game is a type of murder mystery. Students will need to collect information from their classmates and use it to find the murderer among them. The purpose of the game is to create an opportunity to have meaningful practice focused on occupations, and make students work together using Chinese as a tool to communicate to each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-32</td>
<td><strong>Game-step2: Practice Sentence Patterns: What is your job?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2min)</td>
<td>At this stage, students will need to find two other classmates on their list and ask about their occupation. After getting their answers, students will write their answers on the worksheet.</td>
<td>● Interpersonal</td>
<td>● Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-37</td>
<td><strong>Game-step2: Practice Sentence Patterns: What is your father/mother’s job?</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(5min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Interpersonal</td>
<td>● Individual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
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<tr>
<td>37-40</td>
<td><strong>Game-step2: Practice Sentence Patterns:</strong> How many people are there in your family?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At this stage, students will practice asking how many people there are in each other's family. Students have learned this sentence pattern before, so it is used as a review here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-48</td>
<td><strong>Game-step3: Catch the bad guys.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher will divide the students into groups of three, and each student already has the information of the other two students. Between groups they will share information and follow clues to catch criminals.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each group can ask a question, ask the person's job, father/mother's job, how many people in the family, and guess who the murderer is based on the clues at hand.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Groups with correct answers are awarded points.</td>
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<tr>
<td>48-50</td>
<td><strong>Ending</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
As the class is about to end, the teacher will remind the students of the exams that students need to prepare for and the assignments they need to hand in at the next class time, confirm whether the students have any questions, and then class is dismissed.

Video Content

My co-teacher and I take turns being the lead teacher of this co-taught course, switching between lead role and support role every two weeks. On the day of the recording, I was the lead teacher, eight students were present, one student was absent and the co-teacher served as assistant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00-4:49</td>
<td>Using the worksheet for review, we went through every occupation together. I asked them what job is this (point to the picture) and they answered me with Chinese and numbers. They have to fill the number in the blank.</td>
<td>This was the homework that I assigned on Friday. I was thinking they will bring the worksheets all-done and then we can practice in class but actually not all the students did their homework and one student was absent the previous class. Therefore, in order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for everyone to catch up together, I went through every occupation on the worksheet. Only a few students answered me because they had done the homework; the other students were trying to catch up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:50-</td>
<td>Students practiced in groups. I asked them to check if everyone has the correct answer and then they can read to others.</td>
<td>Some students did not know what to do. I didn’t ask them to read through everyone, which I should have done.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:28</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:29-</td>
<td>Story: What do you do for work? I asked one student to read the title and asked the whole class what does that mean. Then I started to use the picture to help me tell the story. The story is about the dogs and what they want to do for their work. We</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:32</td>
<td>In the story I tried to use simplified language to make it easier to understand but some of my expressions were not correct in Chinese. For example, they learned the measure word 個(个) for common things; however, with dog we use 隻(只) as a measure word, but I used the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:33-14:35</td>
<td>The discussion of the story.</td>
<td>In this section I sat with students and listened to their answers and I made sure everyone had a chance to practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:35-16:26</td>
<td>Practice the sentence structure.</td>
<td>I only had a few examples. In this section, I should have had more examples to create more opportunities for students to practice the sentence structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:27-18:38</td>
<td>Read the ID card.</td>
<td>Although it was a small card, it still had a lot of information. It was also important in this game that everyone knew their personal information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:38</td>
<td>I gave them the card with some information and asked students to read the information, making sure they all understood the information they have.</td>
<td>I focused on one of the students because he seemed behind so I tried to help him understand what was going on and what he should know on the card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:39-21:50</td>
<td>I gave students a worksheet (See appendix A) and asked them to fill in the information based on their own card.</td>
<td>Students were slow to handwrite, so it took more time than I expected.</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:51-</td>
<td>The other information that students needed to complete the worksheet is from two classmates. Therefore, I asked them to find two classmates and ask for their information. (Their jobs, parents’ jobs, number of people in their family.) Students kept asking each other questions, sometimes they clarified the meanings using English but they practiced Chinese a lot and negotiated meaning together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32:48</td>
<td>I noticed there were two students who exchanged their worksheet and wrote down their information but that wasn’t the purpose of the activity so I told them to ask each other and write down the information by themselves. I also noticed some students struggling with the last question: how many people are there in your family. This question is not the sentence pattern of this lesson. Although they had learned it before, it was very burdensome for students who had difficulty remembering this sentence pattern. Next time I will consider listing this sentence in the objectives or reviewing the sentence before using it in the activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32:49-38:52</td>
<td>I refocused the students' attention and explained how the next game was going to be played. I reviewed the occupations that occurred in the game and I divided the students into new groups of three. In this game they had to share messages together. They had to ask me for the information so that they can find the murderer, who is one of their classmates.</td>
<td>Although the teamwork between the students was not as strong as I had hoped, they asked questions in Chinese very well, and they said it naturally: He is a doctor, and I am also a doctor. I think the last game ran a bit short, because I only had two murderers for students to find out, so the students who took the opportunity to ask questions were also the students who talk most often in the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38:53</td>
<td>About ten minutes before the end of class, I reminded the students of the homework they should turn in for the next class. At the end, the whole class previewed the oral quiz of lesson 5 of</td>
<td>In the part of reviewing the oral quiz, I was explaining it, and I was leading the practice. I think it would have been better for students to practice with each other.</td>
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</table>
the next class together before I
dischossed class.

Analysis

When I was designing the lesson plan, I thought about my teaching philosophy and the objectives of the lesson. My focus in this class was that students would be able to ask and answer questions about their job, that is, what do you do for work? (你做什么工作？) I looked back at a lesson plan that I had designed previously and I found a great model for practicing sentence structure, which is the PACE model (Adair-Hauck, & Donato, 2002; Aniuranti et. al, 2022; Shrum & Glisan, 2016). The PACE model is a story-based approach, especially used for sentence structure and form.

The first step in PACE is present: in this stage, the teacher presents a story and associates the story with the meaning and the sentence (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). Therefore, at the beginning of the lesson, I presented a storybook and we went through the story together. At this stage, I didn’t let students see the written scripts, but I tried to simplify language and kept asking the same question: What does he do for work? My purpose in this stage was to deepen students’ impression, awaken their awareness about this sentence structure, and connect the form with meaning.

In the PACE model (Shrum & Glisan, 2016), step two is attention. The teacher asks a question to draw students’ attention and makes students focus on dialogic inquiry. The
Attention phase can be achieved in different ways, including asking students directly: Did you notice that some sentence structure showed up many times in the story? However, in this stage, I asked students a question to combine their personal opinion with the story, I asked them what do you want to do for work (你想做什麼工作？). I wanted to ask questions related to their experience so they are more likely to have a positive attitude and have deeper engagement (Eyler, 2018). Although this question can increase students’ interest and attention in the story, the question didn’t bring the structure into the students’ consciousness; moreover, it contains another word that might be a burden to students, which is the new word ‘want’ (想). Based on cognitive load theory (Roussel et. al, 2017; Sweller, 2016a, 2016b, 2020), biologically speaking, the capacity of working memory is quite limited when humans process new information. Therefore, teachers should reduce the amount of new information to improve students' long-term memory of knowledge. In this stage, I provided more help to promote students’ understanding including images and Pinyin, so students didn’t struggle too much but in retrospect I believe it was not a good question in this sequence. I can simply ask what do you do for your job instead.

Step three is co-construct, in this stage the teacher should explain the grammar by asking well-chosen, clear, and direct questions (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). Teachers can also check students’ comprehension by asking them to produce language (speaking or writing). I didn’t specify the grammar because it is an easy sentence structure. I demonstrated different
situations and how to ask for other people’s work in this sentence. I know that sufficient opportunities for output are a necessary component of language learning (Swain, 2005; VanPatten & Williams, 2020), but I only had four examples in this stage, therefore not every student had a chance to practice. It was also hard for me to make sure all students understood this structure and how to use it.

The last step of the PACE model is extension activities. Such activities provide students the opportunity to actually use the sentence they just learned in creative and interesting ways (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). I designed a game that combined information-gap and role-play. Hamari et. al (2016) state that engaging in a game can have a positive effect on learning. Because the students are beginners, I broke up the activity into smaller activities so that students could follow step by step and I could offer more scaffolding to support students.

The first step of the activity involved students becoming familiar with their own role. I gave an ID card to each student and asked them write down their own information on worksheets. This stage required student’s reading comprehension and writing skill. The next stage is the information-gap, which meant that the information each student needed was known by the other student, namely the character description on their ID card. Students needed to communicate with each other to get the information. The communicative approach emphasizes negotiation of meaning and genuine communication as part of students’ efforts in solving problems (Thamrana, 2014). This is why an information gap activity is commonly
found in the communicative approach, which improves students’ oral fluency (Ortiz-Neira, 2019). Thus, students had sufficient practice in this stage, according to the output hypothesis (Swain, 2005), and while students were producing language, I checked their comprehension and at the same time I supported students who needed help.

However, the last question in the worksheet, which asked “how many people are there in your family?” caused undue confusion on the part of students. Neither was this question the content in this class, nor did I offer enough support, thus causing a burden to the students. I included this question in the activity because I thought students would remember this sentence we taught in a previous class and I wanted to use it for review. Again, studies suggest (Sweller, 2016a, 2020; Roussel et al., 2017) that when teaching a new concept, it is better to teach one thing at a time. Therefore, if I wanted to use this sentence in the activity, I should have mentioned this sentence earlier or provided sufficient support for students, or used only the content from this lesson instead.

The last stage of the activity was a game: find the murderer. In this game, every student needed to use the clue they had collected to find the murderer. However, each student only had three pieces of clue so they had to share their information as a group in order to find the murderer, moreover, they had to ask questions to obtain the hint they wanted. This game turned students into their roles and immersed them in the mission of finding the murderer.

Neville, Shelton, and McInnis (2009) report that when students focus on role-playing, their
emotional engagement can promote positive effects on their memories of the content. A game-based approach not only improves emotion and memories but also promotes positive attitudes toward students. When students knew the murderer was among them, they were excited to find out who was the murderer, and they started to speak Chinese naturally and use the sentence in an authentic environment. For example, there was a student who said “我爸爸是醫生，你爸爸也是醫生” (My dad is a doctor, your dad is also a doctor.) He spoke fluently and naturally while focusing on finding the murderer; he was able to offer the information without any prompt, and Chinese served as a tool to communicate at that moment.

**Holistic Reflection**

I really enjoyed planning this lesson plan and assessing myself, because I was able to use my teaching philosophy for both. I also enjoyed playing games with students, as I could feel they were energized and motivated. However, because this is a novice level Chinese class, students need more scaffolding to support them, which required lengthy lesson preparation on my part. Not only the ID card, but also the worksheet needed to be different for each student. I only have nine students in this class but if I had more than 20 students, the preparation would be burdensome. Moreover, this game needed a specific number of students to participate otherwise we would have had uneven numbers of people in each team. As
many things about a day in the classroom are unpredictable, I should have activities that can
easily be adapted for the number of students present.

My last challenge was time management. I overestimated the time needed for several
components of the lesson. I am glad that I over-prepared just in case I went through
everything too fast. I have learned from this experience that a teacher can never prepare
enough for a lesson. Therefore, after this lesson, I always prepare one or two activities to
keep in my pocket, that way I can use class time more efficiently and reduce the influence of
things that don’t go according to my expectation.

**How will I face the challenge in the future**

I think using a lot of pictures or stories is very helpful for beginner students. Through
my observation in the classroom, I found that these pictures can effectively improve students'
understanding of the text.

Another helpful technique is to break up a large activity into many smaller steps. I
consulted with my advisor before designing the lesson plan, and she reminded me to pay
attention to the difficulty and complexity of activities in a low level of language proficiency
class. It would be easier for students if one activity is divided into many smaller ones. One by
one, the small activities are linked together to form a big activity, which can reduce students'
learning anxiety and at the same time encourage them to complete. I split my activity into
several small tasks for students and it worked well. Students even didn’t acknowledge how
complicated the activity was, they accomplished with me step by step. I was worried that implementing a complex activity might be difficult in a low-proficiency class, however, breaking up the activity into smaller steps helped a lot.

I believe the finding murderer game worked well because students enjoyed the atmosphere of playing a game. I also noticed that when students found that the murderer was among them, they were more engaged in the activity. Using what they have learned in the class to communicate was one of my main goals of this lesson. I was glad to see students could actually use Chinese in the game.

These are the techniques that I think went well in this teaching, and I will continue to use them to help me design my courses in the future. I will now turn to the things I want to change in the future and what I have learned to make my teaching better.

The first thing I want to change is to add more practice for students to have enough opportunities to practice. As I mentioned before, I didn’t have enough practice for every student in the class so I was unable to detect students’ comprehension. Even though the sentence we practiced was easy, for the proficiency level of my students, the more practice they can have in class, the better. When I design a practice, I can create a situation or an authentic environment for students to practice, for example, asking students to bring their family picture and introduce their family members and their jobs.
The other things I will change is the design of the game, which could work only for nine people. However, with attendance being unpredictable, a class activity should be designed for a flexible number of students. Next time if I am going to use this game again, I will design two versions, one for an odd number of students, the other for an even number of students. In this way no matter how many students show up, the activity is still feasible. I also noticed that when we played the last game the cooperation in groups was less than I expected. Next time I can add a point system to encourage students to work as a group and make the game more competitive.

The next thing I will change is to have a plan B, it is very important for a teacher to be able to improvise. Although we cannot predict everything in the class, we can still prepare for it. Having an alternative plan or another activity in a file can help the teacher make maximum use of class time.

The other thing I have learned through this self-assessment is the gradual release of responsibility, also known as *I do, we do, you do*. It was first mentioned in Pearson and Gallagher (1983), and refers to an instructional practice that offers students sufficient scaffolding during the class by the teacher demonstrating first, and then students practice as a group, and finally the students have the ability to do it individually. Brandl (2008) mentions that the teacher demonstrates first is the input phase and then the assimilation phase is the teacher and the students work together, finally, the application and extension phase allow
students to work without teacher’s support. When I plan lessons in the future, I will use this technique to transfer the responsibility smoothly and lower the load for students.

In conclusion, I have learned a lot from this experience and I will devote myself to continue learning from literature and my own teaching.
STATEMENT OF FUTURE GOALS AND PLANS

I enrolled in the MSLT program because I felt inadequate and was looking for different ways of teaching that suited different students. I got a lot of help and inspiration during my time in the program. In addition to the courses, I learned from my instructors, my peers, and my students when I was a graduate instructor. However, I don't want to stop my learning here, I still want to continue learning more skills in my future.

There is a saying in Chinese: Learning is like rowing a boat against the current, if you don’t advance, you will retreat. This means that if you don't keep learning, you're going backwards. Especially in modern times, there are many new technologies that are introduced every day, and new discoveries about teaching and learning are reported every day. Therefore, I hope that in my future, I can learn from the perspective of a teacher and gain more experience. I look forward to being able to use what I learned in MSLT program in my own classroom. In addition, I also hope that these experiences will become a good foundation for me in the future, allowing me to create more learning materials, such as online self-study resources, course games, and so on.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A

The worksheet for interview activity

This worksheet was used in class. I divided them to groups so the worksheet has their names on it. The color differences are for the second group work (for example, blue team or green team).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>姓名</th>
<th>工作</th>
<th>爸爸的工作</th>
<th>媽媽的工作</th>
<th>家有几個人</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>灵广莲</td>
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<tr>
<td>沈莉莉</td>
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<td>马宇胜</td>
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