

天主教輔仁大學英國語文學系學士班畢業成果  
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**Reflection on the 2022 Tai-Ping Project**

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## Will's Reflection on the 2022 Tai-Ping Project

### Background Information

As someone who was born and raised in Taitung, the lack of educational resources has always been the stumbling rock throughout my learning journey as both teachers and students at schools have very uneven proficiency levels. Only those whose families could afford their children to attend extracurricular English classes or study in private schools since their childhoods were capable of competing with students from cities. Fortunately, more and more service-learning projects have been conducted by higher education over the past decade with 98 universities in Taiwan integrating SL into their curriculums, which bridges the gap between rural and urban areas to a certain extent (Liu 28). Besides, in light of the government's implementation of Bilingual 2030 which aims to increase national competitiveness and cultivate bilingual talents, it is particularly important for both learners and educators to develop and benefit from SL projects. (Everington). Fu Jen Catholic University has recognized this issue and pioneered rural education by setting up projects which provide schools in remote areas with college students specializing in English language teaching. This semester, I was delighted to participate in one of the tutoring projects in the course of 2022 Spring TESOL and Cross-Cultural Communication to teach students at Tai-ping Elementary School based in faraway

Hualien. I partnered with Terry Zhuang to teach two five-grade pupils, Hank and Shawn throughout the semester. Hank was actually our student last year when we first took this course and used to be very shy; however, this time we met him, he turned into a totally different person, becoming talkative and outgoing. In contrast, Shawn is comparatively short-spoken and he remains silent most of the time during the courses, just as Hank did last year.

### **Lesson Design**

Before the first online meet-ups, Terry and I would like to focus on the public occasions nearby Tai-pin Elementary School that the pupils may visit every day, such as the grocery store and police office, and ask them to take us around the community by using Google Map and introduced their experiences of visiting those places in English. However, it turned out that we could hardly expand on the topic and students could only learn limited words. Hence, we simply had chit-chat together rather than started our courses during the first online meet-ups in order to know the student's interests and English proficiency which would decide how we were going to design our courses. Surprisingly, even though their personalities are quite distinct, they share similar interests. Both of them love playing basketball. Besides, their English levels are all very basic. They can only spell the letters and recognize a few words. After a

few days of consideration, we finally decided to teach sports and created three teaching materials (chapters) in total.

The first chapter is about the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. We brought up the history of the Olympic games at the opening of the courses, including how the International Olympic Committee functions and how Tokyo became the host city. In the second chapter, we selected the sports that are commonly seen in pupils' daily life or on television, such as table tennis, badminton, and weightlifting. Besides, we also introduced some national champions who engaged in the games last year and their remarkable achievements to strengthen the pupils' memories. The final chapter is about basketball, which I consider the most challenging since it includes lots of terms. We listed out the five positions in basketball and elaborated on each of their responsibilities. A shooting guard, for example, is in charge of scoring points for the team and small forwards are responsible for stealing the ball on defense. Apart from the three chapters pertaining to sports, we also spent some slides introducing Ed Sheeran's song "Shape of You," since the pupils often suffered from fatigue caused by food coma after lunch, and the song session could be refreshing and informative at the same time. We interpreted each line of the lyrics and marked down some simple vocabulary and phrases for the pupils to recognize.

It is also worth mentioning that we tend to use as many images or videos as we can and prevent the pages from being covered by a mass of words. If there are some takeaway points like word usage and grammar that the students should pay attention to, we would help the pupils to tidy up the notes and send them to the chat box in case they wanted to review them after class. Besides, Terry and I would take turns giving the lectures. While one of us was teaching, the other one would monitor the student's performance and deal with the technological problems, so that the course could proceed smoothly and we could report any possible contingencies to our teaching assistant right away. As for the evaluation, it was a shame that we only had a pop-up quiz once since we did not expect the project would end so quickly. We simply let our students play KAHOOT in which there are blanks within sentences for them to fill in the correct vocabulary.

### **Connection to 4C**

While coming up with the teaching models and materials, we not only tried very hard to make our courses intriguing but also comprehensive by applying 4C to each lesson. For content, we chose the topics that suit the pupils' interests and life experiences; for communication, we taught basic sentences and words that are commonly used in their daily conversations and provided different scenarios to let the pupils know how they are going to use them in reality; for cognition, we put

vocabulary that belongs to the same nature together, so that pupils could easily perceive the distinction between each category, and for culture, we connected sports with the Olympics and NBA which often involve cultures of other countries. For instance, we played a trailer for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics where students could see many Japanese elements in it, such as an arcade, animation, and capsule machine.

### **Reflection**

Many people may think that service learning is unilateral. Only the recipient of help can benefit from the process, therefore presuming that the tutors are forced to participate for certain reasons. However, Eppler and colleagues argued that service-learning students are more likely to believe that service provides them with new perspectives, increasing self-esteem and competencies to resolve problems (106).

After the 7-week online tutoring project, I find myself having some potential for teaching others. Even though I still have a long way to go compared to those professional educators, at least I fulfilled my roles and duties as a teacher. Teaching students who are much younger requires extraordinary patience and communication skills since they are not good at expressing their thoughts. Therefore, it is inevitable that teachers need to put themselves into students' shoes from time to time. By doing so, we must come up with various questions in order to induce pupils to talk to us. For instance, at the beginning of the course, we had a difficult time communicating with

Shawn and got quite frustrated. We tried not to attribute this problem to his personality but to rethink if there were some external factors that held him back from speaking out. We presumed that Shawn might feel isolated when seeing Hank being so active in the class and receiving more positive responses from the teachers since he had already been acquainted with us. Therefore, after perceiving this problem, Terry and I made some adjustments to our interactions with the pupils by frequently asking Shawn questions, whether they're related to the courses or not, just to let him feel more involved in the courses and drop his guard. Fortunately, it worked out so well that Shawn became more willing to talk to us and pay attention to the courses. The fly in the ointment was that we wrapped up our courses hastily without having students do some pop quizzes or presentations to evaluate their learning outcomes throughout the semester. Hence, it would be better for those who participate in this project in the future to double-check the syllabus beforehand and include an evaluation session at the end of every chapter, so that students are able to review and organize their ideas. Overall, I think both Terry and I were competent at teaching and we will always cherish this memory.

## Works Cited

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