

Recent Reflections on Designing Content-Based Courses in Chinese Language Program

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Introduction:

In North American universities, language programs aim to build students' communications skills and their ability to understand and interact with culture differently. For example, in content-based language courses, students are expected to gain a deeper awareness of the world of many intercultural communities. The ultimate learning outcomes of such a content-based course would include helping students become a responsible citizen in such a world. As a result, in order to make students' language learning meaningful, one needs to consider many factors, among which are diversity of students' needs and inclusiveness of students' perspectives. These can be very specific embodiments of the university's goal to respect and cultivate diversity and inclusiveness in education.

In recent years, institutional awareness of the need to add diversity and inclusiveness in language courses is evidently growing. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for many language programs. In this presentation, I will discuss how it has led to significant pedagogical transformations in content-based courses. In particular, how it has an impact on instructor's selection of course readings and how students are encouraged to shape their learning with new approaches to these readings. I will also address the alignment of course assessments with the newly added learning outcomes. In the latter case, transparency in teaching and learning (TITL) will be introduced as a major pedagogical strategy to design and deliver content-based courses. In summary, by renovation of course contents, reconstruction of course learning outcomes, and reinvention of course assessments, we aim to provide university students a diverse and inclusive learning experience that can construct their globalized view of the world and that can nurture them into open-minded and responsible world citizens.

Key words:

future teaching modes and content, diversity and inclusiveness in course design, transparency in teaching and learning.