The 4th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Service-Learning

“Service-Learning as a Bridge from Local to Global: Connected World, Connected Future”
An Intergenerational Strategy for Promoting Successful Aging and ESL Skills

Dr. Alan Lai
Assistant Professor
United International College
Issues
Lo & Clarke (2010, p. 148) criticize Hong Kong ESL education to be adopting a “reductionist approach to literacy [that] does not address the need for preparing students and teachers to critically engage with the proliferation of new texts and textual practices, and to use and create texts in socially responsible and socially responsive ways.”
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ESL Education in HK

- Motivation: Learning without a meaningless goal.
- Collaboration: Make speech without a collaborative partner.
- Guidance: Either lack of practice or practice without on-going guidance.
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Practice under guidance
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Next issue
20 years later
50% of Hong Kong population will be aged over 55 years old.
A fast-growing number of older adults looking for rewarding lifelong learning opportunities.
Two growing trends in HK
Older adults want to serve.
Younger adults need to learn.
ESL issues
To serve
To learn
ESL Issues
Three concerns to meet in three separate approaches?
A serving model?
A learning program?
An ESL program?
Or in one shot?
IG-ESL

An intergenerational approach to English as a second language education
IG-ESL

An intergenerational approach to English as a second language education
Why intergenerational?
A major ESL goal is to see how...

...to make real-life information become easily available in the English language learning environment for more effective literacy training. (Lai, 2011 & see van Lier, 2004)
Real-life contexts.
Made easily available in the environment.
Older adults
Older adults are like walking treasure of history & real-life experiences.
Older adults make history come alive
Older adults make personal history contexts easily available in the second language learning environment.
And not just that...
“Supportive relationships with caring adults in the school context also provide emotional sustenance and practical help and advice for newcomers…” (p. 88)
Guidance

To provide for the youth when they practice English as a second language
Guidance

To provide the youths when they practice English as a second language
IG-EESL Model
Under an intergenerational framework...
Research
By pairing older adults and university students, IG-ESL program could ...

- Provide an authentic learning platform for L2 practice.
- Offer professional development.
- Create voluntary civic engagement opportunities.
• A 12-week period.
• Six activities over 12 lessons.
A small group of *Third age* (55 years of age and older) members (proficient in English language) will:

1. receive professional development training on teaching ESL and
2. engage in activities tied to co-teaching.
A small group of college students who have completed basic ESL courses from university and want to further improve their English language skills.
Curriculum Design
(For older adults ----> professional development )
Professional Development for Older adults

Curriculum Design (For older adults)
- Worth to Know
- Linguistics Time
- Intergenerational Know-how
“Linguistic Time”: To entice attention to the academic field of applied linguistics or theories.
Throughout this program, all older adults are respectfully invited to be “the more capable peers” to provide guidance for our younger adult participants. You are more capable since you have experienced lifelike histories and you are a living proof who has successfully gone through many real-life challenges. In the Back to the Future activity, students need your guidance since they need to present your real-life story. When you present them your story, you are giving them guidance, inspiration, and encouragement. And when you correct their speech content and ask them to speak more, you are raising their speech ability to a higher level, and once they can present on their own, you will see an amazing thing happen – this thing is called development.

What else might you suggest to help them develop? For example, eye contact, body language, or simply ask them to close their eyes and visualize your story? Let’s talk about it together now.

Your idea here

Linguistic Time
What is ZPD?
Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) refers to “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” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).
Throughout this program, all older adult instructors are respectfully invited to "the more capable peers" to provide guidance for our younger adult participants. You are more capable since you have experienced lifelong challenges. In the Back to the Future activity, students need your guidance since they need to present your real-life story. When you present them your story, you are giving them guidance, inspiration and encouragement. And when you correct their speech content and ask them to speak more, you are raising their speech ability to a higher level, and once they can present on their own, you will see an amazing thing happen – this thing is called development.

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ESL Practicing for Younger Adults
Not just practice
We want it to be fun and “fun-raising”!
Curriculum Design

- Back to the Future
- Intergenerational Hunts
- Intergenerational Power [Press]
- Intergenerational Advert I: Scripts
- Intergenerational Advert II: Review
- Intergenerational Advert III: Promotion
For a real world purpose
Research team members will assess program based on:

- Pre- and post-tests including an IELTS-format test.
- Post-program interviews.
The research team will also use...
Video recording and after-class journals to track intergenerational-ESL patterns of discourse.
Program
27 Older adults
Recruited by
The Institute of Active Ageing, HKPU.

- 27 older adults who are proficient in English language and are willing to volunteer have applied.
- Since we have seven college students to join, seven older adults have been randomly chosen to enter this program.
Flyers
Our program brings in older adult volunteers to work with college students interested in gaining real-world English language practice. We are looking for students to help design, deliver, and participate in this unique course.

Contact:
Dr. Alan Lai
Assistant Professor
alaal@racetrlbht

Location:
Hong Kong

Please HELP!

English Language Development
Learn about successful aging
Serving while learning
Participate in a research project
Meaningful topics
Get inspired by real-life stories
Help make history come alive
Handout games and ...

F.N.U.
Guidebook
IG-ESL Program:
An Intergenerational Approach to Add Excitement to English Language Practicing

A Walkthrough Guidebook for Intergenerational-ESL Users

Alan Lai • Matt Kaplan

BNU/HKBU
United International College
Department of Applied Psychology

PENNSTATE
College of Agricultural Science
Small seed funds
HK$25,000
Partnerships
Penn State University

Professor Matt Kaplan

To provide expert-level consultation on programming and research.
Institute of Active Ageing (活齡學院)
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

To mobilize older adults proficient in English language.

Teresa Tsien
8 younger adults
• Two from Chinese University of HK.
• Three from BNU-HKBU United International College.
• Four from Hang Seng Management College.
IG-ESL Program
2013

Period: June to Sept 2013, every Friday 2 to 5 pm.


Venue: HK Poly U Room M106.