

Building Awareness of Pedagogical Discourse

According to the class on last Sunday with Ni, I gave her Quiz 2 from “Keys to Teaching Grammar to ELLs” by Folse. Ni got 6 out of 20, and she could not write the TOEFL essay up to 250 words in 30 minutes. From her pre-test results, I decided to teach her basic grammar and speaking about the real-life topics. Before I began to teach, I asked her permission to audio record during our tutoring session. Ni was very excited and told me that she wanted to get my comments about her studying after I finished my work on this task.

I think I talked about 60% of the time. When I taught grammar to Ni, I think I spoke a lot more than Ni because I had to explain grammar rules and provide examples to her. I think it should be better if I try to find more interactive activities for our next class to encourage her to participate and speak more. I tried to speak slowly when I went over the grammar concepts. I think Ni needed time to digest the information. However, sometimes I could not control myself. I talked fast, particularly when I gave examples and asked her questions. When Ni did not understand my questions, she asked me to repeat them again. From what I noticed, sometimes I did not change the way I asked her. I think I should make the questions easier for her to comprehend if she does not understand the questions in the first time.

I used display questions more than referential questions when I taught grammar. The examples of my questions were about “What is countable noun?”, “Could you give examples of non-count nouns?”, and “What is the plural form of *ox*?”. When Ni answered some questions in the exercise incorrectly, I explained to her why they were incorrect and what the correct answers were. However, in my opinion, my weakness is I did not check to make sure that Ni was really understand the concepts. I think I should find at least one question like what she answered incorrectly and let her do it again. When Ni answered my questions or did the practice drills correctly, I said “good” or “well done”. I think I should give her positive feedback in written form on her practice drills because I think it is meaningful for students. I will use this method in our next class.

During our practice in speaking, I think Ni spoke more than me because I kept asking her about her favorite movies, her hobbies and her best friends. I used referential questions while teaching speaking. The examples of my questions were about “What do you think about horror movies?”, “What is your favorite horror movie?”, and “Why do some people love to play extreme sports as their hobby?”. Ni enjoyed talking about these topics, so she tried to speak as much as she could. Ni even raised new topics about the main actors in the twilight saga movies. Sometimes Ni did not know the words used in some contexts, or Ni was not sure whether she expressed her ideas correctly. She asked me in Thai, but I answered her questions in English. If Ni still could not understand my questions, I wrote down the whole sentences for her. I think it is better for her to try her best to communicate with me in English. When she realized that I tried to

encourage her to speak English, she tried to avoid asking me in Thai. My weakness is I allowed too little time for Ni to response some questions. At that time, I did not aware that her vocabulary was limited, and she needed time to think before she answered my questions. Furthermore, I think I spoke too fast during our conversation practices. Therefore, Ni sometimes could not understand what I was talking or asking. When she did not understand my questions and asked me, I tried to use different and easy-to-understand words to help her to comprehend the messages.

For the whole time of this tutoring session, Ni and I had a good time together. We laughed and enjoyed our conversation about movies and hobbies. Thanks to this activity, I realize now what I should improve to teach Ni more effectively.