

LiLiu

Professor Mindi Reich-Shapiro

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ECE 411(1500): Intentional Teaching Project: Part A

The class I practiced is first grade, and there is enough space in the class for children to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Such as a word wall, library, and smart board. Through my observations, my cooperating teacher Ms. Asencio will read books and teach the children to learn 2 new vocabulary words from the books in each lesson, and let students understand the meaning of the new words through her explanations. At last, Ms. Asencio asked her students to make sentences with two new words, and asked them to draw a picture according to their own sentences. This kind of training not only pays attention to children's language development, but also improves their literacy ability.

Moreover, during the pandemic, all teachers and students must wear masks, which may make the conversation a bit challenging. However, under Ms. Asencio's reasonable arrangements and plans, the students are actively talking with all teachers. For example, when Ms. Asencio plays the story "Back to school: Rules" on the smart board, Ms. Asencio will explain the content of the story to the students one by one and ask questions according to the development of the story. The students will raise their hands patiently and wait for their teacher to call. The students who are called by Ms. Asencio will speak out their views aloud. Then, Ms. Asencio will respond and encourage according to the content of the students' answers. This not only supports the students' oral development, but also allows them to think about the questions raised by Ms. Asencio, complementing each other with different views and improving the answers to the questions.

On the other hand, when my cooperating teacher talked with the children, I observed that the cooperating teacher Ms. Asencio would guide the children to think, speak and write

through some questions. For example, after independently reading "Going to school", Ms. Asencio would ask students to think about "What is this book about?" Then, Ms. Asencio would collect the children's answers and write them on a big paper, and that is the key words. She gave opportunities to let children think, write complete sentences, and draw a picture for what they write. I can see that the key words really help students develop their writing skills. Some students just took one word for their sentences, some students would take three to five words to make a complete sentence. Moreover, two students would use the word "Also" to add more. Even though not all of the students used key words, they all made complete sentences. It makes me realize clearly that giving children opportunities to explore and choose can make them more interested in the course and have more motivation to learn.

Also, when children talk to each other, they might not use many vocabularies to talk like us. However, they would use simple words to express what they want to say. For example, if a child wants to express that she is taller than another, she may not understand how to express "taller," so she would say that "I am bigger than you." That might be a little incorrect, but this does not affect the children's understanding of each other's meaning. Moreover, I observed that when students did the test, some students were confused about a few words for written expression. Such as "greater," some students didn't understand this word because they usually would say "more" or "bigger." Therefore, children will use some simple words to communicate orally, which will not affect their understanding of the meaning.

Moreover, when children communicate with other children or teachers, they will have more oral communication and use body language and facial expressions to show their mood changes. However, when the children focus on their writing paper, they will think according to the teacher's instruction, and then write down the sentences they want to express quietly.

These sentences are usually complete. Although there are some mistakes in words, they do not affect the teacher's reading and the meaning the children want to express.

Through my observation, some children are very good at expressing, and will lead their classmates to join the conversation. Also, there are some quiet children, who usually observe and listen carefully to the communication of teachers or classmates. When these quiet children hear interesting things, they will show emotional changes, but they will not take the initiative to join. Therefore, Ms. Asencio will encourage these quiet children and let active children and quiet children talk together. Moreover, Ms. Asencio will give them the opportunity to express their ideas, and praise their efforts.

Moreover, because of the pandemic, all children need to keep a certain distance. Therefore, when the children learn new words, Ms. Asencio will give the children a certain amount of time to discuss new vocabulary, such as "turn and talk." Children will have conversations with other children sitting behind or around them to discuss new vocabulary. Then, Ms. Asencio will ask the children about the sentences they are talking about, help them improve the sentences, and give them affirmations, which will deepen the children's understanding of new words, guide them to add more in the sentences and make them more complete.

On the other hand, I observed Ms. Asencio's reading lesson, which relates to our class readings. For example, after reading aloud the book "Families sharing," Ms. Asencio would ask students, "What is this book about?" One student said, "Family!" Then, Ms. Asencio walked around and showed a book cover for students. At this time, another student raised his hand and said, "It's about families sharing." Ms. Asencio gave the student praise and guided students to understand the title of the book. She asked "Why is it important to read the title?" "Because it gave me information!" One student answered that, and Ms. Asencio gave him a positive response and continued to guide the students to think, "What do they share?" A lot of

students raised their hands and said their own thoughts, such as "Fun time," "Play time," "Food," and "Chores." Then, Ms. Asencio continued to guide the children to think, "Why do they share?" A student said, "Because they are family." Another said, "Because families need to take care of each other." Ms. Asencio responded positively to these answers, and she added, "They are sharing because they are getting together to get done." The supplement of Ms. Asencio helped students understand the meaning of sharing and deepened their understanding of sharing. This interactive reading aloud means teachers would stop to ask questions at the planned time point, aroused students' thinking, allowed them to learn to go deep into the text, listen to the opinions of others, and develop their own ideas.

Through this example of classroom talk, which relates to our class readings "The Continuum of Literacy Learning" by Fountas and Pinnell. The authors expressed the seven continuum of literacy learning, and one of them is interactive read-aloud. Because when children read interactively, they can make meaningful connections between their previous knowledge and their own life experiences. They also can complement each other, develop a backlog of shared meanings that increasingly deepens their talk, that support students thinking within, beyond, and about the text. Fountas and Pinnell write, "Readers make predictions and connections to previous knowledge and their own lives. They also make connections between and among texts. They bring background knowledge to the reading of a text, synthesize new information by incorporating it into their own understandings, and think about what the writer has not stated but implied" (12). Interactive reading aloud can support students to think about the article in interactive reading, and the teacher guides the students to discuss according to their own understanding of the article through questions. Give every student the opportunity to share their thoughts, reflect on the content of the text, and develop their own ideas. Therefore, I think Ms. Asencio's reading lesson is a good interpretation of the meaning of Fountas and Pinnell about interactive read-aloud.

Moreover, through my observation, children have enough opportunities to touch printed materials in the class. Ms. Asencios reading lesson will give each child the opportunity to touch books or printed materials, and conduct interactive reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. Also, I noticed that when children write sentences, they will make some spelling mistakes. For example, I go to skl. The correct spelling of "skl" in the sentence should be "school." Although the word is misspelled, it does not affect the teacher's reading and understanding of what the students want to express. Therefore, Ms. Asencio explained to me that "Students maybe didn't know how to write the word 'school,' but it's ok! Our goal is to let students develop writing skills, not to make them feel that they have done something wrong, or make them feel that they are a loser. So, I will tell the children, if they find any words that they can't write, sound it, and try to write down. Because trying is a good way that can support students to explore and stimulate their interest in writing." I really like Ms. Asencio's point of view. It is our goal to stimulate children's interest and motivation to learn, not to close the door of children's exploration, let them lose the courage, and motivation to explore the unknown.

In sum, through my observation and documenting the classroom environment of fieldwork placement, I learned a lot about strategies on how to support children's focusing on language and literacy practices. Also, connecting these strategies with the readings in our class helps me to understand the intentional teaching and the balanced literacy program more deeply. Through fieldwork, I can better combine these theoretical knowledge with practice, support students to explore, and stimulate their interest and motivation in learning. This allows teachers to clearly set learning goals for children and adopt strategies to help children achieve learning goals, so that they can make better progress. Therefore, fieldwork supports me and has a better understanding and practice of intentional teaching.

Works Cited

Gay Su Pinnell & Irene C. Fountas. "The Continuum of Literacy Learning," Grades PreK-2. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. 2008. <https://openlab.bmcc.cuny.edu/ece-411-early-childhood-practicum-fall-2021/wp-content/uploads/sites/1416/2021/01/Fountas-and-Pinnell-Introduction-to-Continuum-of-Learning-compressed.pdf>