



Promoting Literacy and Awareness of Humanities of University Students through Teaching Literary Texts in Interactive and High Adaptability Classrooms

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Abstract

The paper summarises and shares the inspirations from the author's collaboration with Yale University, the U.S., during a teaching-and-learning study visit concerning how the use of interactive and high adaptability classrooms in a university in Hong Kong (PolyU) can help promote university students' literacy and awareness of the humanities through literature texts. Since June 2015, a series of refitting and remodelling work has been done to selected classrooms in PolyU. All these modifications and upgrades have turned the renovated classrooms into a modern, vibrant and user-friendly teaching and learning environment, and their high adaptability significantly facilitates interaction and student-centred learning. Inspired by the university's classroom renovation programme and its endeavour to promote active learning, literature subjects, which are usually conducted in small classes, should allow even more flexibility for active teaching and learning activities. It seems to many that the teaching of literary texts inevitably involves a lot of passive transmission of knowledge. However, literature subjects, as a channel to enhance students' literacy and awareness of the humanities, can, and should be, taught in an interactive way. Students of various language levels will feel less anxious if they can discuss complex literary humanities issues in stress-free ways in interactive classrooms which prevent them from being the centre of attention with the advent of flexible classroom setting. Serious humanities topics which often concern social values and controversies can also be discussed in a relaxed way with the help of technology. In view of the above, the author conducted a 4-week on-site study visit funded by PolyU at Yale University in March-April 2019 to explore how experienced teachers in an internationally reputable institution used innovative pedagogy to maximise the functions of their technologically enhanced classrooms in literature teaching. Class observation, preparation for teaching materials, redeveloping lessons plans, to name but a few, were some of the activities which the author and her collaborators completed to achieve the said goals.

Keywords: *Active learning, literature teaching/learning, humanities, interactive classrooms.*

References

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