The background of the slide is a soft-focus image of an open notebook. A purple and blue pen lies diagonally across the left side of the page. The notebook's pages are filled with cursive handwriting in dark ink. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of brown, tan, and beige.

**Piloting OBL in the English
Course “Introduction to
Language Studies”**

Dr. WANG Lixun

Department of English

Differences between Conventional Approach and Outcomes-based Approach in teaching:

Conventional Approach	Outcomes-based Approach
Teacher-centered	Learner-centered
Auditor	Partner/Facilitator
Focus on teacher's input	Focus on learner's output
Rigid and controlling	Flexible and empowering
Emphasis on products	Emphasis on progress/overall learning experience
Course objectives	Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
Norm-referenced assessment	Criterion-referenced assessment
Content-based & content delivery	Ability-based & ability building

The 'Essence' of OBE

- In OBE, what matters ultimately is not what is taught, but what is **learned**;
- Teachers must set appropriate course intended **learning outcomes**, instead of teaching objects;
- **Constructive alignment: What** we teach, **how** we teach and how we **assess** ought to be **aligned** with the **intended learning outcomes**, such that they are fully consistent with each other;
- The quality of teaching is to be judged by the **quality of learning** that takes place.

Factors affecting the success of OBE:

- First, what the student is to learn must be clearly identified.
- Second, the student's progress is based on demonstrated achievement.
- Third, multiple instructional and assessment strategies need to be available to meet the needs of each student.
- And finally, adequate time and assistance need to be provided so that each student can reach the maximum potential.

(Towers, 1996)

The 'Logic' of OBE

- “The logic is stunningly obvious: Say what you want students to be able to do, teach them to do it and then see if they can, in fact, do it.”

(Biggs & Tang, 2007)

Designing courses in OBL mode

- Begin with **the end** (assessable outcomes) in mind and state the outcomes using appropriate **verbs**;
- Decide **the intended learning outcomes**, i.e. what you want your students to be able to do at the end of the course, taking into consideration of the Institute's Generic Outcomes and Programme Learning Outcomes (POs);
- Design the teaching and learning activities (**TLAs**) which help students to achieve these outcomes;
- Develop authentic **assessment tasks** to directly measure the achievement of these outcomes; and use feedback from assessment to improve teaching and assessment as appropriate.

What kind of CILOs?

- The CILOs must be:
 - **Attractive** – students want to achieve them
 - **Comprehensible** – students know the meaning
 - **Attainable** – students can learn to achieve them
 - **Coherent** – they clearly fit into their programme
- (Baume, 2005)

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline	OBL course outline
Course Objectives	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
To enable students to:	Upon completing the course, students will be able to:
1. demonstrate an understanding of the sub-domains of linguistics, enquiry, furnishing an initial morphology and semantics, discourse, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics;	1. analyse and articulate the nature, structures and functions of English language as a rich and complex system;
2. demonstrate an understanding of issues in each sub-domain pertinent to education, in particular, to the teaching and learning of language;	2. apply principles of language to the specifics of the English language system;

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline	OBL course outline
Course Objectives	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
To enable students to:	Upon completing the course, students will be able to:
3. demonstrate an ability to analyze and discuss core aspects of language, linguistics and communication;	3. demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles and value of different varieties of English and their uses;
Language objectives: develop competence in academic reading skills.	4. demonstrate high level of English academic literacy in speaking, writing and online contexts;
Generic Skills overlooked in the objectives.	5. work collaboratively in an effective way to develop English academic literacy and subject knowledge. (Communication Skill & Social Interaction Skill)

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline	OBL course outline
<p style="text-align: center;">Course Content</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Teaching & Learning Content & Activities</p>
<p>Items of content are listed out without specifying teaching & learning activities</p>	<p>Items of content are listed, and at the same time matching TLAs are also listed, together with the CILOs to be addressed</p>
<p>Defining linguistics; pure linguistics vs. applied linguistics; language as semiotic; differing perspectives on the nature, characteristics and origins of language; language change and variation;</p>	<p>Lecture, seminar, group work, student presentation, online quizzes CILO_{1, 2, 3, 4, 5}</p>
<p>Sub-disciplines in linguistics: grammar/syntax, phonology, pragmatics, etc.; how different areas of linguistics are related and can inform language teaching</p>	<p>Lecture, seminar, group work, student presentation, online quizzes CILO_{1, 2, 4, 5}</p>

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline	OBL course outline
Assessment	Assessment
<p>Two Assessment Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An <u>individual written essay</u> (1000 words) on a module related topic (60% of the total grade).2. A <u>group task</u> in which each group member would contribute (1000 words) to a chapter of a student-authored academic book based on the topics introduced in the module. Peer editing among group members will be required and members in the same group will receive the same group grade (40% of the total grade).	<p>Four Assessment Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An <u>individual written essay</u> (1000 words) on a module related topic. (40%) : CILO <i>1, 2, 3 & 4</i>2. A <u>group task</u> in which each group member would contribute (1000 words) to a chapter of a student-authored book based on the topics introduced in the module. Peer editing among group members will be required and members in the same group will receive the same group grade. (40%) CILO <i>1, 2 & 4</i>3. A 15-minute <u>group presentation</u> of the framework of the chapter that each group will write. Members in the same group will receive the same group grade. (10%) CILO <i>1, 2, 4 & 5</i>4. 10 short online weekly <u>quizzes</u> during the module. (10%) CILO <i>1, 2 & 3</i> <p>Note: CILOs addressed by the assessment tasks are shown</p>

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline

OBL course outline





Assessment Design

In the traditional mode, there were two assessment tasks which failed to totally reflect the knowledge and skills the students obtained in the course. Together with the principles below, the number of assessment tasks of the OBA mode has increased to four.

According to Killen (2007), assessment design should conform to the following principles:

1. Assessment must be **aligned** with the outcomes that are being tested.
2. The assessment procedures should be **reliable** – sources of error should be minimized so that dependable, consistent results are obtained.
3. The assessment procedures should be **fair** – they should not disadvantage any learners or be influenced by any irrelevant factors such as the learner’s cultural background.
4. Assessment should focus on the knowledge and skills that are **most important** for learners to learn.
5. Assessment should tell educators and individual learners something they do not already know, stretching learners to the limits of their understanding and ability to apply their knowledge.
6. Assessment should be **comprehensive** – it should address all the important outcomes, not just a small sample of them.
7. Assessment should support every learner’s opportunity to learn things that are important.
8. Assessment tasks should provide adequate opportunities for learners to express their individuality.
9. Assessment tasks and the interpretation of learners’ results should be based on explicit quality criteria.
10. The evidence obtained from assessment procedures must be interpreted in valid ways so that appropriate inferences are drawn.
11. Assessment should be designed to engage learners in higher-order thinking so that they can reveal the depth of their understanding.
12. Assessment should provide adequate opportunities for learners to demonstrate their ability to integrate their knowledge and understanding and apply it to significant and relevant problems.

Example: “Introduction to Language Studies”

Traditional course outline	OBL course outline
Assessment Marking Criteria	Assessment Marking Criteria
<p>Only ONE rubric of marking criteria for the assessment tasks, which is a set of generic criteria for all written assessments in the English Department.</p> <p>Marking Criteria </p>	<p>Three different sets of rubrics of assessment criteria for Task 1 to Task 3.</p> <p>Guiding principles for writing the Assessment Criteria for assessment tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Assessment Criteria should map with the CILOs.2. The criteria should be articulated in a transparent way.3. The criteria need to be observable and easy to be measured with evidence.4. The criteria should demonstrate what your expectations on the students are.5. Apart from the common generic skills of most of the assessment tasks, we have to design specific criteria which match a particular assessment task. <p>Task1  Task2  Task3 </p>

Piloting OBL in the course “Introduction to Language Studies”

- Explain the course outline in the first lesson, emphasizing the CILOs of the course. As William (2004) points out “outcomes should be essential to all learners, they should be transparent and fair...”
- Remind the students of the CILOs throughout the teaching process.
- When assigning an assessment task, focus on the CILOs addressed by the task.

Reflection: Mid-Module Evaluation

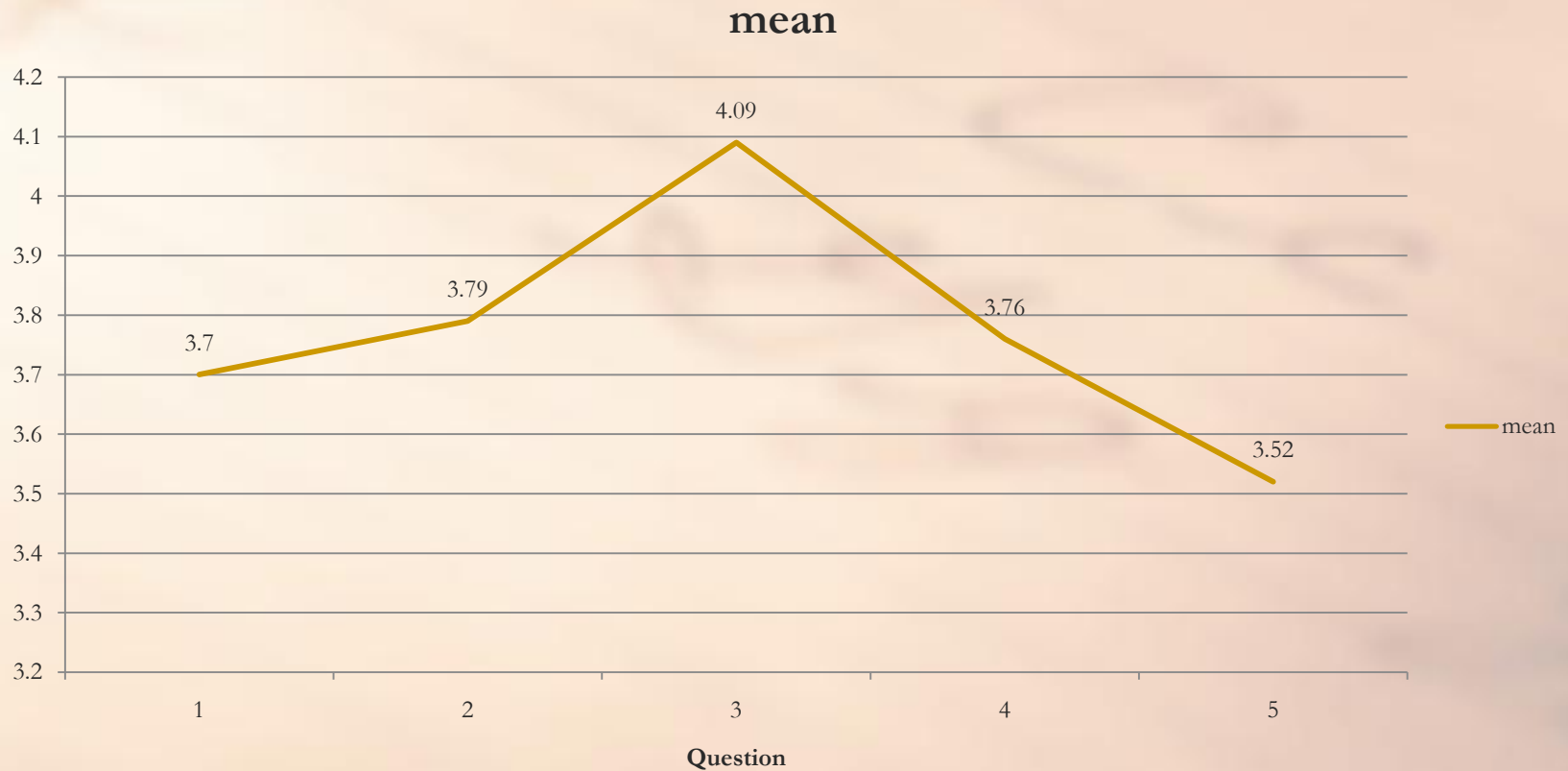
- No. of students in Lixun's Group: 33
- They are asked to fill in the mid-module evaluation form
- Results of the data analysis:
 - There is positive feedback from the students as about 97% of them agree that the CILOs are clear, the teaching & learning activities help them to achieve the learning outcomes, the assessment tasks are relevant to the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria of the activities are clear enough.




Mid-Module Evaluation: Questions on OBL

1. How clear did you find the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)?
2. To what extent did the teaching and learning activities help you in achieving the outcomes?
3. How relevant did you find the assessment tasks to the intended learning outcomes?
4. How clear did you find the assessment criteria/grading of the activities in this module
5. How confident do you feel of achieving the intended learning outcomes by the end of the module?

The mean of Q.3 is 4.09, which is the highest among the five questions. This means most students agree that the assessment tasks are relevant to the intended learning outcomes. Q.5 has the lowest mean of 3.52 among the five, which indicates that students do not feel fully confident about achieving the intended learning outcomes by the end of the course.



End-of-course Evaluation

- No. of students in Group 2: 33
- Students are asked to fill in the survey form  at the end of the course
- No. of students fill in the survey form: 32
- Results of the data analysis:

The following table shows the mean of the Q.1 – Q.13 & Q.17, with the highest on the top:

QUESTION	MEAN
6. Course activities are well prepared and carefully explained.	5.09
3. The stated learning outcomes are clear and understandable.	5.00
9. Lectures, group work and other learning activities have a clear relationship to course assessment.	5.00
1. The stated learning outcomes of the course have a valuable relationship to my degree programme.	4.97
5. Tutor lectures contribute to my understanding of the course content.	4.87
8. There is a clear relationship between the teaching and learning activities and the stated course outcomes.	4.78
2. The stated learning outcomes of the course have a valuable relationship with my practice as a teacher.	4.75

The following table shows the mean of the Q.1 – Q.13 & Q.17, with the largest on the top: (cont'd)

QUESTION	MEAN
4. The stated learning outcomes agree with what is actually taught in the course.	4.74
7. The required reading materials /texts are helpful and practical.	4.69
11. Course methods of evaluating student work are fair and appropriate.	4.66
12. Examinations/graded materials test the course content as emphasized by instructor.	4.53
17. My enjoyment of this course, relative to other courses is greater.	4.50
13. The amount of time I spend in this course working towards exams and graded materials is reasonable.	4.41
10. The feedback I have received on examinations/graded materials helps my improvement.	4.34

Q.14 to Q. 16 are comparisons between the pilot course and other courses. The following table shows their S.D. which rank top three, implying that the students' views are varied.

QUESTION	S.D.	Mean
14. Course difficulty, relative to other courses, is greater.	1.176	3.69
16. Course pace, relative to other courses, is faster.	1.019	3.84
15. Course workload, relative to other courses, is greater.	1.016	4.00

Discussion

- The students **enjoyed the pilot course** as 100% of them agreed the enjoyment of this course, relative to other courses, is greater. (Q. 17)
- 100% of them agreed the stated **learning outcomes are clear and understandable**. (Q.3) (mean = 5.00, the 2nd highest)
- This **conforms with the result** of the Mid-Module Evaluation, in which the S.D. of the same question is the lowest (0.467), showing that the views of the students are consistent.
- To implement OBL successfully, Towers (1996) suggests that what the student is to learn must be clearly identified and the above results show the pilot course has achieved this aim.

Discussion (cont'd)

- The **constructive alignment** of the pilot course reflects one of the “Essence” of OBL: **What** we teach, **how** we teach and how we **assess** ought to be **aligned** with the **intended learning outcomes**, such that they are fully consistent with each other.
- 100% of the students agreed that lectures, group work and other learning activities have a clear relationship to course assessment (Q.9 mean = 5.00); and there is a clear relationship between the teaching and learning activities and the stated course outcomes (Q.8 mean = 4.78).

Discussion(cont'd)

- The design of the CILOs of the pilot course is consistent with two of the principles of designing curriculum, i.e. **clarity of focus and design down** (Spady & Marshall, 1991)
- **Clarity of focus** means that all activities (teaching, assessment, etc) are geared towards what we want students to demonstrate. (Brandt, 1992)
- **Design down** means designing the curriculum from the point at which you want students to end up. (Brandt, 1992)
- In the survey, all students agreed that the outcomes of the course have a valuable relationship to their degree programme (Q.1 mean = 4.97) and they also express that the stated learning outcomes of the course have a valuable relationship with their practice as a teacher (Q.2 mean = 4.75).
- The above evidence proves that the pilot course has a clear focus that all activities are geared what we want students to demonstrate at the end of the learning experience and it is also designed from the “exit outcomes” - those outcomes that occur at the close of a student’s academic career (Spady & Marshall, 1991).

Discussion (cont'd)

- Besides Killen (2007), Griffin (1997) also states, “assessment standards, tasks, procedures, and uses **should be fair** to all students and should be valid and **appropriate representations of the standards** students are expected to achieve.....”
- In the survey, 100% of students think that course methods of evaluating student work are fair and appropriate (Q.11 mean = 4.66) and this is consistent with what Killen & Griffin suggest.
- On the whole, students feedback towards OBA is positive in the pilot course.

Comparing with other courses

- When comparing the pilot course with other courses, the S.D. of the 3 items “course difficulty is greater”, “course workload is greater”, and “course pace is faster” rank top three, but the mean scores of these three items (3.69, 4.00, and 3.84) rank the lowest of all the items.
- It may indicate that most students felt that the pilot course is not more difficult than other courses, the workload may be slightly greater, and the course pace is similar, but the views are varied.

Conclusion

- Four essential elements of implementing OBL successfully at course level:
 1. Set **Attractive, Comprehensible, Attainable, and Coherent** CILOs.
 2. CILOs must be carefully **mapped** onto the Programme Learning Outcomes.
 3. T&L activities, assessment tasks, and marking criteria **must all be properly aligned with the CILOs**.
 4. **Reflections** by students and the tutor are important for further adjusting and improving the whole practice.

THANK YOU!!

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