

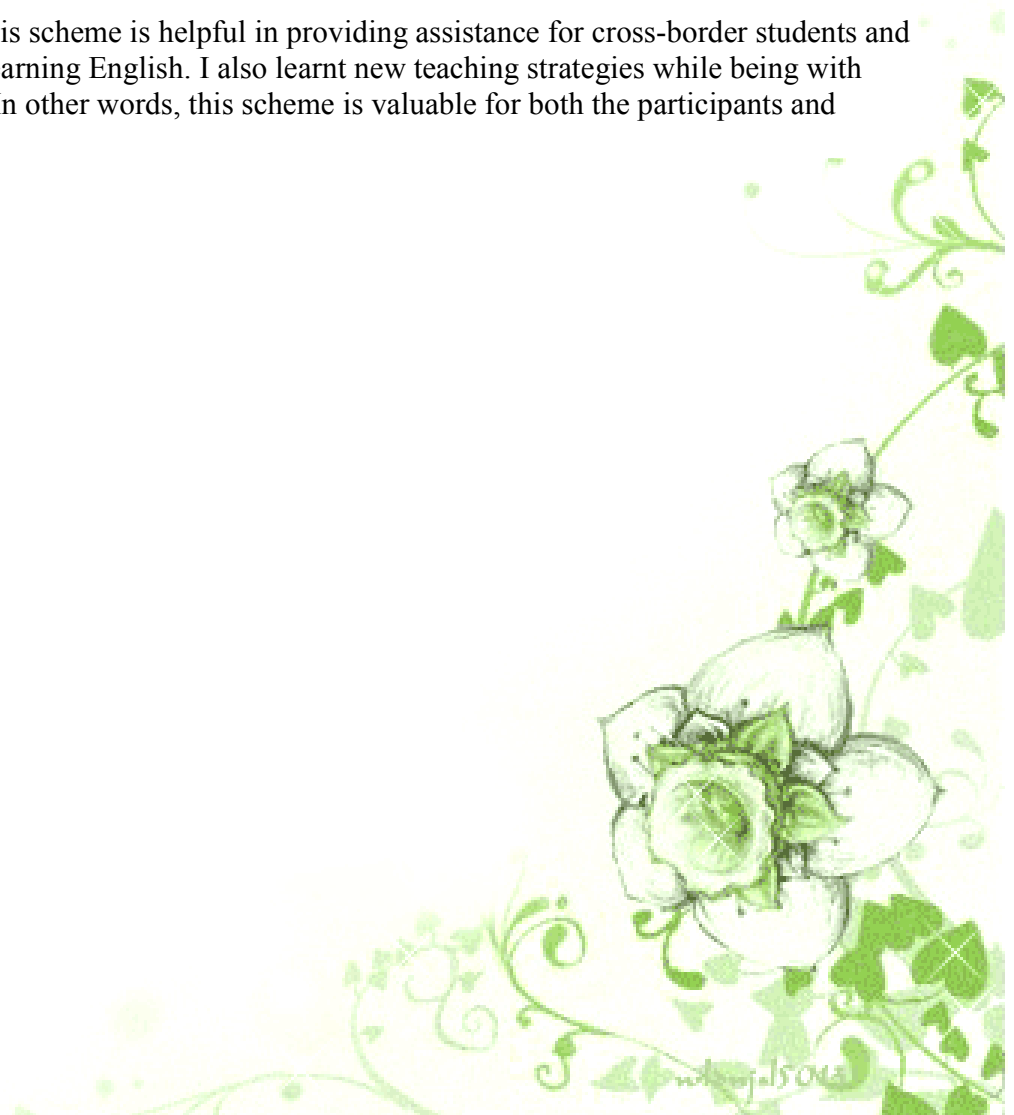
David's reflection on school-based support scheme

I gained two valuable experiences by participating in the scheme.

The first one is being an assistant teacher in a regular classroom setting. In a classroom, there is usually one teacher who facilitates the entire class. However, in this scheme, I had the chance to provide extra assistance for the regular teacher by sitting among a group of students and helping them understand the class material. At first, I wondered about the effectiveness of this teaching strategy. However, I soon started to notice that the students paid closer attention when there was another teacher sitting beside them. With clarification and elaboration, the students had better understanding of the instructions about the class activities. When I spotted anyone not paying attention, I would simply ask them to repeat after the teacher quietly. The improvement of the students revealed the success of this scheme.

The second valuable experience I gained from participating in this scheme was while I was assisting a reading workshop in Shenzhen. During a two day workshop, I learnt a lot from the reading activities and the seminars. I feel grateful to have had the opportunity to help cross-border students learn English.

Overall, I think this scheme is helpful in providing assistance for cross-border students and immigrant children in learning English. I also learnt new teaching strategies while being with this group of students. In other words, this scheme is valuable for both the participants and student teachers.



Karen's reflection on school-based support scheme

I am glad that I have had a chance to participate in this school-based support scheme. Before joining this scheme, I had no prior experience teaching in a real classroom setting. After this scheme, I have learnt various strategies in helping the newly arrived students.

In my assigned school, the English classes were divided according to the abilities of the students. This way, teachers may not only monitor the students more efficiently, but also eliminate any labeling effect.

I tried two ways to help in the classroom. Firstly, I co-teach with a teacher who taught P.5 English. The lessons carried out quite smoothly, but there are still rooms for improvements. I realized that although the classes were grouped according to ability, the individual differences were still very large. In the lesson, the teacher tried very hard to help every single student to understand by using a lot of body language and pictures. Therefore, I prepared my lesson with a PowerPoint presentation full of animation and images. I also learned from observation that lessons and instructions should not be given in the forms of lectures. To better convey information and engage the class, the teacher can invite students to help demonstrate the tasks of the lesson.

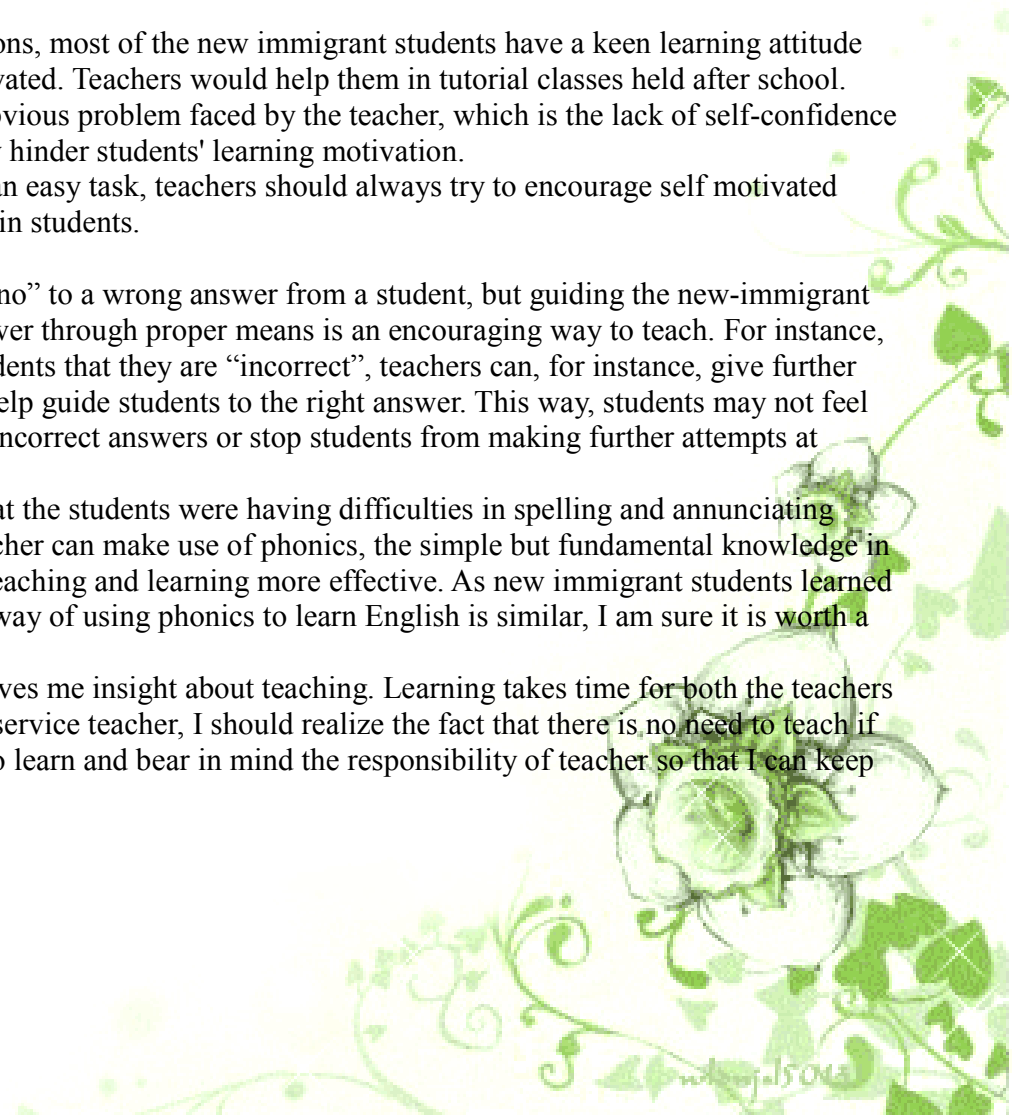
From my observations, most of the new immigrant students have a keen learning attitude and are highly self-motivated. Teachers would help them in tutorial classes held after school. However, there is one obvious problem faced by the teacher, which is the lack of self-confidence among students that may hinder students' learning motivation.

Though it is never an easy task, teachers should always try to encourage self motivated learning and confidence in students.

Teachers may say “no” to a wrong answer from a student, but guiding the new-immigrant students to the right answer through proper means is an encouraging way to teach. For instance, instead of telling the students that they are “incorrect”, teachers can, for instance, give further information or hints to help guide students to the right answer. This way, students may not feel discouraged by making incorrect answers or stop students from making further attempts at solving problems.

I was also aware that the students were having difficulties in spelling and annunciating vocabularies. I think teacher can make use of phonics, the simple but fundamental knowledge in order to make both the teaching and learning more effective. As new immigrant students learned pinyin in Putonhua, the way of using phonics to learn English is similar, I am sure it is worth a trying.

This experience also gives me insight about teaching. Learning takes time for both the teachers and students. As a pre-service teacher, I should realize the fact that there is no need to teach if everyone knows how to learn and bear in mind the responsibility of teacher so that I can keep myself motivated.



Eileen's reflection on school-based support scheme

Teaching in Ta Ku Ling Ling Ying Public School was enjoyable and provided me an opportunity to gain authentic experience. To me, classroom management has been one of the most challenging aspects in teaching. From the comments of the school teacher, Mr. Deng, my classroom management skill needs a lot of improvement to seize the misbehaviors of the students. I think building up a quiet learning environment is one of the most essential steps to do.

Apart from the academic aspects, the teacher-student relationship and the warm atmosphere in Ta Ku Ling Ling Ying Public School left me a strong impression. The teachers pay high attention to the needs of every student while the students are willing to share with teachers about their issues. Therefore, there is a strong bonding in their relationships.

