A STUDY OF TEACHING ENGLISH EFFECTIVELY FROM TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES: A CASE STUDY FROM A CHINESE SECONDARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Studies on TI (Teacher Identity) have placed a great deal of emphasis on the SLA (Second Language Acquisition) area. This research focuses on how does TI help teaching English effectively in SLA classes. It also investigates teachers 'awareness of students' needs and their preferred ways to implement TBLT (Task-based language teaching) and group work. In 2017, this study employed a questionnaire survey and involved 75 teacher participants of secondary school in China. The questionnaire was used to collect data which includes multiple-choice and open-ended questions, and the data were analyzed by thematic analysis. After data analysis, three main findings are documented. First, different teachers show different understandings of roles and they perceive teachers' roles based on their experiences and cognitions. Second, in the recent decade, group work and TBLT were widely used in the English classes of this school as new teaching approaches. As some teachers lack theoretical background and they could not avoid using traditional teaching methods when utilizing TBLT or group work, the implement of group work and TBLT in this school was not fully acceptable. Third, the biggest challenge for teachers is to cater to students' needs and help students improve their language abilities. As such, it is therefore suggested that the findings of this study have pivotal implications for future research on TI, teachers' guidance and teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher Identity, Teacher's Guidance, Students' Needs, Group Work, TBLT

1. INTRODUCTION

The definition of TI is to "explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and to the world at large"(MacLure, 1993,p. 311). Notably, the main problem is that teachers are lacking of the knowledge of the teaching methods and thus fail to shift their role from a manager to a facilitator. Therefore, it is necessary to research TI, which aims to provide some inspirations and suggestions to teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section refers to three theories: TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching), ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) and NA (Needs Analysis) respectively and gives a

review and synthesis of previous studies from teachers' perspectives.

2.1.1 Task-Based Language Teaching

TBLT was first implemented by Prabhu (1987) in the actual classroom and published by Long (1985). Compared with traditional teaching method PPP (presentation, practice and production), TBLT is a learner-centered approach to take teacher as a guide to help learners use L2 in real-world contexts (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2005; Willis & Willis, 2009). Specifically, Nunan (2004) defined task as a type of classroom work to immerse learners in the target language context and help them focus more on the meanings rather than the forms. Although TBLT could motivate learners and provide real contexts for them to practice language (Ellis, 2009), it still remains some challenges since TBLT requires teachers to be more creative, dynamic and open-minded to achieve the successful teaching (Hatip, 2005).

Given that, Branden (2006) proposed language learning needs and utilized it in real classrooms of TBLT in that NA could help teachers to select the suitable tasks (Kaur, 2007). Therefore, it is noted that TBLT is compatible with NA as they could be conductive to each other in the EFL class.
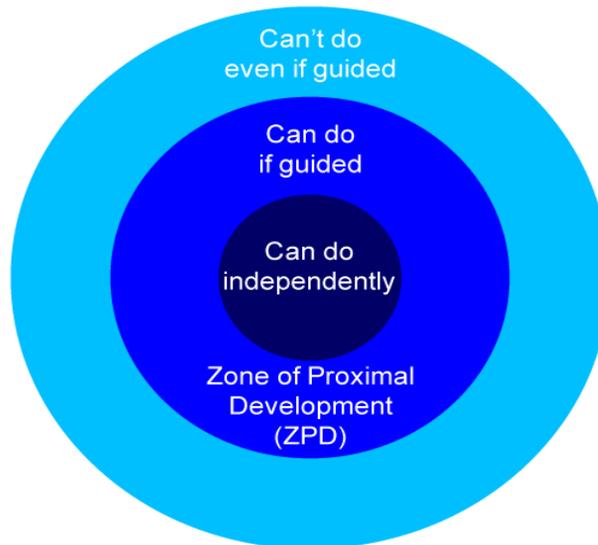
2.2 Zone of Proximal Development

Figure 1:ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978)

ZPD was proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Originally, ZPD was used to illustrate the mental growth of children (Vygotsky, 1978). Further, Vygotsky (1978) specified ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level and the potential developmental level with the assistance of adults or high-level peers. From figure 1, it can be seen that ZPD is in the circle 2, which means students can do with assistance. Scaffolding, which was proposed by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976), is always linked with ZPD since it represents the assistance that adults or peers provide for children. By using ZPD, the

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teacher could act as a prompter to lead students to reach their potential developmental level or have some high-level students to help other students (refer to circle 2 in figure 1). As Vygotsky (1978) argues that social interaction has a key role in ZPD, tasks are suggested to use to help students learn in pairs or groups.

2.3. Needs Analysis

NA was first emerged from the period of 1960s in language teaching, and it played an essential role in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Brindley, 1989). During recent decades, NA has undergone great changes. Originally, NA focused on the assessment of learners' communicative needs and ways to accomplish specific teaching objectives. At the moment, NA puts more emphasis on gathering information about learners and researching the target situation and environment of ESP (Otilia, 2015). Under the circumstances, needs become more diverse. From pedagogical and linguistic perspectives, Brindley (1989) divides needs into wants, desires, demands, expectations, motivation, lacks, constraints and requirements. Hutchinson and waters (1987) divide needs into target needs (the purpose of what learners need to learn) and learning needs (learners' expectations and motivations).

Although implementing NA will bring benefits to the EFL class, it still poses challenges to instructors. For instance, teachers should ensure that learners' needs, and expectations should be realistic and they need instructors to help them identify their own needs (Graves, 2000), otherwise the course could not be effective. Moreover, whether textbooks could cater to students' needs (Medrea & Rus, 2012) and how instructors identify their roles and power dynamic (Graves, 2000) should be taken into consideration.

2.4. The Overview of Previous Research

The study conducted by a group of researchers intends to find out the effectiveness of NA in different ELT (English Language Teaching) contexts. For instance, Prachanant (2012), Spence and Liu (2013) and Karimi and Sanavi (2014) conducted research in the workplace. The finding of Prachanant (2012) was that learners hope to use English to give information and offer help, and they have problems in vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Further, the study of Karimi and Sanavi (2014) suggested that useful activities were needed to help students improve their skills.

Other studies conducted by Wu (2012), Otilia (2015), Poedjiastutie and Oliver (2017), and Todea and Demarcsek (2017) all recruited university students as their participants and do research on differences on students' current and future needs. The findings were divided into three aspects:

a. Wu (2012) and Otilia (2015) revealed that materials are of significant importance to meet learners' needs.

b. Wu (2012) and Todea and Demarcsek (2017) showed that intriguing activities and TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) should be performed in the class to motivate students to learn.

c. Wu (2012) and Poedjiastutie and Oliver (2017) demonstrated that students needed to master some language skills to meet their future work's needs.

As such, there are some gaps in the previous research that should be addressed in future research. Most research has focused mostly on investigating students' needs, but has not paid much attention to teachers' needs. And the context of most research is focusing on education courses in the company, university, vocational high schools and primary schools, but very few studies are conducted in the secondary schools contexts. In that case, this research will focus on teachers and investigate the effective teaching of general English in a secondary school.

2.5 Thematic Analysis

TA is regarded as a qualitative research method, which could be adopted to analyze large qualitative data, and be used to answer various research questions (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017; King, 2004). Specifically, by utilizing TA, qualitative and detailed information of data will be provided (Braun & Clarke, 2006). And accordingly, themes could be identified, analyzed and interpreted within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2015; Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012).

In such cases, some researchers (O' Neill, 2011; Yukhymenko, Brown, Lawless, & Mullin, 2014; Raufelder, Nitsche, Breitmeyer, KeBler, Herrmann, & Regner, 2015) conducted research on employing TA in different applications. Raufelder, Nitsche, Breitmeyer, KeBler, Herrmann, and Regner (2015) aimed to investigate German secondary school students' perceptions of teachers' quality according to their experiences and O' Neill (2011) investigated the nurses experiences of using English in clinical settings in Australia. Similarly, Yukhymenko, Brown, Lawless, and Mullin (2014) also applied TA to research teachers' instructional practices and middle school students' responses to practices. Therefore, it should be noted that TA could help to deal with the data that are large and qualitative.

2.6 Research Questions

1) What do teachers think about their individual roles in the classroom?

2) Do the teachers gain a good knowledge of the different levels of students' learning situations?

3) What are teachers' preferred ways to group students and what are effects of grouping students?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

This is a questionnaire research, which was conducted in a secondary school in China, and the primary focus is on 75 ESL teachers with various teaching experiences. There were 92% female teachers and 8% male teachers participated in this research and their age is from 23 to 55. In addition, 57 teacher participants teach in grade 7 to 9 and 18

teacher participants teach in grade 10 to 12. The classes that teachers teach are around 40 students. This research applied snowball sampling to recruit teacher participants. The reason is that snowball sampling cannot only protect the confidentiality of teacher participants, but also help to locate the potential respondents (Etikan, Alkassim & Abubakar, 2016).

3.2 Procedure

This research adopted mixed methods, which employed questionnaire survey as the quantitative research method to collect data and applied TA as the qualitative research method to analyze the data. The reason why mixed methods were used because quantitative and qualitative research methods could draw a joint picture to see TI. Specifically, quantitative method could help to get an understanding of teacher participants' information, identity of their roles in the class and their attitudes to students' learning situations and group work logically. However, quantitative method could not provide detailed information and help to generate in-depth ideas. Based on this, by adopting qualitative method, researchers could get a thorough understanding of how teachers act their roles in the class, how do they deal with students' different learning situations and the challenges that they encountered, teachers' preferred way of teaching and the effect of using them to teach.

In addition, this research employed a questionnaire with 32 questions to collect data and it was designed to explore teacher participants' perceptions about TI. The questionnaire was divided into closed questions (e.g., multiple-choice questions, and likert rating scales) and open-ended questions.

Then, TA was adopted as the data analysis method and the reason was that TA could help to identify complex meaning within the data (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). In the data analysis procedure, the data were coded and examined three themes.

3.3 Reliability and Validity

In this research, the drafted version was sent to several participants and then the researcher modified and revised it according to their suggestions. In that case, the reliability and validity of the research could be ensured. In addition, this research is a case study which was conducted based on a group of teachers in a secondary school. Therefore, the findings have its reliability under the same conditions. Regarding validity, since there was only researcher analyzed the data, some subjective results might exist. That means validity would be to some extent affected, which could be a limitation for the validity in this study.

4. DISCUSSION

This section aims to use TA to present and analyze the data according to themes and 3 research questions. Each research question includes related themes and sub-themes. In this research, the researcher matched each theme with relevant data to answer research questions. And then this section intends to discuss the findings, some implications,

limitations, and future directions in the 4.4. Some key issues will be discussed respectively.

4.1 Research Question1: What do teachers think about their individual roles in the classroom?

In this research, most teachers are aware of their **own roles** and they **define their roles** in different aspects. Meanwhile, they attach great importance to how to **be responsible for their roles.** More importantly, they realize students are the important parts in the class. Below are some questions in the survey:

Q1: I am _____ with the idea that the modes of work, teaching methods will be different if teachers are aware of their roles being a facilitator rather than a manager in the class.

Table 1: Teachers' attitudes to the shift of their roles will lead to different mode of work and teaching methods

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Strongly agree	31	41.3%
Agree	39	52%
Neutral	4	5.3%
Disagree	1	1.3%
Strongly disagree	0	0

Q2: Describing how should the teacher as a prompter to teach the mixed ability classroom

Table 2: How should the teacher as a prompter to teach the mixed ability classroom

Different Answers	Number	Proportion

1. Preparing for the class well in order to meet students' needs and to intrigue their interests:
   1.1 Make different teaching plans
   1.2 Make different tasks and activities
	22	45%

2.As a good guide, observer, leader, and organizer and take students as the center of the class	13	27%
3.Teachers should be professional, knowledgeable and hard working	6	12%
4.Teachers' attitudes to students should be friendly, patiently, and respectful	6	12%
5.Teachers should set different learning goals for students and help them to achieve those goals	2	4%

From table 1, it can be seen that 93.3% of the teachers agree that raising their awareness of being a facilitator will influence the modes of work and teaching methods, while only 1.3% of the teachers disagree with this opinion. Specifically, as it is shown in the table

2, except being a **prompter**, 27% of the teachers take the attitude that they should be a decent **guide, observer, leader, and organizer** in the class and they are prone to **take students as the center** of the class. In addition, 45% of the teachers give priority to make the class well prepared in advance in order to meet students' needs and stimulate their interests. For instance, teachers make different teaching plans and different tasks and activities before the class. It should be noted that there are 12% of the teachers consider that being a prompter they should be **professional, knowledgeable and hardworking**, and another 12% of the teachers hold the view that being a prompter they should treat students **friendly, patiently and respectful**. There are only 4% of the teachers, however, think that being a prompter should take learning goals into consideration.

Q3: I am _____ with student-centered pedagogy can help to teach the mixed ability class.

Table 3: Teachers' attitudes to student-centered pedagogy can help to teach the mixed ability class.

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Strongly agree	24	32%
Agree	43	57%
Neutral	7	9%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly disagree	0	0

Q4: I am ___ that design a lesson plan concerns for every student is difficult.

Table 4: Teachers' attitudes to design a lesson plan for every student is difficult

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Strongly agree	28	37%
Agree	33	44%
Neutral	6	8%
Disagree	8	11%
Strongly disagree	0	0

Accordingly, table 3 displays that 89% of the teachers agree that **student-centered teaching method** helps to teach the mixed ability class, while there is only 1% of teachers hold the opposite opinion. Although it was mentioned above in the table 2 that 45% of teachers believe that **being a prompter** they should make different teaching plans to meet students' needs and stimulate them, table 4 shows that 81% of the teachers agree that designing a lesson plan consider for every student is difficult.

To answer this question, most teachers plays the role of prompting students and they care about their roles in the class. Based on this, teachers believe that as a responsible

prompter, they need to make good preparation before class and focus on students' needs. In addition, most of them argue that student-centered pedagogy helps teaching, which indicates that they care about students' feelings. However, they found that it is very difficult to design teaching plans that meet every student's needs.

4.2 Do the teachers gain a good knowledge of the different levels of students' learning situations?

In this research, most teachers recognize **students' learning situations** and most of them believe that knowing **students' learning situations** is of great importance. Based on this, teachers have some ways to check（e.g., presentation, quiz, exam）and get to know **students' learning situations** (e.g., **learning needs, learning abilities, learning outcomes**) and how they take measures to improve students' current learning situations are also presented.

Q5: I am _____ with the learning abilities of different levels students.

Table 5: To what extent do teachers familiar with students' learning abilities

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Not at all familiar	5	7%
Slightly familiar	4	5%
Somewhat familiar	34	45%
Very familiar	32	43%

Q6: I am _____ that English teacher should start with knowing the students learning needs.

Table 6: Teachers' attitudes to they should start with knowing students learning needs

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Strongly agree	45	60%
Agree	27	36%
Neutral	2	3%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly disagree	0	0

According to table 5, it can be seen that 88% of the teachers are familiar with **students' learning abilities**, while only 7% of the teachers are not familiar with **students' learning abilities** at all. Further, it should be noted from table 6 that 96% of the teachers agree that they should start with **knowing students learning needs**, whereas only 1% of the teachers disagree with this opinion.

Q7: Which ways do you usually use to understand different students' learning abilities?

Table 7: Ways to understand different students' learning abilities

Different Answers	Number	Proportion
Questionnaire	13	17%
Students' Reactions	50	67%
Observing Students	36	48%

Q8: Which ways do you usually use to check the learning outcomes of different levels students?

Table 8: Ways to check the learning outcomes of students

Different Answers	Number	Proportion
Presentation	21	28%
Quiz	32	43%
Exam	38	51%

Table 7 and table 8 show how teachers understand and check the **learning abilities and learning outcomes of students**. Notably, there are two criteria that were adopted to have a clear idea of students' learning abilities, which is subjective criterion (table 7) and objective criterion (table 8). The reason was that this way could make results more reliable. According to table 7, 67% of the teachers know **students' learning abilities** from the feedback. Interestingly, 48% of the teachers know **students' learning abilities** by observing students. There are only 17% of the teachers know **students' learning abilities** via conducting questionnaire. According to table 8, it is not surprising that 51% and 43% of the teachers check students' learning outcomes by exams and quiz. However, there are only 28% of the teachers choose presentation as the way to check students' learning outcomes.

Q9: To what extent do you usually use the following to help students achieve effective learning?

Table 9: Ways to help students achieve effective learning

Different Answers	Number	Proportion
Giving clear instructions	31	41%
Setting Goals	55	73%
Error Correction	8	11%
Modifying Teaching Strategies	17	23%

Q10: The students often show different learning speed in a class; to what extent do you agree with the following ways to help different learning abilities students to get progress?

Table 10: Ways to help students with different learning abilities get progress

Different Answers	Number	Proportion
Assign Different Tasks	69	92%
Design role-plays	7	9%
Peer Support	11	15%

Q11: I am ___ with using the supplementary materials to help students to learn if the course book cannot meet the satisfaction of all students.

Table 11: Teachers' attitudes to use the supplementary materials to help students learn

Attitudes	Number	Proportion
Strongly agree	28	37%
Agree	41	55%
Neutral	5	7%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	1%

Table 9, table 10, and table 11 present the measures that teachers would like to take to help students get progress. From table 9, it can be seen that 73% of the teachers believe that setting goals helps students achieve effective learning. And 41% of the teachers believe that giving clear instructions could play a part in achieving effective learning. There are only 11% of the teachers, however, believe correcting students' errors could improve their learning. Notably, for the ways to help students with **different learning abilities** get progress, 92% of the teachers from table 10 show that they choose to assign different tasks for students. And only 9% of the teachers design role-plays to help them get progress. In addition, table 11 displays that 55% of the teachers are willing to use supplementary materials to help students to learn.

To conclude, it can be seen from the above that most teachers have a clear understanding of students' learning situations, but they are not confident in saying that they know every student. Despite that, they still believe knowing their students are of great importance. For instance, they attempt to know their students' learning abilities in different ways (subjective and objective criteria) in the class.

4.3 What are teachers' preferred ways to group students and what are effects of grouping students?

In this research, teachers' attitudes to group students and how they prefer to group students will be presented initially. Further, teachers' views on advantages and

disadvantages of grouping students will be illustrated then. Finally, teachers preferred teaching methods will be shown.

Q12: In order to teach the mixed ability class successfully, rate the way that you prefer to apply in the class.

Table 12: Teachers' preferences of teaching the mixed ability class

Different answers	Number	Proportion
Students learning as individual	7	9.3%
Students learning in groups (around 4 students)	68	90.7%

Q13: How would you like to divide students into groups?

Table 13: Ways to divide students into groups

Different answers	Number	Proportion
According to different levels （According to different abilities）	32	43%
Around 4 students in a group	9	12%
According to the original seats	7	9%
According to scores	5	7%
According to different personalities	4	5%
According to tasks	3	4%
According to interests	2	3%
According to genders	2	3%
According to teaching need	1	1%
I don't know	10	13%

As can be seen from table 12, 90.7% of the teachers prefer to **group** students to learn instead of learning individually (9.3%). Specifically, table 13 displays that 43% of the teachers **group students** according to **students' different levels**.

Q14: List your ideas about the advantages or disadvantages of grouping students according to their learning abilities.

Table 14: Advantages of grouping students

Different answers	Number	Proportion
1. Students could help each other 1.1 Peer support 1.2 Peer correction	32	48%
2. Achieve better learning effectiveness	9	14%
3. Cultivate different abilities	8	12%

3.1 Communication skills		
3.2Cooperation skills		
3.3Problem-solving skills		
3.4Brainstorming		
4. Embrace individual differences	4	6%
5.Assign different tasks to different students	4	6%
6. Create a good atmosphere to finish tasks in the class	4	6%
7. Teachers could manage the class easily	2	3%
8. High-level students make progress easily	2	3%
9. Students have time to prepare for their answers	1	2%
I don't know	9	0%

Table 15: Disadvantages of grouping students

Different answers	Number	Proportion
1.Teachers meet some challenges	8	26%
1.1 Difficult to design textbooks		
1.2 Difficult to control the class		
1.3 Consume more time		
1.4 Teachers could not focus on all students		
1.5 Students talk about other things in the class		
2.Students learning efficiency will be lowered and the gap between high-level students and low-level students may be enlarged	2	6%
3.Disadvantages to high-level students Sub-themes:	8	26%
3.1High-level students think teaching low-level students is a waste of time		
3.2High-level students will lose interests		
4.Disadvantages to low-level students	12	39%
4.1 Low-level students may feel inferior, stressful, become passive and keep silent in a group		
4.2 Low-level students are not willing to engage in group activities and lose interests		
4.3 Low-level students maybe used to depend on others		
I don't know	45	3%

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Table 14 and table 15 present teachers' views of **advantages and disadvantages of grouping students** respectively. According to table 14, for students, 49% of the teachers believe that grouping students could facilitate **students helping their groupmates,** while only 2% of the teacher mentioned students could prepare for answers before they express themselves in a group. Interestingly, 12% of the teachers believe grouping students could **cultivate students' different abilities**. However, for teachers, only 6% of the teachers believe that grouping students helps them **assign different tasks for students** and **create an active atmosphere** in the class. Notably, 3% of the teachers think grouping students helps them **manage the class** well. From table 15, it should be noted that 39% of the teachers found grouping students would **bring disadvantages to low-level students** and 26% of the teachers believe that **high-level students would be affected negatively**. In addition, it is worth noting that 26% of the teachers found they would **meet challenges** if they group students. However, only 6% of the teachers believe grouping students would **affect learning negatively** and **enlarge the gap between high-level students and low-level students**.

Q15: The teaching method that you think can help you to teach the mixed ability classroom.

Table 16: Teachers' preferred teaching methods to teach the class

Different answers	Number	Proportion
Group study	14	40%
1. TBLT and provide different tasks and games (eg, role-play, drawing, singing, English speech, English drama) for students	11	31%

2. Make good preparation in advance
  2.1 Anticipate unexpected problems in the class
  2.2 Think how to know different students' abilities
  2.3 Set teaching goals
	3	9%

3. Combine teaching and exercising	2	6%
4. 3P (presentation, practice, production)	2	6%
5. Student-centered pedagogy	2	6%
6. Teach according to the textbooks	1	3%
I don't know	40	0%

Regarding teachers' preferred teaching methods, it can be seen from table 16 that 40% of the teachers choose **group study** as their teaching method, whereas only 3% of the teacher choose to teach according to the textbooks. Surprisingly, 31% of the teachers choose **TBLT** as their teaching method.

To conclude, although group study poses some challenges to teaching and the gap

between high-level students and low-level students may enlarge, most of teachers still believe using group study helps them to teach. In addition, this way helps teachers focus on students, and students gets benefits by working with their peers. Further, students can to some extent achieve learning effectiveness and cultivate some abilities (e.g., communication skills, cooperation skills).

4.4 The Discussion of Key Issues

With respect to TI, the results of this study show that most teachers are aware of their roles as the facilitator, guide, observer, leader, and organizer respectively rather than the manager and controller. This finding is echoing the findings of Rahmijati and Rizkiani (2014), Khasanah and Madya (2018), and Mahbub (2018). This indicates that TI has a key part in teaching and in the process of learning to teach. Being aware of their own roles helps teachers construct their professional roles in the class and start to consider the relationship between their roles and the contexts.

In addition, a number of teachers (45%) concerns about teaching plans and students' feelings (Table 2). Similarly, Khasanah and Madya (2018), and Mahbub (2018) found students should be the active role in the class. Cummins (2000) states that teachers need to start thinking about learners' identities and begin treating learners as the center. Thus, listening to and focusing on students' opinions and needs will create harmonious atmosphere in the class.

However, 81% of the teachers found it was difficult to design a teaching plan to cater to every student's needs (Table 4). From above, teachers' identities are not fixed, which means their identities varied according to the contexts, students, resources, the curriculum and policy (Miller, 2009; Kanno & Stuart, 2011). Thus, it is necessary for teachers to be aware that they can act as several roles and design several teaching plans to deal with different situations. In contrast, identities can to some extent be contradictory, since teachers cannot identify themselves as a communicative language teacher and a grammar instructor simultaneously. If so, it may have negative impacts. Overall, as TI is complex, teachers need to understand each role clearly and identify suitable roles to help students.

Regarding student-centered pedagogy, 89% of the teachers support the student-centered pedagogy (Table 3) and they use TBLT, tasks, activities and group study in the class (Table 2, 10, 14, 16). These are similar to the findings of several other studies (Wu, 2012; Rahmijati & Rizkiani, 2014; Tzotzou, 2014). This indicates that most teachers have shifted their roles from an instructor to a facilitator. And this helps students to be responsible for their learning since they have opportunities to control their own learning (Slunt & Giancario, 2004).

Further, to achieve effective learning and create collaborative atmosphere, teachers in this research group students and design some tasks or activities to motivate students (Table 12, 13, 14, 16). Some researchers (Wu, 2012; Mahbub, 2018; Tzotzou, 2014; Khasanah & Madya, 2018) reported the similiar findings. Wu (2012) found teachers

select tasks from the real situations, and Mahbub (2018) found students' preferred activities related to listening (e.g., practice dialogue and monologue), reading (e.g., search the meanings of vocabularies in the text), and writing (e.g., arrange jumbled sentence to be a text). Thus, it is necessary for large-size classes to have group work since it is the opportunity for students to engage in the class. And group students to do tasks or activities are popular since group study allows students to interact with each other (Situmorang, 2021).

However, tasks or activities teachers designed cannot motivate all students, and not all students prefer to study in a group (Table 15). Accordingly, teachers should conduct a survey before the class to know students' interests, which is conducive to designing teaching plans. Notably, at times students' interests to task topics depend on their knowledge, opinions of the topic and to what extent they could discover the topic (Jones, 2007). Thus, teachers should provide some open-ended questions and encourage students to think about their personal experiences related to the topic to talk in groups (Jones, 2007). And it is advisable to have students to know how to execute tasks successfully, and therefore task-related assistance is suggested to adopt to help students address tasks difficulties and learn in a more productive way (Dao & Iwashita, 2018).

In addition, regarding the problem of grouping, teachers should combine work individually, work in pairs or groups and work as a whole class together. For example, students prepare their answer and take notes by working individually and they could work in pairs or groups to discuss their answers and finally they interact with the whole class (Jones, 2007).

With regard to classroom managements, some low-level and high-level students were reluctant to engage in the class. The reason was that low-level students feel inferior and keep silent, while high-level students feel the questions are too easy for them and they are not willing to help low-level students all the time (Table 15). This finding correlates closely with that of Rahmijati and Rizkiani (2014). This implies that teachers should pour attention to the Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), since it has a central part in teaching and learning. By adopting CIC, students could have more opportunities to engage in the class (Walsh, 2012). And teachers should focus more on the meanings that students express rather than the fluency or accuracy since CIC is different from speaking classes. As CIC requires mental ability and conversational strategy (Walsh, 2012), teachers' participation in interaction provides some inspirations for students and encourages them to take turns to interact.

Another challenge in this research is that teachers found students' needs are specific and students with different levels have different needs. The same findings were also published by several related studies (Saenkhum & Accardi, 2013; Wu, 2012). Therefore, it is ideal for teachers to conduct a survey before the class to know students' different needs and attempt to meet needs of most students in large-size classes.

To this end, although this research studied crucial issues that affect effective learning, it must be acknowledged that this study has a number of limitations. This research merely

studied students' learning needs; future research that addresses this limitation is necessary to study the students' target needs in secondary schools to know students' needs more comprehensive.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper researched teachers' perceptions of TI in an SLA class of a Chinese secondary school as a case study. On this basis, we conclude that 1) although teachers identify themselves as different roles in the class, teachers have various perceptions of their roles. Specifically, some teachers understand TI superficially and others recognize TI in detail. The reason is that teachers' cognition is varied, and they have different teaching experiences; 2) Teachers are willing to embrace new teaching methods (e.g., group work and TBLT) and to utilize them in the class. At times, the procedure of implementing those teaching methods are not smooth, since some teachers lack academic experience to acquire theories thoroughly; 3) Although teachers are aware of students' needs, they still found that it is difficult to meet every student's needs and encourage students with different levels to make progress. Teachers, students, researchers and policy makers are concerned in this research. From findings, teachers who teach in the similar contexts could take this study as a reference, since they could know teacher participants' preferred teaching approaches, teaching strategies and their awareness of roles. And it is necessary for students to know teachers' needs and thus cooperate well with teachers. With regard to researchers, they could not only know teachers' views of TI in this context, but also provide teacher education to enrich their theoretical knowledge. Based on the findings, policy makers could design the suitable curriculum-related rules, which caters to the real teaching contexts. As such, this paper will inspire some people (e.g., teachers, students, researchers, policy makers) and give implications to them. My future Ph.D. research will take TI as a follow up research to give more details.

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