Love Your Neighbor as Yourself: Learning from Award-Winning Second Language College Teachers

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Love Your Neighbor as Yourself: Learning from Award-Winning Second Language College Teachers

Abstract
What can we learn from award-winning second language teachers so that we can serve the students at our Christian institutions better? A wide spectrum of college teachers was interviewed about their perspectives on the qualities needed to excel, their classroom practices, and their theories of teaching and learning.

Keywords
second language acquisition, language teachers, excellence, expertise

Disciplines
Christianity | Higher Education | Language and Literacy Education

Comments
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LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF: LEARNING FROM AWARD-WINNING SECOND LANGUAGE COLLEGE TEACHERS

LEENDERT VAN BEEK
PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

To identify, describe, and understand the perspectives award-winning second language college teachers have regarding their qualities, practices, philosophies of teaching, and theories of language learning.
SAMPLING

- **sampling method:** purposeful sampling
- **recruitment:** 70 award winners received an invitation via email
- **sample size:** 16 participants
- **languages:** Chinese, French, German, Italian, Latin, and Spanish
STATES OF THE 16 PARTICIPANTS
DATA COLLECTION

All data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The participants had received the open-ended interview questions a few days prior to their interview. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission and lasted about 45 minutes each.
DATA ANALYSIS

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and reviewed by the participants before analysis. Recurring patterns were studied on three levels:

- open coding,
- axial coding,
- construction of themes.
PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

To identify, describe, and understand the perspectives award-winning second language college teachers have regarding their (1) qualities, (2) practices, (3) philosophies of teaching, and (4) theories of language learning.
INTERVIEW QUESTION 1

What are, in your opinion, the qualities needed to excel as a second language teacher at this institution?
WATCH OUT!

WARNING
DON'T MESS WITH THIS
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER
WHAT ARE, IN YOUR OPINION, THE QUALITIES NEEDED TO EXCEL AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER AT THIS INSTITUTION?

- loving one’s neighbor
- having expertise in the language taught
- being well-versed in second language pedagogy
- practicing self-reflection
- being committed to lifelong learning
- being actively engaged in scholarship
What classroom practices do you use that are conducive to student learning and to teaching excellence?
A STUDENT-CENTERED CLASS…
WHAT CLASSROOM PRACTICES DO YOU USE THAT ARE CONDUCIVE TO STUDENT LEARNING AND TO TEACHING EXCELLENCE?

• the use of technology in the classroom
• enhancing student motivation
• facilitating a student-centered class
• providing timely and adequate feedback
• the use of humor
INTERVIEW QUESTION 3

What are the philosophies of teaching that you support in your instruction?
DIFFERENT CULTURES…
WHAT ARE THE PHILOSOPHIES OF TEACHING THAT YOU SUPPORT IN YOUR INSTRUCTION?

- standards set by teachers’ associations
- cultural sensitivity in one’s teaching
- the use of comprehensible input
- an emphasis on improving communication
What theories of language learning do you believe in?
"WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? LOOK, IT'S EASY TO LEARN FOREIGN LANGUAGES!"
WHAT THEORIES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

- one-size-does-not-fit-all approach
- learning through experience
- self-directed learning
- organized chaos in the class
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- with students of the award winners
- similar study in another part of the world
- online second language programs
- guidelines on how to teach similar content to different age groups
- principles of second language acquisition
ANY QUESTIONS?

This is your chance!