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我如何教一群英文不好，也不想學英文的大學生「新聞英文」

How I teach journalistic English to a bunch of non-gifted and non-motivated college students

 Journalistic English is extremely professional English. I have to admit that I‘m really not qualified to teach this course. In my opinion, unless the teacher has ever worked as a reporter in an English speaking country, or a translator-editor in a big news media, he/she should not teach the course of Journalistic English. However, that sort of talented person won’t get a teaching job in the university, so here I am, teaching journalistic English reading and translating two years in a row.
 The department never has a requirement for the content of the course, figure no one knows how to teach this course back then, so I get to do it my way. Then I found myself run into a problem that is hard to solve. Our students, my students are not good at English, at all. Not to mention grammar, they don’t even know easy words that are often used. To ease their anxiety, I decided not to push them to memorize single words, instead, I’d like them to actually read the news, starting with the domestic news, then international news. As long as the students can read and understand what the news story is about, my teaching goal is reached.
 To motivate students, I ask them to prepare themselves by reading related articles in Chinese. Through this way, students can make up their deficiency of background knowledge and be able to read English news more easily.
 And to choose the teaching material, I try to pick those news stories that are most related to their lives, weather, travel, clothing, eating and drinking, festivals, holidays, etc. Still, the breaking news, important issues drawing attention from the whole world cannot be eliminated.
 Since I carefully selected news from the official websites of CNN, BBC and also the domestic news media such as Formosa TV English news, Taiwan News and Taipei Times. It is quite easy to share material to the FB group of the course which was set up at the beginning of the semester. This way, all material is available for students’ review and preparing for exams.
 To alleviate students’ fear of English, I also assign quite a lot of homework and cut down tests and exams. All the assignments count for points so the students have to put efforts in and do them in a creative way. I asked them (each group) to search for news by their preference to share with the rest of the class, and to pick and practice western pop music with long lyrics to sing in front of the class, and to look for movies and introduce to the class the classical clips from the movie. that is, from which movies? what is the plot? who said that to whom, etc. They have to do the whole thing in English.
 As for the project for their final, I give up the exam since I figure any type of final exam or term paper is not helpful or practical to them. Hence, ever since the first round I gave this course, I made up my mind to just let the traditional exams go. My students would really have a hard time trying to get through the exam, so I let them do what they are good at, or at least capable of. I meant to see some works, works of art, works of various forms, works having real use, not just homework or assignments done by course requirements. Last year my students made a map, a tour map of Dalin town in both Chinese and English and it’s given to the Association of Dalin Cittaslow Development. Then for this semester, we are still thinking either to make the English version of the leaflet of the department or the school. We’re still evaluating which one is more practical and useful.
 At last but not least, I tried to share my experience abroad with students to encourage them to get out of here, studying or traveling, at least they get a chance to speak English and experience various cultures. When I went to Bangkok, Thailand to present in an international conference on March, I showed the students interesting stuff there, local custom, and some particular English words people use in Thailand.
 And that’s all from my teaching journalistic English as an international language.