

In Pursuit of the Democratic Classroom: Striving toward mind-set transformation

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Impact of SLC on Taiwan's Educational Sectors

Fulfilment of the philosophy of SLC in Taiwan

	1	2	3	4
— Public Philosophy				
— Democracy				
— Excellency				

My Observation:

- Need deeper philosophical thinking of democracy

Student-centered has been a resounding slogan for a long time in Taiwan. Nevertheless, it rarely practiced.

The Essential Question is :

WHY THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEMOCRACY RARELY WORKED OUT IN TAIWAN'S CLASSROOM?

My Observation:

- Need mind-set transformation from egoism to individualism.

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Taiwan has encountered SLC already five years, there must be some teachers who has been striving very hard to pursue the democratic classroom. Nick is one of pioneers.

The Essential Question is :

WHAT HAS NICK BEEN THROUGH?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

Fulfilment of the philosophy of SLC in Taiwan

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OUTLINE

1. Nature of SLC, Democracy and Democratic Classroom

2. SLC Impact on Taiwan's Educational Sectors

Need more and deeper philosophical thinking of democracy

3. Hindrance Toward Democratic Classrooms

Need mind-set transformation from egoism to individualism.

4. What's the rationale?

In democratic classroom, all students are created equal, that they are endowed with certain rights.

5. The principles of democratic classrooms

6. The professional development of Mr. Nick Chan in search of the democratic classroom.

7. Follow up : Nick's Classroom

Philosophy of School as Learning Community, SLC



Vision of School

Philosophy

Activity system

— Public Philosophy
— **Democracy**
— **Excellence**

“A **democracy** is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.”(Dewey, 1916)

Excellence is the fruits of SLC

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934)
zone of proximal development

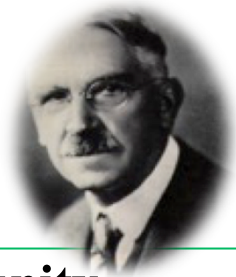
John Dewey (1859-1952)
Democracy and Education

Democracy is the roots /base of SLC

Create peace of mind in the environment

Enhance learning ability and achievement

Landscape of Democratic Schooling

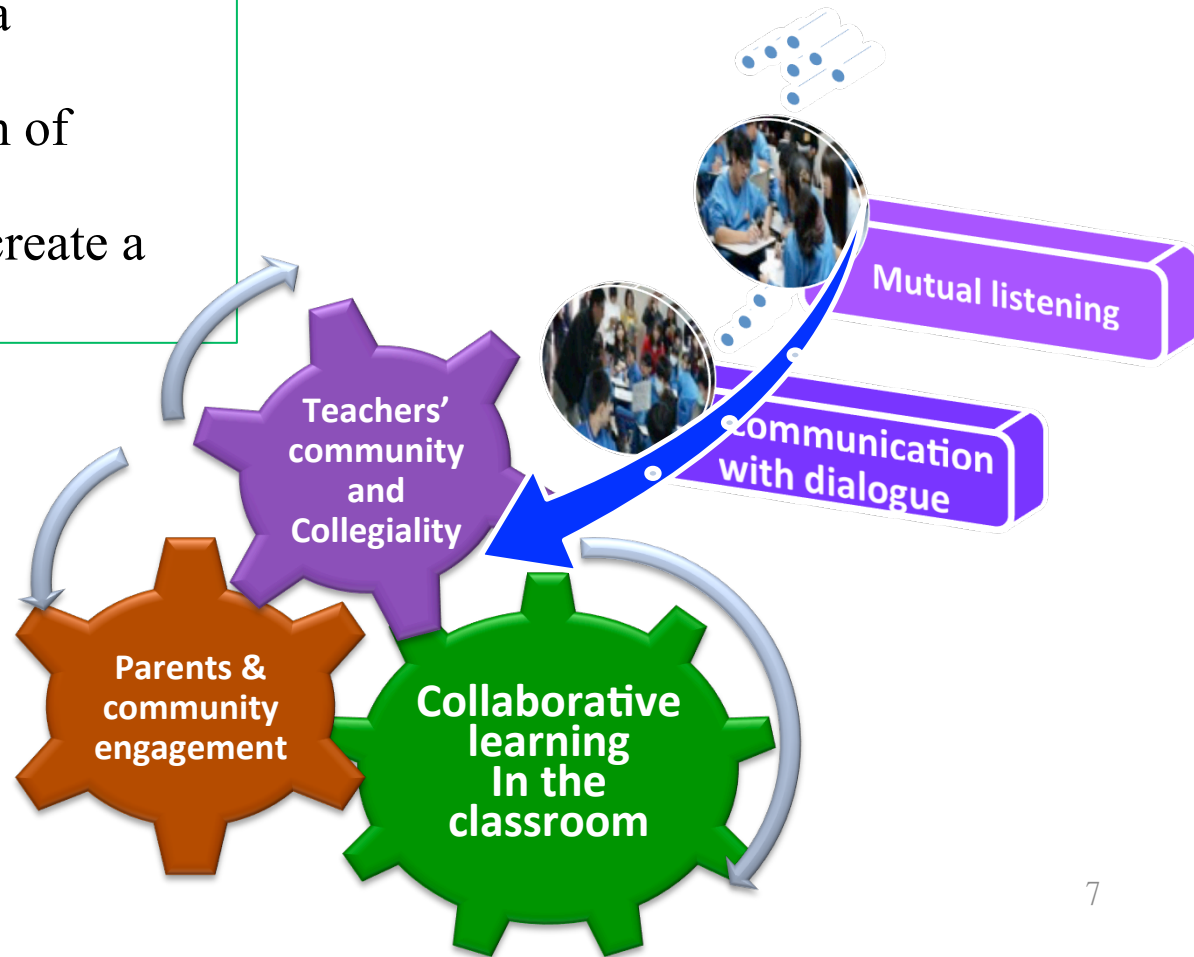


School as miniature community

- **Education** oriented toward a democratic way of **life**.
- **School/Classroom** as a form of community **life**.
- **Communication** can alone create a great community”.



School as learning community





School as a Great Community

Three levels of community

- **Association and interaction:** members join together with some interests.
- **Shared action:** members are cooperative to solve problems of associated living.
- **Shared value:** members share common goals, beliefs, knowledge, and values by communication and understandings.

Children's instincts are expressed well in language as a communication tool.

(Dewey, 1899, p.29)

- Conversation and talk
- Inquiry and discovery
- Making and producing
- Artistic expression



School as a Learning Community

1. A way of associated living.
2. No child be given up.
3. **Teachers engage** in school tasks and decision making to achieve high quality of education .
4. Students, teachers, the principle and parents are all **school protagonists and collaborate one another.**
5. **Conversational / interactive communication** based on relationship **of mutual listening** between student and peers , student and teacher, as well as teacher and colleagues.

(See Sato: “School as Learning Community: Ideal and Practice”)

Impact of SLC on Taiwan's Educational Sectors

1. **Classroom Landscape** are Changing from Behaviorism to Constructionism.
2. **Integrated in the new Curriculum Guideline in Taiwan:** the Ideas and Lesson Study Practice
3. **Teacher autonomy:** Teacher initiated teaching models.
(Emphasize association and interaction in the teachings.)
4. **More focus on professional dialogue** of curriculum and instruction in Teacher community

My observation:

1. **Lack philosophical thinking of democracy**
2. Change is shallow, superficial and Formalism
3. Mixed with other policies and models for convenience

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**WHY THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEMOCRACY
RARELY WORK OUT IN TAIWAN'S
CLASSROOM?**

Hindrance Toward Democratic Classroom

1. Social Structure and Culture

- Teacher's traditional authority/
Teacher- centered teaching

2. Emphasize Educational Efficiency, Accountability

- Too often and too many kinds
of evaluation

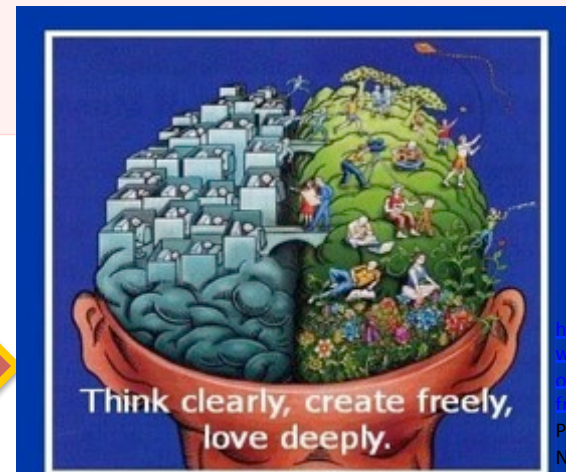
3. School Culture of Competition

- Overemphasize competition keeps
teacher and students busy on
formalism without thinking.
- Induce too many reform models :
Fancy, Shallow and unnecessary
competition

4. Teaching Models

- Knowledge-oriented teaching
- Activities-oriented teaching

Need mind-set transformation



<http://www.anonymousartofrevolution.com/2012/12/think-clearly-create-freely-love-deeply.html>
Posted 4th December 2012 by Toni Nicolle

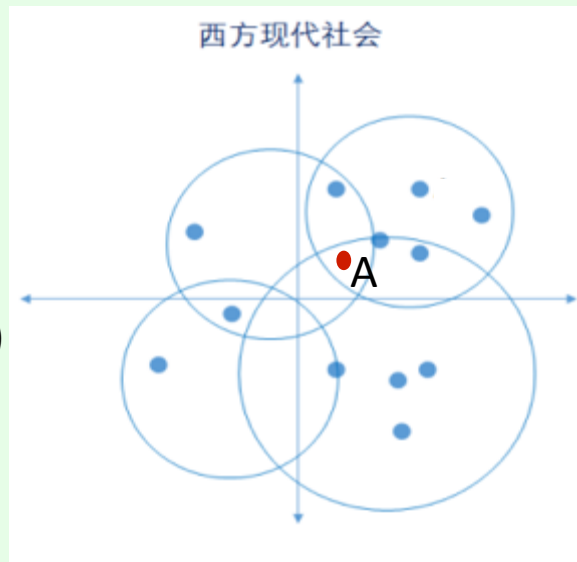
Interpretation of Social Structure

费孝通(1947) 差序格局

Western Modern Society

團體格局(Tuanti geju)

“group/community mode of association”

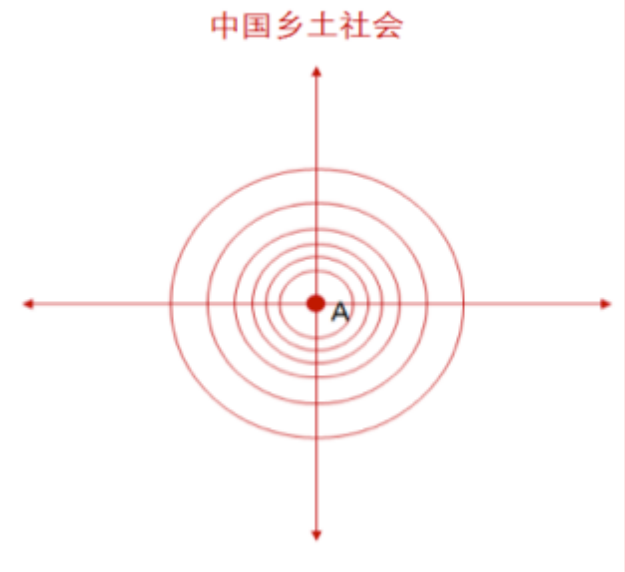


Clarify one's rights
Fight for the rights

Chinese Traditional Society

差序格局(Chaxu geju)

“the differential mode of association”



Clarify one's “guanxi”
(關係, relationship)
Pursue the “guanxi”



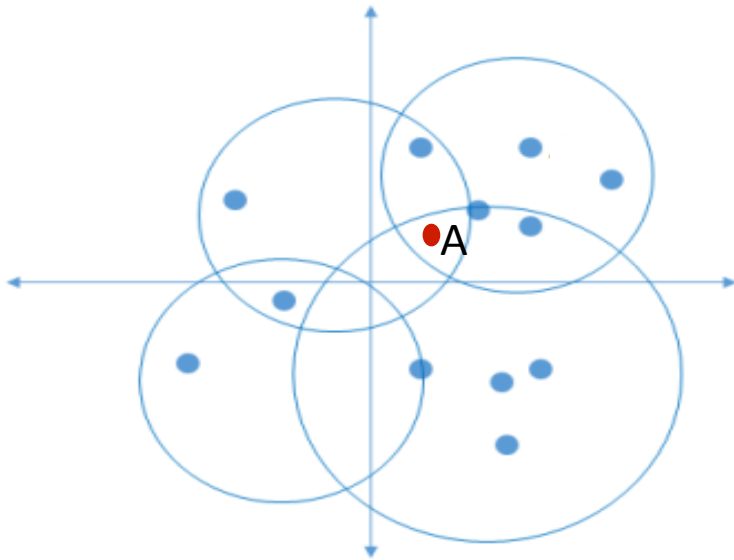
費孝通(Fei , Xiaotong)
(1910-2005)

團體格局(Tuanti geju)

“group/community mode of association”

- People committed themselves to various communities

西方现代社会



Clarify one's rights
Fight for one's rights

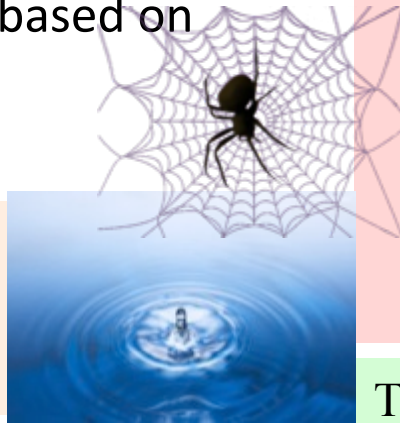
Individualism

1. In the concept of group, the boundaries within and outside the group are clear, and the relationship and grading in the group are also predetermined.
 2. Group structure is based on religion. **The group symbolizes God.** Everyone in the group is equal; and the group treats everyone fair and protects everyone with love.
- 1) **Under the individualism, the status of the members in the group is equal.** Everyone respect others' rights. No individual can violate other's rights.
 - 2) **The group must protect the right of each member.** It can not deny and harm the rights of the individual; furthermore, it may control the public affair only if individuals are willing to submit some right. The group exercises power only in the context of justice and care.

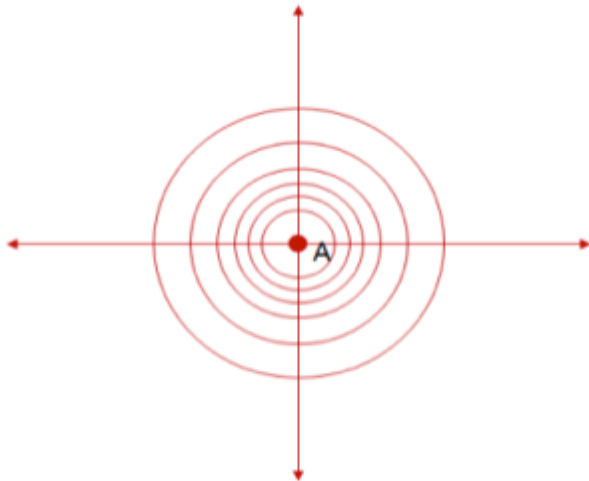
Traditional Chinese Society

差序格局(Chaxu geju)

- ◆ the differential mode of association”
- ◆ “guanxi” (關係) as Concentric ripples. / Spider web
- ◆ “guanxi” (關係) is based on
 - kinship
 - area



Clarify one's “guanxi”
(關係, relationship)
Pursue the “guanxi”



egoism

1. It is not an individualism, but **egoism**.
2. In this highly scalable network, there is a **"self" center** anytime, anywhere.
3. The individual exists for the group and is the molecule to the whole.
4. **The ethics are formed in accord with self-centered network of association.** The ethnics, so called Lun (倫) hold differential grading in practice. For example,父子、君臣、夫婦、兄弟、朋友；天地君親師。

The main features of Chaxu geju are:

1. the importance of kinship,
2. the relativity of public and private,
3. self-centered ethics,
4. Rites order, that is, the use of traditional interpersonal relationships and ethics to maintain social order,
5. the political mechanism of the rule of the elders

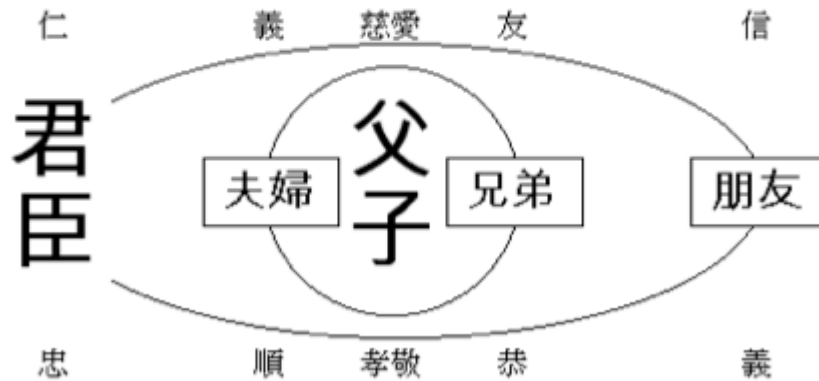
The ethics are formed in accord with
self-centered network of association

五倫 Five ethics

社會架構：

家庭內(父子、夫婦、兄弟)

家庭外(君臣、朋友)



In the cultural context, teachers hold much responsible position within the classroom. There is rarely a mind-set of student-centered teaching in them.

五恩/五聖 Five Graces /
Five holy ghosts



Back to the ideal of democratic classroom, a great community...; a learning community...

Chinese Traditional Society

1. The relationship between teacher and student is like father and son.
2. In a patriarchal society, how is that teacher and students hold equal status possible ?

In the cultural context, teachers hold much responsible position within the classroom. They're not able to practice student-centered teaching *unless there is a persuasive argument which changes their traditional mind-set.....*

中国乡土社会

Western Modern Society

1. All students are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain rights.
What's the rationale?
2. How to make sure that every student is protected with equal rights?

西方现代社会

Here is a typical Argument....

When they strived for their own independent country.....

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.



This also applies to classrooms and schools
What's the rationale?



If God is an omnipresent being, how could he create a world with sin and imperfection?

TSIMTSUM (lit. "**contraction**");

1. The Jewish culture believes that **God is everywhere, so there would be no room for creation.**
2. The idea that creation occurs when **God contracts himself in order for there to be an abundance of creation.**



The Metaphor of Bagel

When God withdrew all the light from that hole, He was really still there. And He still is there. For Him, nothing really changed. It's just that **He wanted a space where He could get across the essential point of everything.**



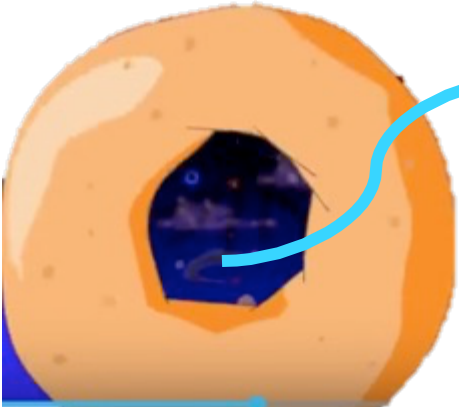
- ❑ A psychological space.
- ❑ It's what makes people divine.
- ❑ To have free will.
- ❑ To decide on one's own lives.
- ❑ To be real people.

In the space, each one is protected by God(the group) holds certain rights.

- ✓ Right of equality
- ✓ Right of life
- ✓ Right of liberty
- ✓ Right of the pursuit of happiness

- The hole is like **psychological space**. He makes space for us to have **free will**. To make our own decisions. To **decide on our lives**, where we want to go and what we want to be.
- He puts darkness and light in front of us, all mixed up, so that we will have a choice. And when we choose the right thing, we show that He is there, breathing within our **freedom of choice**.
- So the empty hole is the space for us to be real people.

MISSION: Make the Space/World Shine



Mutual Association and communication

No one be let behind or given up

Freedom to fulfil diverse talents to shine bright.

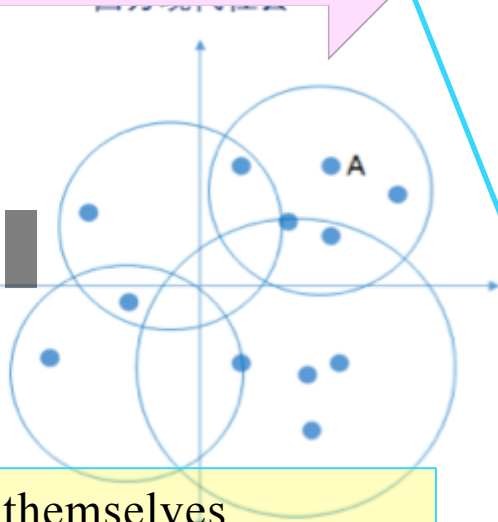
Connected in the same group/ community. Hold Equal status.

Oil: Shared same spirit and values.

Shared power& responsibilities



This is a great community looks like?



People committed themselves to various communities



What is Tsimtsum

1. Hebrew word meaning “**contraction**”
2. The Jewish culture believes that God is everywhere, so there would be no room for creation.
3. The idea that creation occurs **when God contracts himself in order for there to be an abundance of creation.**

Tsimtsum

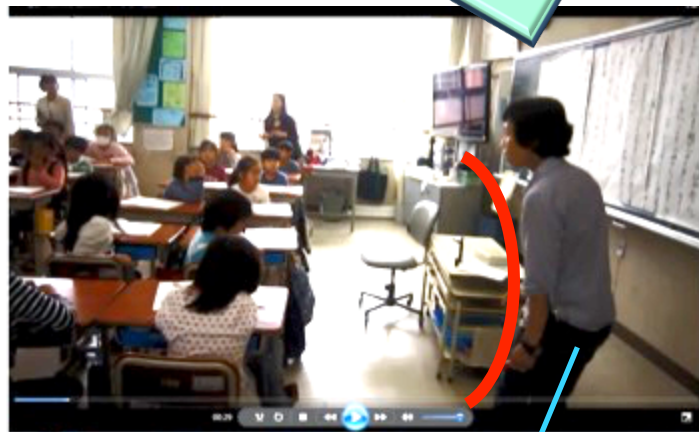
7. Tsimtsum can also describe shrinking oneself in order to understand God’s divinity.
8. In the same way, **The Tsimtsum contracted itself in order for Pi to experience this journey to find himself.**

Principles of Democratic Classroom

Learned from above argument.



Change



A SLC Teacher Contracts herself

1. **Teacher have to contract himself /herself to make a room for students** to find themselves. Eg. Change mind-set, languages (vocabulary, body, tone, volume,), space, etc.
2. **School as miniature community**
 - ✓ Students are created equal.
 - ✓ Students hold the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
 - ✓ Students are all protagonists and collaborate one another.
3. **Classroom as a great learning community**
 - ✓ Communication can create a great community.
 - ✓ Mutual listening is the prerequisite for communication.
 - ✓ Members keep association, interaction, shared action and shared value
4. **The design of learning activities should follow the instincts of students.**
 - ✓ Conversation and talk
 - ✓ Inquiry and discovery
 - ✓ Making and producing
 - ✓ Artistic expression

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The Essential Question is :

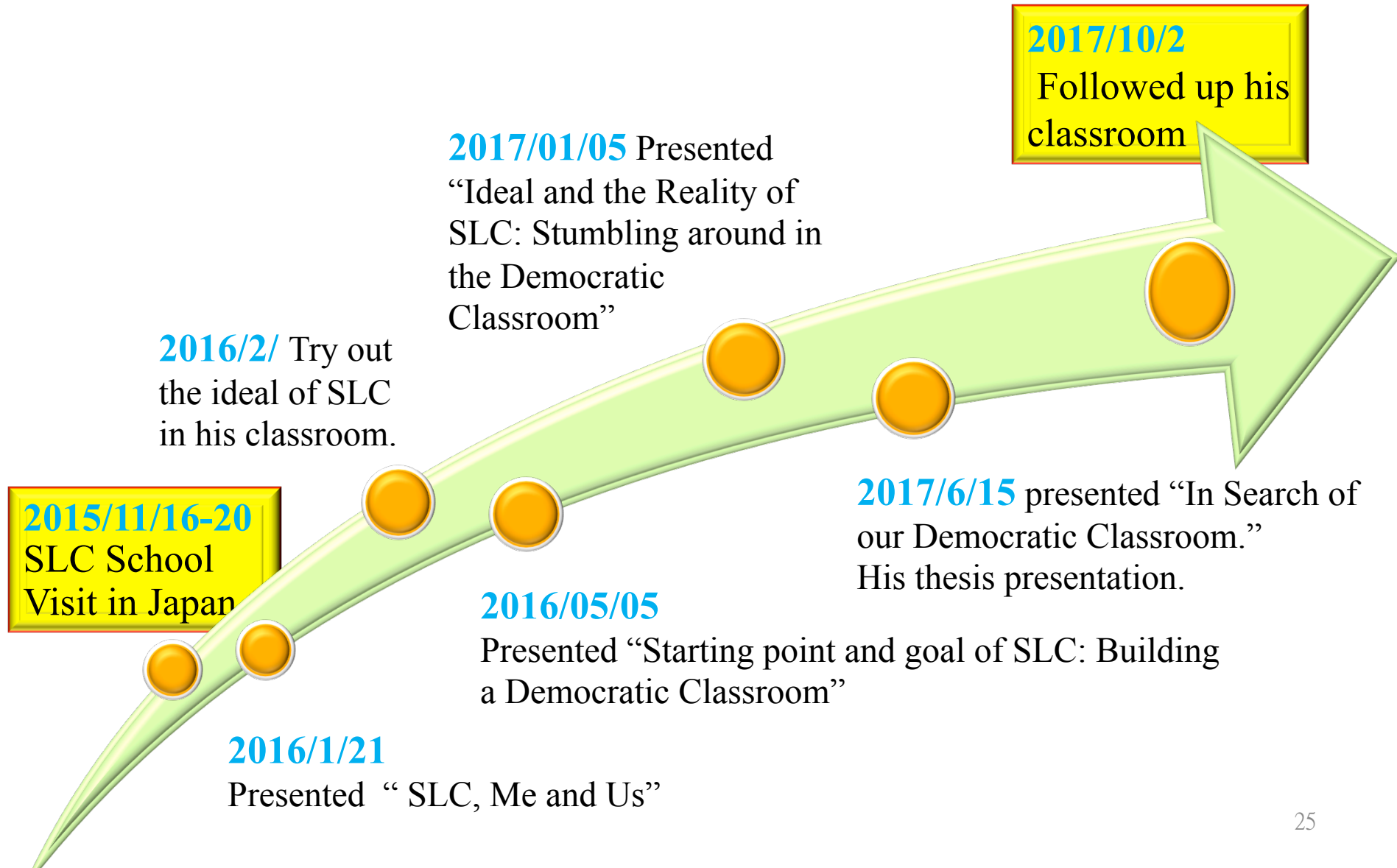
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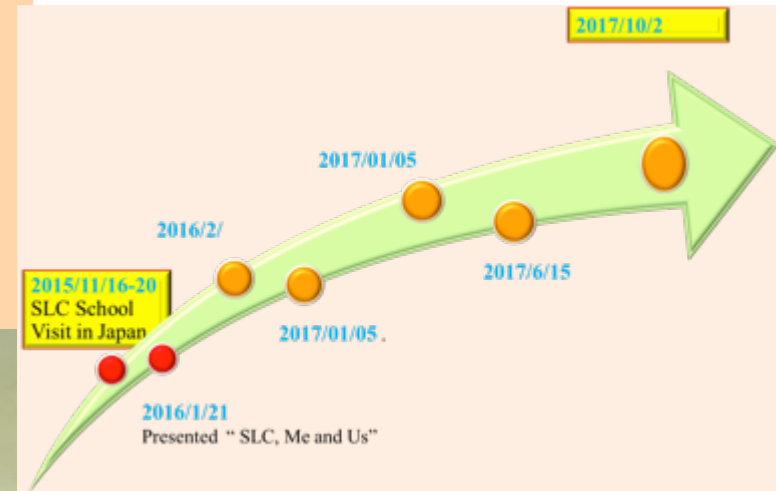
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In Search for our Democratic Classroom: Professional Development of Mr. Nick Chan



2015/11/16- 20 SLC School Visit in Japan
2016/1/21 Presented “ SLC, Me and Us”



2016/1/21 Presented his deep reflection from SLC school visit in Japan. “SLC Me and Us”

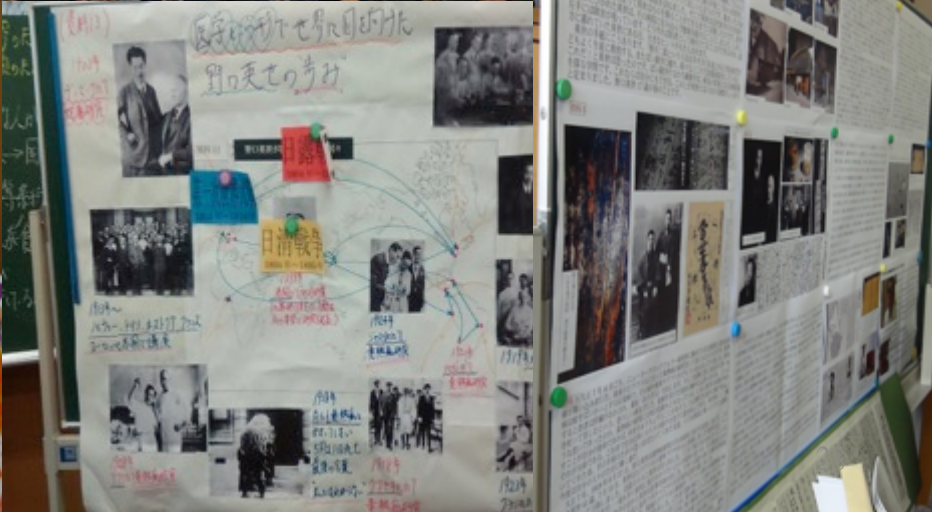


	Yasaka協坂	Nick 我
Loading 節數	29 sessions/ per week	16 sessions/ per week
Subjects 科目	Almost all subjects	About half of the subjects
Social studies 社會	2 years	10 years
Off work	after 7 pm	before 7 pm

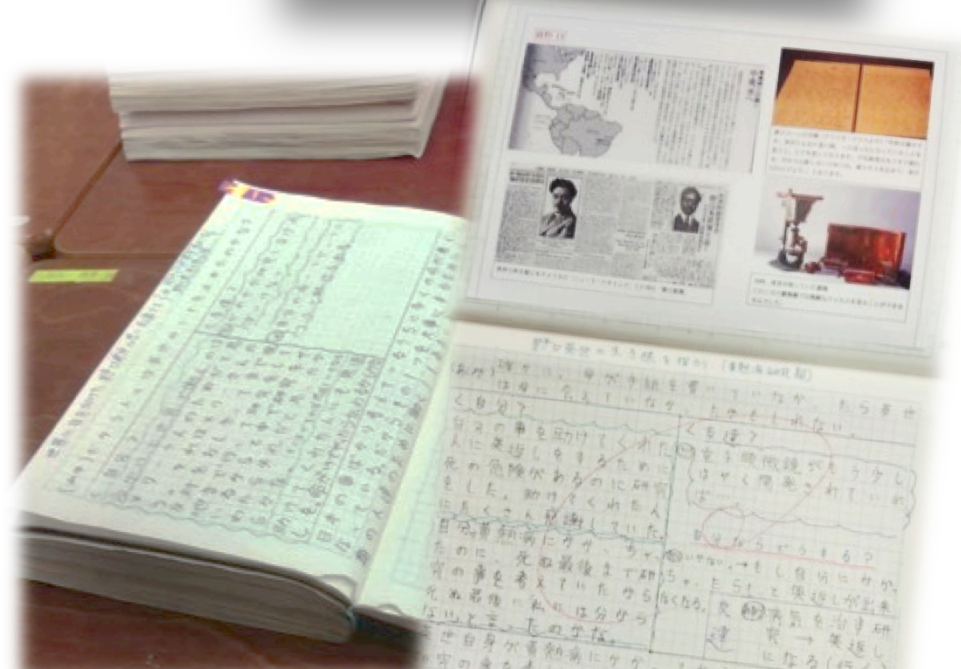
Nick: I’m ashamed. Don’t know what I’m tired out for.

浜之郷 6年3班 脇坂老師 累完的成果...

Nick: The results of what Mr. Yasaka has done are amazing.



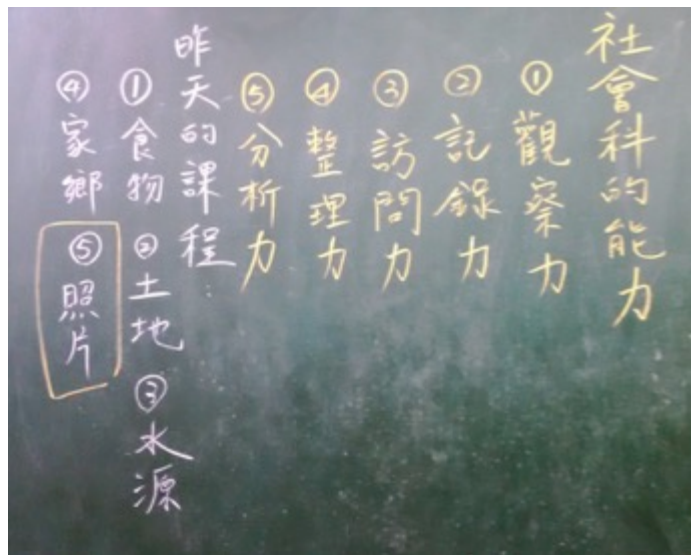
Nick: I have workbooks for students.
But the thickness and richness of the
workbook is much worse.



Taiwan's student workbook:
Focus on memorizing knowledge from
the textbooks.

Mr. Yasaka's students : Collect and sort
data; Write down the ideas.

How to use blackboard...



Taiwan: Teacher's exclusive message board!



Mr. Yasaka:
The thinking tracks from the whole class.

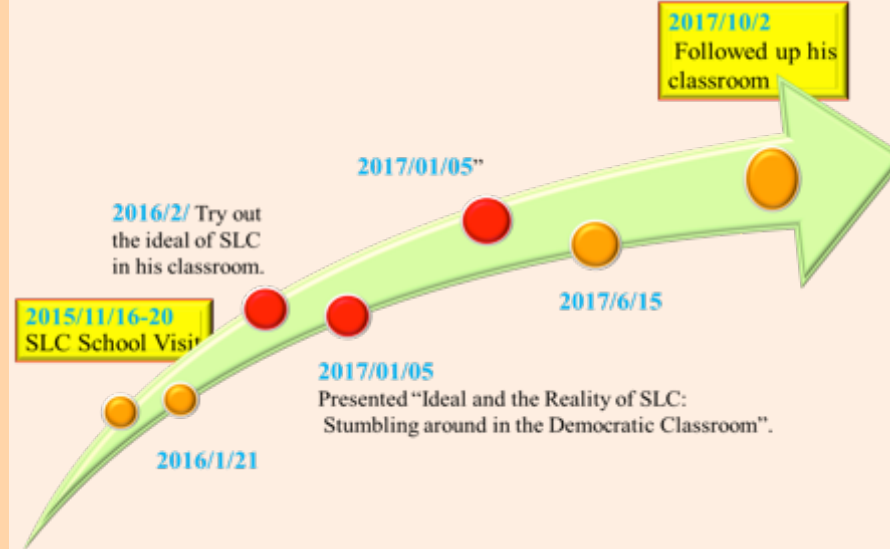
NICK: SLC is a philosophy to be practiced.

- Learning go first, then teaching
(先學後教。)
- Taught is not equal to what learned
(教過不等於學會。)
- Preparation is for Ready without.
(備課是為了「備而不用」)
- Design learning plan, rather than teaching plan
(設計「學案」而非「教案」)
- Focus on student's learning pace; no need to catch up the schedule.
(重視「學習速度」就不必「趕進度」)

2016/2/ Try out the ideal of SLC in his classroom.

2016/05/05 Presented “Starting point and goal of SLC: Building a Democratic Classroom”

2017/01/05 Presented “Ideal and the Reality of SLC: Stumbling around in the Democratic Classroom”





一百個人有一百種學共。

100 people have a total of 100 kinds of SLC.

您是否也有
自己想堅持的那一種？

Do you also have
the one you want to keep to?

Nick (2017/01/05):

"Democracy" is the key to carrying out SLC
which is the way that I insist on.

SLC 學習共同體

Stretch & jumping challenge

listening association retrieving

preparation observation Deliberation

Peace & calm atmosphere

"Democracy" is the key
to carrying out SLC.

Literacy of Democracy 民主素養

Deliberative negotiation;
Rational critique

Respect differences;
Multiple values

Seeking consensus among the differences

Respecting differences among the similar

Group consensus

Individual diversity

審議協商
理性批判

Deliberative negotiation
Rational critique

審議式班會
Deliberative democracy
for class meeting

proposal

discussion

Vote



審議協商
理性批判

Deliberative negotiation
Rational critique

審議式班會

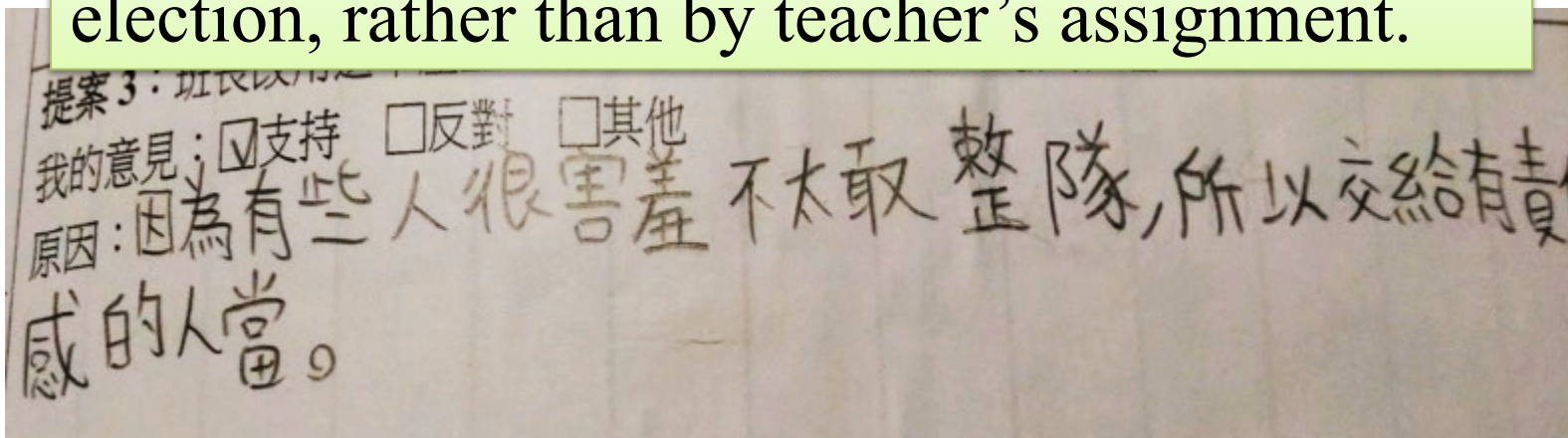
Deliberative democracy
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Proposal : class leader's appointment is by election, rather than by teacher's assignment.



☆Before discussion, each one express his/her opinion.

我支持, 理由是...

I support it. The reason is...

審議協商
理性批判

Deliberative negotiation
Rational critique

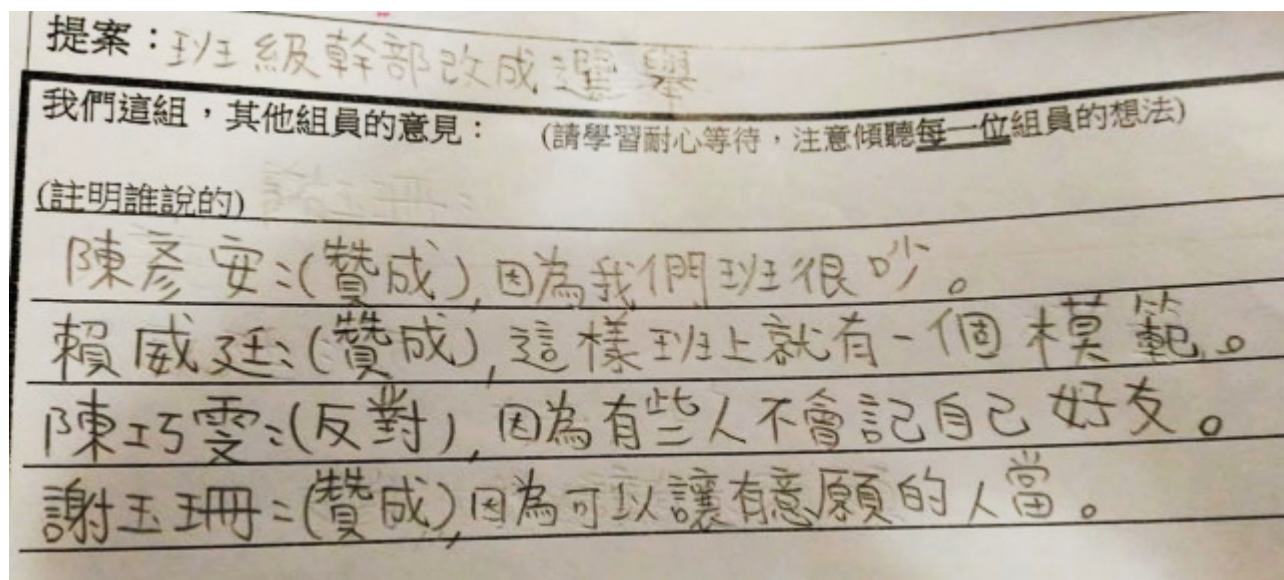
審議式班會

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☆Students shared opinions in the group session.

Some supported the proposal, others didn't.
Their reasons were recorded.

審議協商 理性批判

Deliberative negotiation
Rational critique

審議式班會

Deliberative democracy
for class meeting

proposal

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Vote

我們這班，別組同學的意見： (請收集各種不同的意見，愈多愈好)

(註明誰說的)

6	李睿恩：如果沒有責任感的人怎麼管這個班。(贊成)
17	江妮玟：因為這樣大家無法當班長、副班長。(反對)
15	孫瑜憶：因為有些也想當。(反對) 25.12.10
23	江依潔：選一個比較不會聊天的當。(贊成)
14	邱于庭：有些幹部會記討厭的人。(反對)
16	周庭禕：用權力恐嚇別人。(反對)

☆Collect the opinions from the whole class.

Consider deliberatively the reasons pro or con.

審議協商 理性批判

Deliberative negotiation
Rational critique

審議式班會

Deliberative democracy
for class meeting

proposal

discussion

Vote

聽完我們這組所有同學的意見後，我的新意見是：☐支持 ☒反對 ☐其他
原因：因為有些人也想當，而且還有人不記自己好友，還有些股長還會看別人臉色。

☆In the final step,
write down one's decision.

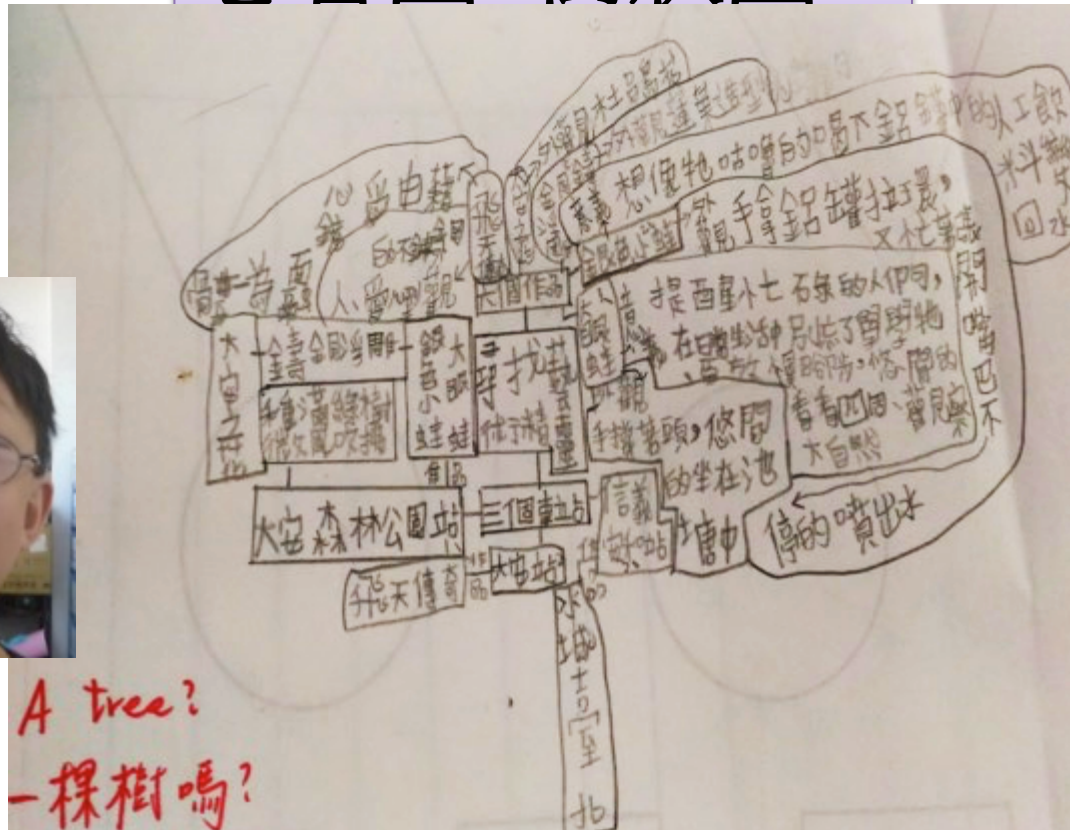


My new opinion turn to...

尊重差異
多元價值

Respect differences;
Multiple values

心智圖+樹狀圖？



☆A slow learner create the picture. Teacher praised him publically based on the idea of respect differences. He then gradually got approved by others and stimulated others' to better their work. Eventually he was nicknamed “**Doctor**”.

驚喜了老師、刺激了同儕、看重了自己。

尊重差異
多元價值

Respect differences;
Multiple values

數學的解題策略 Problem solving strategies

Method 1

Method 2

Method 3

Method 4

Method 5

the textbook method

☆The design model of "Mountain Climbing" was applied to Math class.

Students explored the method 1-4. The 5th was the textbook method.

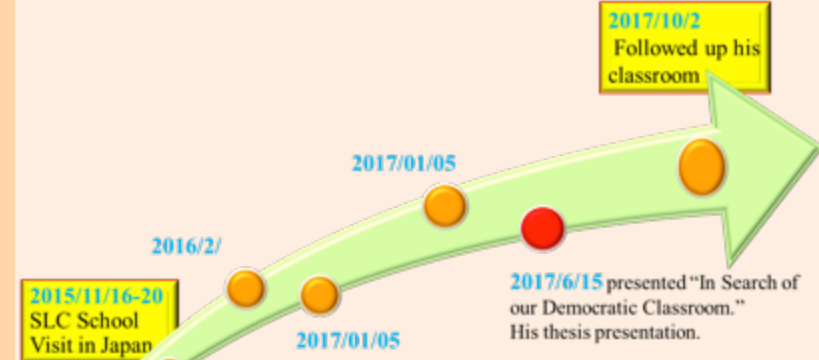
predicament

- School-wide exams still emphasized memorization and competitive ranking. The ranking and score of Nick's class was a little behind in short term.
- Hard to deal with student's disordered behaviors.
- Awaken student's talkative instincts, but still working on "listening" attitude.

New understanding

- **“Collecting”** multiple opinions is not good enough.
“Understanding” multiple perspectives is the key.
- The democratic spirit of SLC is everywhere;
What a teacher lacks is to find it and practice it.

2017/6/15 presented “In Search of
our Democratic Classroom.”
Thesis presentation.



探尋屬於我們的民主教室 --輔以班會對話分析

In Search of Our Democratic Classroom
Dialogue analysis on class meetings

Nick Chan

Master Thesis presentation
2017/6/15

Ideal Image of “Democratic

Democratic community

associated living

Conjoint communicated experience



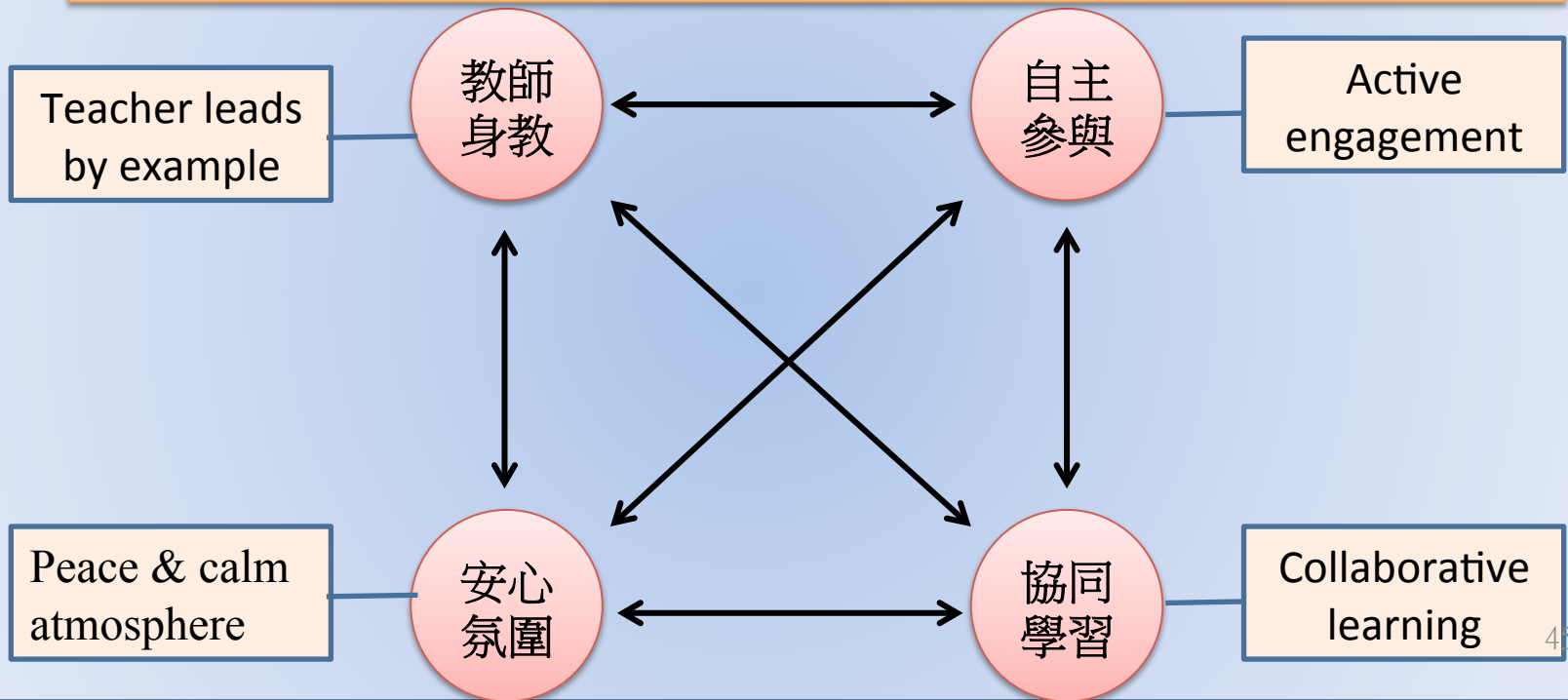
Learning Community

Public

Democracy

Excellence

Management principles for the Democratic Classroom



Implementation of democratic class meeting

☆班會議題：固定議案、臨時議案

☆班會形式：意見分享型、共識凝聚型

Discussion
Principle

communication centered meetings

Discussion
Mode

individual

grouping

Whole class

individual

Deliberation Spirit:

Full knowledge, mutual understanding, consensus conclusion

充分知情、相互理解、共識結論

Construction Process of our democratic classrooms

研究目的(一)
理想與現實的辯證

1. Shared Vision

民主的權威者形象
增加生生經驗溝通
後設建立批判態度
鼓勵提案改善班務

3. Opportunity of Change

公開觀課民主討論
班級幹部選舉與否
批判模範生的條件
認同班會認同改變

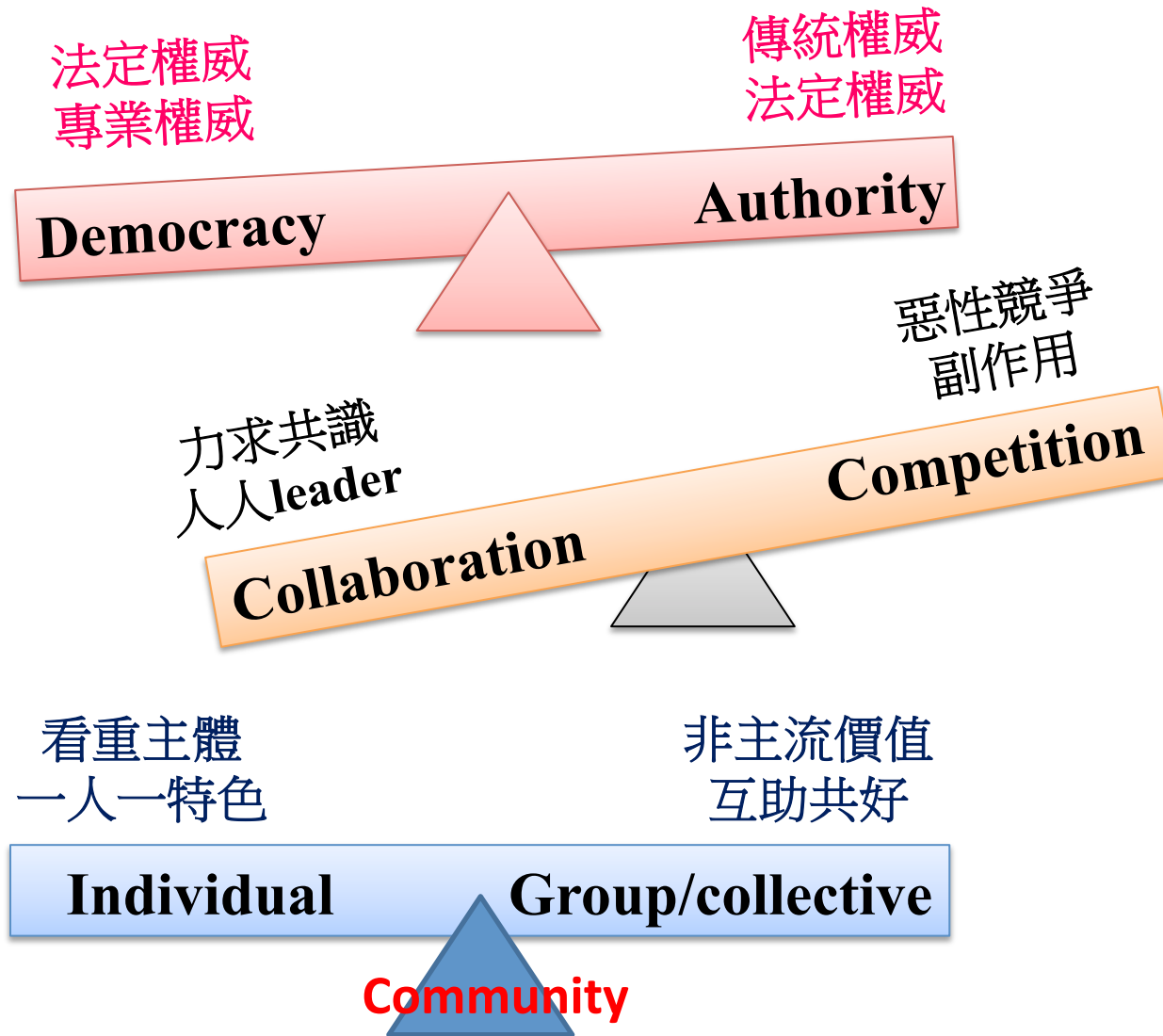
2. Hindrances in Reality

學生無感「不思變」 Some students are not sensitive to the undemocratic things and do not want to change.

無法忍受「不民主」 In order to deal with student disordered and "undemocratic" behavior, resorting to **teacher authority**.

難以跳脫「較勁心」 It is difficult to be free from the "rivalry heart."

Profile of Rival Values in our Democratic Classroom



Nick's reflection showed that he has advanced to philosophical thinking of democracy.

- Democracy vs. Authority
- Collaboration vs. Competition
- Individual vs. Collective

He has been struggling for mind-set transformation in search of the democratic classroom.

Struggles in Nick's Democratic Classroom

- Nick:
- The pursuit of democratic classroom has not been going well.
- I admitted I shouted to my students once when they lost self control; I lost self control too. I responded to the chaos with my traditional authority.

- Students:
- Our teacher is a good man, very nice, very gentle to us. Unlike my ex-teachers, he seldom lost temper. But he did yelled at us a few times because the class misbehaved.

Nick's tentative **Conclusion** : So, Democracy IS...

1. Nature of democratic literacy is **love** after all.
2. The way to democracy is the **process of seeking a balance** among subjectivities in the classroom.
3. Democracy grows in the dynamic process of **certainty to uncertainty, and then to reconfirmation**.
4. Each democratic classroom is **unique**. There is **no template** to practice a democratic classroom.

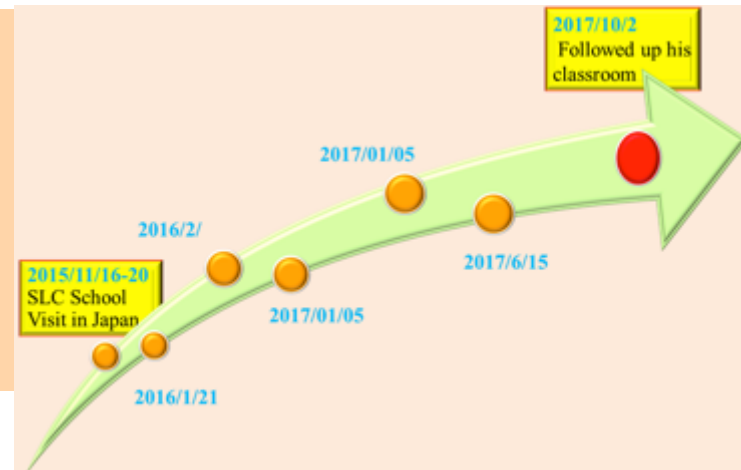
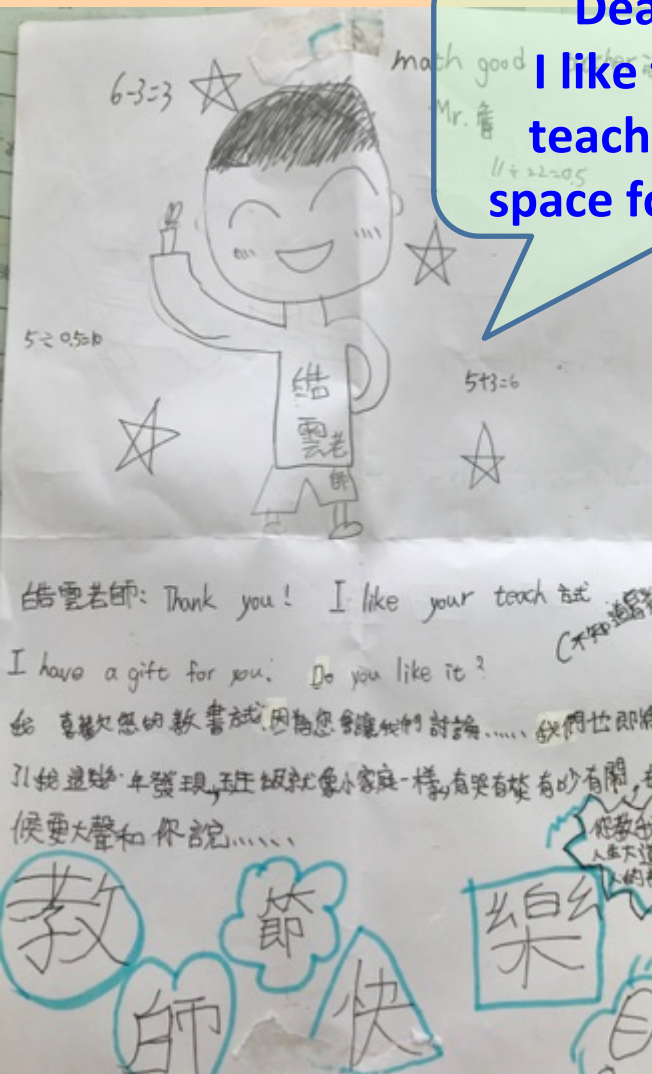
Nick's **Suggestion** to educators...

1. Regularly carry out substantive student **self-governing** activities
1. Increase **collaborative** learning activities and reduce competitive learning activities
2. In a democratic Classroom, concerned more about the class's inner **diversity**, rather than the class's external conformity and Similarity.

2017/10/2

Follow up: Nick's classroom

Dear Teacher,
I like the way you
teach. You give us
space for discussion...



Democratic Classroom keeps moving forward— **Students' self-governing learning clubs**



Ukulele Club



Hip-hop Dance Club



Chess Club



Experiment Club



實 驗

日期: 9/6

標題: 爆炸氣水

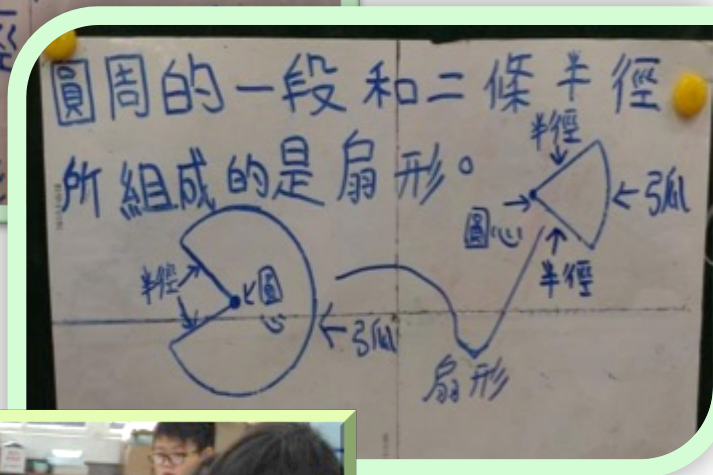
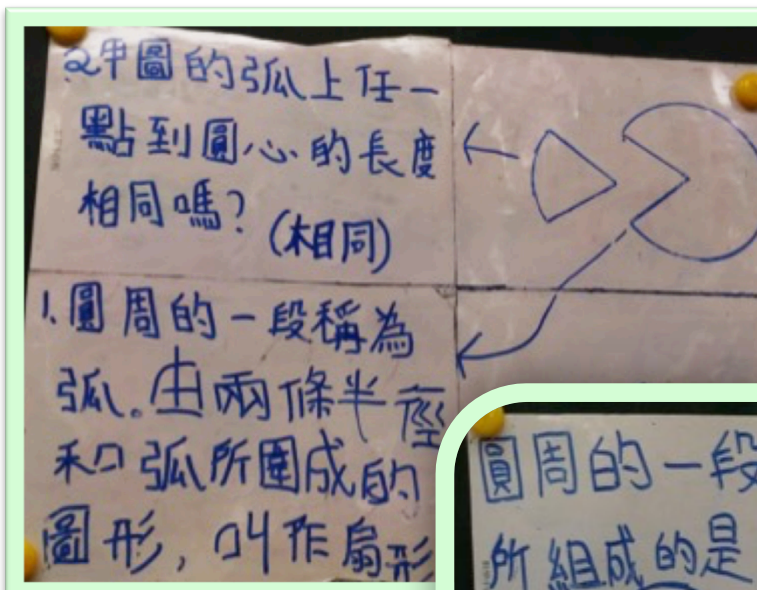
材料: 曼陀珠、可口可樂

做法: 可樂 + 曼陀珠

結果: 只有發泡

原理: 曼陀珠是甜的, 表面粗
樂會爆出來。

Self-directed Learning: Math Unit



Democratic Classroom , Student-centered, and dialogue based on listening are not slogans. What we preach, we are resolved to practice. Teachers are not able to practice student-centered teaching *unless there is a persuasive argument which changes their traditional mind-set.....*

**CLARIFYING THE NATURE OF
DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM AS WELL AS
TRANSFORMING THE TAKE-IT-FOR-
GRANTED MIND-SET ARE THE KEYS.**

讓自己成為那個你想要看到的改變
(Be the change you want to see)



敬請指教！♪

陳麗華 教授 淡江大學課程與教學研究所
詹皓雲老師/三芝國小