

CHINA

Implementation of CRC-Based Teacher Training Program in IMNU and TVC, Inner Mongolia, China

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1. Frame of Reference

CRC awareness has undoubtedly become embedded in change agents' awareness since the CRC Training Program started in Inner Mongolia in 2005. Meanwhile, tremendous amounts of work has been carried out in this region, which covers the dissemination of participatory approach, the enhancement of parents' role in classroom teaching, and the emphasis of administrators' role in school management. Favorable results have been achieved in the protection of child rights. CRC, owing to the untiring efforts of our former change agents, has been exposed to many people concerned, including some officials and teachers, who have gradually started to comprehend CRC and some even spontaneously start to launch campaigns of spreading the conception of CRC, which is obviously a positive signal.

However, the progress of CRC dissemination in Inner Mongolia is more or less unsatisfactory after more than half a decade's effort. The problems, which hinder the CRC dissemination in the region, are listed as follows:

1) CRC, since being introduced into schools in Inner Mongolia, has never been regarded as an inseparable part of our curriculum in any school, resulting in the unintentional ignorance either on headmasters' or teachers' parts to some extent, let alone students themselves.

2) The methods of disseminating CRC have been only confined to certain rigid forms, such as giving lectures to hundreds of target individuals, making eye-catching posters

on campus or in classrooms, or implementing participatory teaching approach in separate classes, all of which in fact have no long lasting effect.

3) Lack of formal CRC training materials (textbooks) substantially hinders the results of the changing efforts.

Attempting to tackle these problems, the China team in this batch plans to introduce CRC into classrooms, making it an indispensable part in Teaching Syllabus of the IMNU (Inner Mongolia Normal University) and the TVC (Tongliao Vocational College), which is and will be an unprecedented breakthrough in our colleges, and even in the autonomous region as a whole. Today, August 2012, there are 18 Change Agents or former participants in this CRC training programme still very active in Inner Mongolia (batch 1 to batch 16). Three more Change Agents are now joining the CRC training programme in September 2012.

2. Purposes

The program entitled “Implementation of CRC-Based Teacher Training Program in IMNU & TVC” is planned to last about 4 years (June, 2011-July, 2015) with the following aims:

- to increase pre-service/in-service teachers’ awareness of CRC in classroom teaching,
- to increase principles’ awareness of CRC-based participation in school management,
- to encourage them to implement CRC-based participatory approach, and
- to maintain the sustainability of the CRC project in Inner Mongolia, China.

In order to achieve these proposes, the change agents of the project take the following peoples as targeted groups:

- related staff teachers in IMNU, and TVC
- students in Inner Mongolian Normal University & Tongliao Vocational College who are trained to be future teachers
- representatives of in-service primary and secondary teachers from different regions of Inner Mongolia, China
- representatives of principles from primary and second schools in Inner Mongolia, China.

3. Activities

With inspiration and encouragement got from the training program, we devoted our time and energy to this great cause of protecting child rights by taking advantage of our administrative positions and academic backgrounds. During the past one and a half years, a lot of efforts have been done before getting leaders' final approval to modify the syllabus by inserting CRC course into the compulsory ones.

3.1 Activities in TVC

Ms Liu Haihong and her CRC partners in TVC carried out various activities which secures a smooth complementation of the project in her college.

Obtaining approval

To ensure the project to go smoothly, Miss Liu has to gain support from higher administrating levels. She persuaded the president and the college academic committee to accept her idea. The backbone teachers were also encouraged to take part in this great course.

Approval of the president

While receiving training in Sweden, Miss Liu Haihong (or named: Ms Kathy) kept regular contact with President Guan, who is a key figure carrying weight on big decisions, informing him of the detailed progress of the training and discussing with him details of the implementation plan. As a result, Mr. Guan has a deeper understanding of the project and shows greater interest in it.

After the completion of training program, she made a detailed report to President Guan and exchanged views with him on many issues concerning the spread of CRC in TVC, including the modification of syllabus. He promised to totally support this project plan, saying that any support ranging from material aspects to financial ones shall be provided without any constraints.

Support from the CAC

In TVC, modification of teaching syllabus cannot without the support from the members of the College Academic Committee (CAC). At the meeting, Liu briefly introduced the project to CAC members and emphasized the significance and urgency of introducing CRC into the college, which incurred a lot of questions and doubts from the CAC members. One argued and won supports that the students in the college are over eighteen and are not eligible for CRC items. The proposal of adding CRC to syl-

labus was once severely defied by some members, who alleged that CRC is not related to their teaching aim. After nearly two hours' heated argument and patient explanation, the proposal was finally agreed upon (see photos attached).

Discussions with relevant teachers

The final stage involved discussions with backbone teachers from various departments concerned, which appeared to be more smooth than expected. The core issue is how to formally integrate CRC into the students' training plan for Grade 2011. In the discussions, some valuable and feasible suggestions are proposed, which propelled the quick approval and adoption of new syllabus by Teaching Affairs Division. (Enclosed please find the formal application and approval documents, and training plan for different majors included.)

Activities at TVC

Various activities, involving both students and teachers, were carried out to ensure a good start of the project, and expected results were achieved.

Teachers' training

Changes agents in TVC exerted great efforts to encourage and motivate more teachers to take part in this great course.

Delivery of lectures

To get more teachers motivated in the great cause of disseminating CRC, two lectures were given to more than 200 young teachers. Four teachers played different roles in giving the lectures, in which interactive and participatory approaches were applied. The Lecturers' task is to go out to get all trainees present to enjoy the atmosphere and to change their traditional view on lectures. Most of the audience were attracted both by the concept of CRC and the methods employed by the lectures.

In the lectures, discussions and debates were taken between groups. The participants were required to write their comment or viewpoints on large sheets of paper and then give presentations. After the lectures, one teacher remarked, "I've never attached importance to child rights before. I can't exactly remember how many times I drove students out of my class just because they were not listening to me. I now know I'm to be blamed for that. My next class will be totally transformed. It will be a class with smile and laughter, a class showing respect to each individual."

Demonstration classes given by teachers

Two demonstration classes were given by two teachers in which participatory approach was applied. The classes were greatly welcomed by the students and impressive effect was achieved. The change agents' confidence in changing was greatly enhanced. (video on the spot being attached)

Students' training

Besides organizing teacher activities, Liu and her partners also carried out various students' training programs.

CRC education to target classes

In accordance with the detailed implementation plan, Mr Wang Lan, an English teacher from Teachers' Training Faculty, gave lectures about child right protection to pilot classes. A questionnaire containing forty questions was also handed out to the target students (questionnaire attached as appendix). Based on the answers obtained, a range of activities were carried out aiming to raise the students' awareness of law, especially of CRC.

A preliminary CRC education was also given to over 1,000 freshmen shortly after they entered the college. Participatory approach was applied in the process, which aroused their great interest and most of them volunteered to demonstrate themselves without showing shyness or timidity as they often do in other situations. Some commented this meeting as democratic and open, adding that they liked it so much that they were in the hope that classes will be given in this way.

Lectures presented by Mr Lulan – former CRC Change Agents

Invited by Ms Liu Haihong (Kathy), Mr Lulan (a former participants and CRC-Change Agents in Batch 11) gave two lectures to the students from Grades 2010 and 2009, the contents of which cover:

- A) a quick glimpse of Sweden, including cultures, education, welfare and history, which all aroused the students' interests and curiosities;
- B) a brief introduction of what CRC is about and what has been done in the last few years in child rights protection in Inner Mongolia;
- C) what the college is doing in terms CRC and what students should have in mind with regard to CRC.

Mr Lulan emphasized that the students should not only be familiarized with the concept of CRC, but also bear the responsibility of disseminating the concept to whoever

they will be teaching after graduation. Some of the students remarked that they have realized the importance of child right protection and will proceed to spread the CRC concept to others, especially to their future students and the parents.

Students' reports to show their understanding of CRC

No sooner had the training of the target students been finished than they were required to write down some events which impressed them most in their childhood. Most students earnestly recalled the ignorance of their rights either at home or at school. Most reports showed the students' understanding of CRC and the importance of protecting their own rights. Some students wrote in their reports that they would never allow their future's students repeat the tragedies. When reading all these reports, we saw the future of child rights in China.

Activities after Malawi visit

Inspired by the Malawi visit Ms Kathy (or Ms Liu), together with other change agents in Tongliao, carried out various activities to ensure the project to be implemented smoothly and effectively.

Selection of new target classes to extend CRC

Upon Ms Kathy's return from Malawi, two trial classes, aimed at enhancing students' awareness of CRC by applying participatory approach, were initiated with Mr Lulan, the former change agent, as lecturer. Ms Kathy, on the other hand, was responsible for class layout and teaching effect supervision. Eventually, two target classes were selected and 12 lectures were given in terms of CRC with obvious outcomes as follows:

- 1) Students are tremendously exposed to the striking and shocking cases in some countries involving teachers' corporal punishment to children, parents' ignorance of children's human dignity and society' indifference to children's needs , etc., which have prompted them to better understand the necessity and urgency of child rights protection;
- 2) Through detailed analysis of the Child Rights Convention item by item, the target students have become aware of how children can be protected and what role CRC can play in protecting child rights in different circumstances.
- 3) The volunteer teachers attending these lectures were fully aware of both the way that lectures were delivered and the necessity with regard to CRC, thus laying a solid foundation for their future's involvement in the CRC extension work.

Addition of child rights elements in teaching quality assessment

Pushed by Ms Kathy, the college criteria for teaching quality assessment have, after experiencing twists and turns, finally been amended by taking into consideration the factors as follows:

- 1) Whether teachers pay due attention to the rights of individuals;
- 2) Whether a democratic atmosphere is established in the classroom setting.
- 3) Whether participatory approach is applied in teaching process.

Accordingly, an inspection and supervision group is set up to monitor the implementation of the above mentioned amendments. Therefore, a favorable environment for CRC extension has come into being, in which the change agents can further carry out relevant work more readily and smoothly.

New premium put on mentor's visit

The college leaders attach great importance to mentor's visit before which Mr Guan, vice president of the college, personally presided over a series of conferences assigning each individual with the specific task related to the mentor's visit, covering the blueprint of the project report, visit to internship bases and even every detail of mentor's reception, etc. With the leaders' full support and guidance, Ms Kathy Liu designed and took charge of the whole process of mentor's visit. The highlight is the way that the project report was delivered involving five presenters with each person's role ingeniously defined, vividly and innovatively unfolding the core essence of the CRC-based participatory approach before people's eyes, which unsurprisingly won applause from the mentor as well as the leaders of college and department levels.

During the mentor's visit, a great variety of activities were organized, one of which was a demonstration class given by a student teacher from the trial class in the internship base of the college, the teaching effect being greatly satisfactory. Appointed by Ms Kathy, Mr Lulan, a change agent who was assigned to teach the trial class presented an observation class which also received positive comments.

Furthermore, the students from the trial class presented a series of spontaneous activities, among which one is worth touching upon. They performed several short dramas whose plots, ranging from abuse of child rights to teachers' apathy to children, were so moving that almost everyone on the spot had tears streaming down. It's just an epitome that shows how deeply the target students know about CRC and what they will do when they become teachers or parents.

What should be focused is that all relevant leaders from college and various departments were present when project report was being delivered and demonstration classes given. All leaders present have comprehended the essence of CRC more deeply, show-

ing great enthusiasm in the project, thus forming very advantageous surroundings for future's CRC dissemination work, as can be illustrated as follows:

Firstly, a high consensus is reached among leaders from various levels within college with regard to the teaching methodology of CRC-based participatory approach. It's expected that a large scale of teaching reform will be launched in the whole college next term.

Secondly, a top-to-bottom format of CRC dissemination has been shaped by applying administrative power to get everything done, which has proved to be the most effective means. It's acknowledged that the leaders ultimately influence the direction of any project work and it's certain that, at least in terms of the CRC program in TVC, an overwhelming advantage has been obtained with our joint efforts, the outcomes of which are bound to be significantly positive.

Thirdly, a virtuous circle has formed regarding the CRC extension in the college or the locality at large. The three change agents from TVC, together with other former change agents shouldering different tasks have been, as a matter of fact, working cooperatively for a common cause within the network--to get CRC ideology embedded firmly, to make more people conscious of the significance of CRC and to usher in more qualified personnel to get involved in this great cause. Judging from the present outcomes achieved, more fruitful results are hopefully just on the horizon.

New tasks designated by Mr Guan

After Mentor's visit, Vice president Mr Guan chaired a conference attended by all department leaders. The significance of CRC was emphasized once more demanding all leaders present of the following work.

- 1) One or two pioneer departments are to be selected for further extension of CRC;
- 2) Backbone teachers' training shall be proceeded;
- 3) The participatory approach shall be extended to the whole college;
- 4) Mr Guan himself will act as the key person for the newly established project – Participatory approach research and dissemination in TVC. All the work shall be carried out at the beginning of next term;
- 5) Ms Zhang Aihua (CRC Change Agents in new batch 16) has started editing CRC teaching brochure and more training sessions will be delivered next term and more teachers are expected to join this big family of CRC dissemination.

Therefore, a safe conclusion can be drawn that, with more support from the college leaders, more involvement by all teachers concerned and more strenuous efforts by change agents, it's beyond doubt that CRC will be firmly rooted in TVC, in Tongliao and even in the whole autonomous region with unswerving force and this day is not far

off when all of us will share the CRC fruit with the rest of the world in Bangkok June 2013.

3.2 Activities in IMNU

Returning from Sweden, Miss Narisu and Mr Chen Jiangang, together with the former change agent – Miss Wu Haiyan – have exerted their great effort to put forward the implementation of the project at IMNU.

Obtaining approval and support

The project in IMNU consists of two aspects: the training of in-service teachers and the training of pre-service teachers. The key process of implementing the project is to put CRC training course into the teaching syllabuses, which needs approval and support from higher administrating levels.

For training in-service English teachers, we modified the training program after repeated discussion with related administrators in the university and submitted formal teaching plan to the Ministry of Education. The plan was finally approved, and English teachers from different parts of Inner Mongolia will receive CRC education with focus on classroom management.

To train pre-service teachers, the change agents are working together to carry out discussions and surveys so that the application of a public optional course on CRC is successfully approved. The formal application will be submitted next term.

Activities before Malawi visit

To ensure the smooth implementation of the project, change agents in IMNU, together with motivated teachers and administrators, took any opportunity to carry out activities to spread the concept of CRC and to inspire more participants.

Activities in Bach 13 visit in China

Before and during the CRC Bach 13 visit and Progress Workshops in Hohhot in June 2011, the change agents in IMNU made great advantage of this opportunity to carry out several activities, spreading the idea of CRC among teachers, students and administrators as well.

The president's meeting

After detailed explanations and discussions, the application of a meeting between the IMNU University President and Batch 13 members was approved. The meeting was

held on June 9th. The President Yang Yijiang extended a warm welcome speech to all the change agents, mentors and administrators of the training program, saying that, as a university training both pre-service and in-service teachers, it is of great significance for IMNU to have teachers take part in this international training program. He also expressed his willingness to support change agents in spreading the idea of child rights protection by integrating it into teaching and training programs.

Discussion with teachers and students

During the visit, a meeting was also organized between all the guests and the teachers and students of the Foreign Languages Institute. This was a precious opportunity to spread CRC concept among the teachers and students. Both teachers and students showed great interest in child rights protection and enjoyed the discussion a lot, asking questions and expressing ideas actively. A mini demonstration class using participatory approach was also presented to the visitors by Hong Ying, a young English teacher.

Revision of the in-service teachers training program

To ensure the project success, the key step is to integrate CRC course into teaching syllabuses. Yet this has to be done step by step. In July, Narisu revised the teaching syllabus for in-service English teachers and submitted for approval. Good news came in September and the course will be given to over 50 English teachers in this October.

Lectures to students before teaching practice

On September 20th, lectures were given to over 100 under graduate students, who are going to have teaching practice in about 50 secondary and primary schools across Inner Mongolia, on preparations and requirements of doing practice. The three change agents attended, and Narisu gave the students a brief education on CRC, emphasizing the importance of protecting child rights. She also introduced some strategies and skills of motivating children in classes, making friends with them, and exerting their potentials, etc.

Other motivation lectures to about 50 under graduates, who are Mongolians, were delivered on September 27, during which the CRC concept was also disseminated. They expressed their understanding of the concept and decided to put it into practice.

Activities after Malawi visit

After Narisu's back from Malawi (because of a paternal leave, Chen Jiengang didn't take part in the Malawi visit; but he did cooperate closely with Narisu and other change agents in IMNU as well as in Hohhot), various training activities have been done to ensure the project a smooth and successful implementation.

The addition of CRC courses to in-service teacher trainings

First, after the successful application for the addition of a new course named “Child Rights Protection and Foreign Language Teaching” into a national training program for in-service teachers, Professor Wu Haiyan began to give lectures of this course to over 50 backbone English teachers coming from different parts of Inner Mongolia. Great success was achieved.

Second, the addition of the “Child Rights Protection and Foreign Language Teaching” course was also made in the in-service teachers’ training program of Yuquan District, Hohhot in October, 2011. The course was lectured by Narisu, which also achieved expected results.

The compiling of a CRC course book

We are during Spring-Summer 2012 active in compiling a bilingual course book named “Child Rights Protection and Foreign Language Teaching” under the leadership of Mr. Sunbajun and Professor Wu Haiyan, with Narisu and Chen Jiangang participating in it. We have so far worked out the book outline and some chapters.

The addition of a CRC public course to pre-service teachers in IMNU

In the end of May, 2012 we submitted an application for a public course named “Child Rights Protection and Classroom Teaching” which is open to all undergraduates in IMNU. Narisu is responsible for the construction of the course with all change agents at IMNU being the participants. There is big possibility that the course will be approved.

4. Results

So far, various activities have been carried out in both IMNU and TVC, and expected results have been achieved, although the duration of the project does not come to the end. After receiving trainings in IMNU and TVC, the trainees’ (both pre-service and in-service teachers) awareness of CRC in classroom teaching is highly enhanced, and they are eager to practice it the now ideas in their work. In communication with the mentor and the former and present change agents, the CRC awareness of the leaders of IMNU and TVC is also increased, and they are willing to support the implantation of our project. They would like to do more to put the concept of child rights projection into practice at the teacher training courses at the universities.

Children in pilot classes become happier because of the changes in classroom teaching and management. They are eager to participate in classroom activities. Parents, when seeing the changes of their children, also show their support to the project.

5. Reflections and Discussion

Although most of the preliminary expectations have been achieved during the past three months, there is still a long way to go to have the project finally succeed. There are always challenges and difficulties. For the time being, the challenges and difficulties we are facing are the following:

a) *Revising teaching syllabus* is a long, repeated and complicated process. First we need to carry out careful researches and surveys. The related situation has to be considered: CRC in China and Inner Mongolia, CRC in IMNU and TVC, the CRC concept among teachers and students in primary and secondary schools, etc. Then we have to apply for approval. Sometimes we have to go through different administrative levels before the modification is finally approved.

b) *Compiling teaching materials* or course books is also a long and complicated step. Besides the bilingual course book we are now compiling, we are planning to do more course books so as to meet the needs of different targeted groups. It will undoubtedly take a long time and a lot of efforts: consulting related documents and books, collecting related CRC cases, carrying out surveys on local CRC situation, and doing necessary typing and translation work, etc.

c) *Enlarging the scale of training program* is also long and complicated. First, we are able to carry out the training program with our departments. In TVC, only the Teachers Training faculty is involved, and in IMNU, the English department. Pilot classes have to be established and experiments have to be done. Then, we gradually extend the program to other departments or even the whole colleges. For example, in IMNU, the training program has to start with in-service English teachers, which is easier and more convenient; then the undergraduates majoring in English education are to be trained; and finally, a public optional course is open to the undergraduates of different subjects, even post graduates.

d) Finally, getting both administrative and financial supports from the university and local educational administration is also a big challenge. We are prepared to do repeated persuasions, applications, and discussions.

All the difficulties mentioned above are expectable and we are sure they can be solved one by one through cooperative and continuous efforts. We gained this confidence in the process of participating this program, namely, attending lectures, giving presentations, and reading documents.

6. Way Forward

It is our firm belief that CRC training classes be given to most middle-aged and young in-service teachers in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and all the students majoring in education in IMNU and TVC. We hope the concept of CRC can be spread to most of teachers and application in actual teaching activities. In order to approach this, we are planning to do some medications to the relevant teaching syllabuses, compiling teaching materials and course books, and carry out training programs.

6.1 Compiling more suitable course books

We are going to finish writing and publish the bilingual book “Child Rights Protection and Foreign Language Teaching” under the leadership of Professor Wu Haiyan, and make it a text book in various teachers’ training programs, so as to spread the concept of child rights protection in a more extensive context.

Also we need to compile other CRC course books in Chinese, English and even in Mongolian to satisfy different needs. As the trainees in both IMNU and TVC are of different levels (there are also Mongolian trainees), the course books are expected to be different. *First*, the language used in the textbook should be different. For pre-service and in-service teachers of English education, the course book is to be written in English; for those of other subjects education, the course book is supposed to be bilingual. Maybe we also need to compile textbook of Mongolian language for the trainees of Mongolia nationality. *Then*, we need to consider the difficulty and complexity of the contents. It is appropriate to have trainees of different levels to get access to text books of different levels.

6.2 Adding CRC courses in more teacher training programs

In TVC, we have put CRC courses in the teaching syllabus and have more trial classes. In IMNU, we have made “Child Rights Protection and Foreign Language Teaching” taught in in-service teacher training programs. And now we are untiringly making CRC courses a formal selective course for undergraduate pre-service English teachers, and

trying to explore the possibility of adding it into teaching syllabus for graduate students and Mongolian students.

6.3. Strengthening communication with both experts and other change agents

We firmly believe that communication with experts in Lund University and contacts with change agents both home and abroad inspire us on implantation of our dreams and enable us more chances for cooperation.

7. List of References

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