

China Institute

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Student-Centered Instruction

*2009 China Institute-STARTALK
Summer Language Academy*
www.chinainstitute.org

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2009 China Institute-STARTALK Summer Language Academy

- 6-week Chinese summer immersion program for 25 high school students from New York and New Jersey with little prior knowledge of Chinese or China
- Overarching theme --- “*Global Citizens in the 21st Century: Beijing and Beyond*”
- Close integration of Chinese culture and Chinese language teaching/learning





What is Student-Centered Instruction (SCI)?

- An approach to education focusing on the **needs of the students**, rather than those of others involved in the educational process. Theorists like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky are primarily responsible for the move to SCI.
- In SCI, the teacher still has to lecture, design assignments and tests, and grade papers. However, the teacher also provides students with **opportunities to learn independently and from one another** and coaches them to acquire **the skills they need to do so effectively** (From *Navigating the Bumpy Road to Student-Centered Instruction*, October 13, 1996, by Richard M. Felder and Rebecca Brent).



How did China Institute implement the SCI learning environment? (cont'd)

- Invited students to the process of program planning
 - Listened to the needs of the students prior to and during the program
 - Constantly adjusted the lesson plans to meet the learning needs of the students throughout the program





How did we implement the SCI learning environment? (cont'd)

- Facilitated the students' learning process
 - Substituted active/interactive learning experience for one-way lectures
 - Assigned open-ended questions and questions requiring critical or creative thinking that could not be solved by following text examples
 - Involved students in simulations and role-play





How did we implement the SCI learning environment? (cont'd)

- Fostered students' positive interactions
 - Set up the physical learning space in a way that encouraged pair/group work
 - Intermingled lectures with practice involving pair and/or group work
 - Evaluated students' learning progress and emotional reaction regularly before considering pair work and/or group work.

