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*Utah State University*

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TEACHING COMMUNICATION IN THE CHINESE  
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

XIA WU

2011

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**ABSTRACT**

Teaching Communication in the Chinese as a Foreign Language Classroom

By

Xia Wu

Master of Second Language Teaching

Utah State University, 2011

Major Professor: Dr. Karin de Jonge-Kannan  
Department: Language, Philosophy, and Speech Communication

This portfolio is a collection of the author's teaching beliefs and approaches regarding Chinese as foreign language teaching, which she developed during her time in the Master of Second Language Teaching program. The centerpiece of the portfolio is the author's personal teaching philosophy. It is followed by three artifacts. The language artifact analyzes one of the complexities encountered by learners in the Chinese as a foreign language classroom: the three particles 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de). The culture artifact illustrates the difference between American and Chinese language teachers. The literacy artifact talks about using literature circles in the CFL class. The portfolio also includes a reflection on a 50-minute video of teaching a beginning-level college Chinese class. The last section of the portfolio contains an annotated bibliography and a list of references.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank Dr. Karin de Jonge-Kannan for serving as my major professor and for all her efforts to support me in writing the portfolio and completing the master's program. I am so grateful I could meet such a great mentor. She always encouraged me and helped me to believe that "I can do it." I also appreciate Dr. Guo Li who gave me precious instruction and valuable suggestions about Chinese teaching and served as my committee member. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Gordon Sarah for her patient guidance in technology of language teaching and learning as well as serving as my committee member.

I would also like to thank my other professors in the MSLT program who supported me in completing my program. At the same time, I'm grateful to my classmates who have given me much help in learning.

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Xia Wu

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## INTRODUCTION

This portfolio collects my teaching beliefs and teaching methods in Chinese as a Foreign Language Teaching. As a CFL teacher, I make an effort to find appropriate up-to-date theories applied to my teaching practice. Writing the portfolio gave me a chance to articulate my personal teaching philosophy and support it with artifacts on the topics of language, culture, and literacy.

The first part of the portfolio is my personal teaching philosophy in which I focus on the approaches to teaching three modes of communication as well as on my role as a teacher. The teaching philosophy includes three parts: The Apprenticeship of Observation, Professional Environment, and Teaching Philosophy.

The second part of the portfolio contains three artifacts. In the language artifact, I analyze the complexity of 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de) in CFL learning and offer some practical approaches of teaching the complexity. In the culture artifact, I compare the difference between American and Chinese language teachers in teaching methods, teacher roles, teacher-student relationship, teacher beliefs, and teacher social status, five aspects for which I must find a balance for myself between American and Chinese styles to better help my future students. In the literacy artifact, I demonstrate how I will use literature circles in the Chinese as a foreign language class.

Following the three artifacts is a reflection on my own teaching video. It contains a comparison of my teaching philosophy and my teaching practice.

The next part is the annotated bibliography. This section includes summaries of valuable books and journal articles about L2/FL teaching and learning that I have selected



from my readings. For each book or journal article, I offer a reflection on how I can apply the findings and recommendations to my language teaching.

Then a brief looking forward illustrates my personal plan to keep improving my teaching, developing in my profession, and contributing to the CFL teaching field. Finally, the last part of the portfolio is made up of a list of references and some appendixes.

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

### **Apprenticeship of Observation**

In school, my favorite subject was always Chinese. Since I was young, my dream has been to be a Chinese teacher. However I did not know at that time that I could be a teacher of Chinese as a foreign language in the United States. My yearning to teach Chinese and my love of Chinese language can be attributed to my aunt's cultivation. She was a very successful teacher of Chinese at a high school. At home, she was my private Chinese tutor. When I was young, she often told me interesting Chinese idiom stories and fables. I think she was trying to promote my interest in learning Chinese and to instill some valuable notions through these stories.

When I had just learned to write a few characters, she began to ask me to write in a diary every day. The diary entries could be two or three sentences, recording something that happened each day. I have kept these diaries to this day. Every time I open them, I appreciate how my aunt used this method to help me learn writing through meaningful engagement. Also, she encouraged me to attend many story-telling sessions and poetry reading competitions in order to help me build confidence in speaking. Later, when I entered middle school, she required me to take "reading notes" about a book every week. Although I could choose the book myself, she required me to write a book summary, and then give my opinion. Thanks to this assignment, I read many famous pieces of literature in Chinese. In the beginning, I did not really understand my aunt's purpose; I just obeyed her orders and finished these assignments as tasks. Gradually, I developed interest and confidence from accomplishing these tasks, and I continued to carry out practices such as "reading notes" which becomes a habit later in my life.

Now, I am training to be a language teacher. I am aware that my aunt was fostering my interests in my first language and building learning strategies for this language. In addition, she was a helper rather than a lecturer in my Chinese language-learning. She guided me to understand the communicative goal of Chinese language. Much of her teaching approach can be applied to my future teaching.

In middle school, I came into contact with another language: English. In the beginning, I liked my English class, which was engaging. We did games, activities, and competitions; also we practiced dialogues with classmates. All content we learned could be applied to our daily lives. I was always parroting the English sentences I learned in class to my parents. However, from the third year of middle school, I lost interest in learning English. The class had become totally different, even though the teacher and classmates were the same. All students listened and wrote down notes silently. The teacher did just two things in class. One was translating articles in the textbook, sentence by sentence, and pointing out different forms of the language. Those articles were quite long and difficult to translate. Ironically, much of the time we could not understand the articles at all, even though our teacher spent several lessons on their translations. The second thing we did in this class was testing and reviewing our tests. Except for the writing portion, all questions on the test were multiple-choice questions divided into grammar, cloze, and reading comprehension. The day after the test, the teacher would announce the answers. Ninety-five percent of the time, the teacher spoke Chinese in class.

Many people have said that the English learned by the Chinese people is "mute English". I agree with this statement. After graduating from university, most of us have studied English

for at least 8 to 10 years. We might have a good foundation of basic English knowledge. However, most of us are not good at writing or speaking English. In other words, it is difficult for us to use the language in real life. Some people have suggested that the reasons are the large number of people in the class, Confusion culture, and the different teaching philosophies of Chinese teachers. I think the main reason is because of the stress of the Chinese examination system. The college entrance examination puts too much pressure on students, teachers, parents, and even the school administration. In China, the college entrance examination is so important that it can change someone's life or affect a school's reputation. Therefore, teachers have to teach according to the requirements of the exam. Whatever we learned was to prepare us for the examination. The teacher's purpose was to focus on teaching students to obtain good scores on the test rather than to learn to use the language.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I chose to study abroad in the United States. When I arrived, I was surprised that the English spoken here is not like the "English" that I learned in China. Therefore, in the beginning, I could not understand when people spoke to me. Also, I was not able to express my ideas. Later, I studied English at the English Language Center of Brigham Young University for two semesters. The English teachers there impressed me very much. Professor Brewer was my favorite teacher and my example of a good language teacher. Her class was a reading class, but the class did not merely revolve around practicing reading. In fact, her class was an integrated language skills class based on language context. She used various authentic texts, such as novels, magazines, movies, cartoons, and music to help us develop all four language skills, not only reading comprehension. For example, she often asked us to write a different ending for a novel, used

a jeopardy game to help us practice speaking, asked us to narrate the story in a movie, and so forth. Furthermore, in her class, we had many opportunities for discussion and questions. She helped us find answers by scaffolding, molding, guiding, and other teaching strategies. Also, I found there were no right or wrong answers in her class. All students participated very positively.

The differences between Professor Brewer and my Chinese English teachers can be attributed to the role they played and the purposes of their teaching. Professor Brewer was a great facilitator. She assisted students in acquiring knowledge for themselves. Her purpose was to teach students to apply the language to their lives and to future academic studies. On the other hand, my Chinese English teacher's role was as a typical authority figure whose main purpose was to help students get good scores on the entrance examination.

I appreciate that I was exposed to such diverse language learning experiences, which were precious experiences for my future teaching. As I stated before, to teach is to learn. I will always be learning how to be an effective Chinese teacher.

## **Professional Environment**

I hope to teach Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) in the United States, particularly to adults. There are four reasons I wish to be a CFL teacher. The most important reason is intrinsic: I really love teaching. Consequently, I believe this will enable me to persist in this career and devote myself to it. Secondly, I am a Chinese culture and literature fan, and I never stop studying Chinese. Therefore, I am confident that I will be a good Chinese teacher, always learning. Thirdly, although increasing numbers of people are becoming interested in China and studying the Chinese language, there are not many people who really know China well. Therefore, my mission is to engage more people in learning about China, to help them see the real China, and to eradicate stereotypes. Furthermore, I believe that Chinese is likely to become the most popular foreign language in the world in the near future, especially in marketing. Thus, I believe that teaching Chinese will offer me more job opportunities.

I prefer teaching adults because most of their motivation comes from their own desires, and generally they have a clear goal for learning rather than learning a language in fits and starts. Thus, I believe that their learning attitude would be positive. In addition, due to their more developed mind, I could discuss topics of Chinese language and culture in great depth and share my interests with my adult students.

## **Personal Teaching Philosophy**

I have studied English as a foreign language for many years; and thus understand how difficult it is to learn a foreign language. On the long road of language learning, numerous variables might affect a learner's language acquisition. However, I believe teachers play a vital role in learners' language acquisition. I have met many different language teachers in China and in the U.S., each of whom has had his/her own teaching philosophy. Through my observations and the training I have received in my Master's program; I have developed my own teaching philosophy for teaching Chinese as a foreign language: I will always be a learner and a facilitator in my class. Also I will focus on teaching my students the three modes of communication by communicative approaches.

## **The Role of the Language Teacher**

In my view, to teach is to learn. Teaching is a long learning process, much like language learning. To improve as a teacher, one must learn from students, from self-reflections, and from new teaching approaches and techniques. In other words, a good language teacher should be a humble learner.

Let us begin with why one should learn from one's students. To teach efficiently, a teacher needs to meet students' needs. The students themselves know their situation best. They know their strengths, their Achilles' heel, what kinds of teaching approaches they like, the pace at which they learn best, and so forth. Therefore, to better help students, I will listen to their valuable suggestions so as to find suitable and effective teaching approaches.

Additionally, it is also important to learn from self-reflection. According to Reagan and Osborn (2002), reflective practice is a cyclical process, starting from reflection-for-practice,



moves to reflection-in-practice, and on to reflection-on-practice. Reflection-for-practice, which precedes classroom teaching includes reflective planning and preparation so as to create a good lesson plan. Reflection-in-practice happens during classroom teaching. The effect of my teaching is written on the students' faces. Thus, reflection-in practice helps me know how to be effective and efficient in teaching and how to adjust teaching approaches according to students' immediate response. Reflection-on-practice takes place at the end of classroom teaching and is a retrospective reflection on both positive and negative sides of teaching. And it will benefit the reflection- for- practice to make a good lesson plan. By learning from this cycle, I can make better decisions and offer comprehensive and well-suited lessons for my students. Reagan and Osborn conclude that all three types of reflection are necessary for the classroom teacher, although the importance of each component might change over the course of a teacher's career.

Furthermore, as a classroom teacher, I should stay informed of innovative teaching approaches and techniques. New teaching styles and techniques are continuously being developed. Therefore, I need to read research articles and books as well as attend professional workshops and conferences, to learn these innovative approaches and to adjust my lessons to keep up with the most recent methods (Geng, 2007).

As part of my teaching philosophy, I also hope to be a facilitator, helping my students to achieve their language goals. In my view, the relationship between teachers and students is not that of actor and audience. Rather, the teacher's responsibility in the classroom is to assist and motivate students to perform as well as they can. A good language teacher should give students support, assist them, and help them access and use their own language knowledge.

Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2007) suggest that "doing" and discussing make abstract concepts concrete because students learn best by involving themselves in relevant, meaningful application of what they learn. In other words, the most efficient language learning happens through student engagement and self-effort. According to my own experience in language learning, no matter how teachers attempt to transfer knowledge, it has the greatest impact if students absorb this knowledge and make it their own through meaningful, contextualized practice.





### **Using scaffolding.**

How can I be a facilitator in my classroom? Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) provides an answer. Vygotsky (1978) states that there are two levels of development for learners: The actual developmental level, which refers to what the learner, can do without assistance, and the potential developmental level, which represents what the learner can do with the assistance of teachers or more capable peers. Vygotsky defines the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). According to this definition, language development happens in social interaction and guided assistance, also teacher and students have to work together to co-construct meaning in context. Thus, I will be a facilitator who collaborates with learners to make progress on their actual developmental level, for "what learners can do with assistance today, they will be able to do on their own tomorrow or at some future point in time" (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 24). To help my students reach the point where they can perform a task alone, I will use scaffolding

as a teaching method. Duffy and Roehler (1986) define scaffolding as the interaction between teacher and novice in a problem-solving task. The following is an example of scaffolded assistance that occurred between myself and some of my novice adult CFL students.

The lesson began with: "Today we will learn how to say names of countries and the people of these countries". By using Power Point, I showed the image of a flag with each country's name one by one and read these country names with my students out loud. Next, I showed the words representing the people of these countries next to the country names. Then, I asked my students "Comparing these two lists of words, can you see how we build the word representing the people of the country based on a country's name?"

Table.1 Introducing countries' name and those countries' person

	Country	Person
	měi guó 美 国	měi guó rén 美 国 人
	zhōng guó 中 国	zhōng guó rén 中 国 人
	mò xī gē 墨 西 哥	mò xī gē rén 墨 西 哥 人
 Brazil	bā xī 巴 西	bā xī rén 巴 西 人

Student A: "There is one more character behind the country of name in the second list of

words."

I: "Excellent, I think you have found the point. We just attach the character 人 (rén) in the end of country's name to build the word representing the people of the country. The character 人 (rén) means people. Well, let us see another country, yīng guó (England). Who can tell me how to say the people of this country?"

Students: All students told me the answer together, "yīng guó rén".

In this interaction, I facilitate learning by providing scaffolding assistance including visual aids, assisting questions and feedback. There are numerous methods of scaffolding, including modeling, simplifying the task, highlighting language features, visual aid and so forth. For example, after I teach a language form, I will write down a sample sentence and highlight the language form, then give students time to write down and do oral practice with sentences similar to the sample sentences. In addition, if they will be doing activities, I model what I want them to do with the target language. The type of scaffolding is determined by what the student is doing, his or her language ability, learning style, and the context. The key point in scaffolding is that the teacher should not provide the solution to students directly, but instead facilitates the learners' search for solutions themselves.

### **Teaching Three Modes of Communication**

One of most important principles in my teaching philosophy is cultivating my students' communicative abilities and teaching them to use the Chinese language in real life. Communicative ability in a foreign language consists of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are used in concert, not in isolation in our lives. Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2007) demonstrate that as we go about our daily lives, we use language in a natural way, reading what we write, talking about what we have read, and listening to others

talk about what they have read. Therefore, I will focus on teaching all four language skills in balance through integrated instruction.

When we mention communication, many people will associate it with personal interaction. In fact, communication goes beyond interpersonal communication. ACTFL Standards define communication by means of the three communicative modes: the interpersonal mode, the interpretive mode, and the presentational mode. All three modes of communication occur in real life and demand the use of integrated language skills. All three modes will be taught in my class.

### **Teaching interpersonal communication mode.**

First, I will introduce my approach in developing the most common communication mode in my class: interpersonal communication. This mode includes both oral and written communication and all four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students can negotiate meaning through clarifications and adjustments. MacIntyre (2007) claims that a challenge in cultivating a classroom which is rich in interpersonal communication lies in engaging learners' participation. In my view, learners' participation closely relates to teachers' instructional methods. Tsou (2005) shows that Participation Instruction (PI) can increase students' oral participation as well as improve students' speaking proficiency. Therefore, the instructor can motivate learners' participation and develop their interpersonal communication as long as I use effective instructional approaches. In the following, I will introduce some instructional approaches for developing oral and written interpersonal communication respectively.

### ***Developing learners' oral interpersonal communication.***

To develop learners' oral interpersonal communication, frequent interaction opportunities for every student are a prerequisite. Additionally, it is necessary to use the target language as much as possible. Moreover, because the learner's language performance with others exceeds what the learner is able to do alone (Vygotsky, 1978), learners can perform a greater number of content clarifications, confirmation checks, and comprehension checks when pair or group work entails discussion and negotiation of meaning (Doughty & Pica, 1986). Passively listening to a lecture in a language class is of no avail. Therefore, I will urge my students to engage in cooperative activities to develop their oral interpersonal communication.

#### *Cooperative learning.*

Cooperative learning is a very useful way in the class to develop students' interpersonal communication. Johnson and Johnson (1987) suggest that cooperative learning (CL) is a powerful strategy which often produces higher achievement, increases retention, and develops interpersonal skill. Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1991) describe the five basic elements of CL: 1) Positive interdependence: groups are structured so that students must depend on each other and work together to be successful. 2) Face to face promotive interaction: students help and encourage each other in their learning. 3) Individual accountability: students are assessed on their individual work and contributions to the group. 4) Social skills: students must be taught and then use skills in "leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication and conflict-management." 5) Assessment of group process: students are taught to look at the contributions of each member, how effectively the group works together, and what they need to do to improve in the future. From these characteristics,

we can see that cooperative learning goes well beyond common group work. In CL environment, students rely on and help each other in a group, everyone has a strong responsibility, and they need to assess their own process continually.

For these reasons, CL works well in language classes with proficiency diversity, which is very common in a foreign language classroom. For example, in Chinese 1010 at Utah State University, some students have a certain foundation because they served a mission in a Chinese-speaking place, some are heritage language learners, and some learners learned Cantonese before, while about half the students are true novices. In traditional straight lecture classes, those true novice beginning students might be quiet and afraid to contribute, or even feel frustrated. However, cooperative learning particularly benefits these students who are temporarily behind. Such students benefit in three areas (Coehlo, 1992): First, the affective domain, as students may acquire a greater sense of belonging and identity. Second, the common sense of identity and purpose, students can get it when they share goals of group members. Third, the achievement for the lower achievers in the class, which can be improved.

#### *Ways of grouping students.*

To achieve optimal results with cooperative learning, ways of grouping need to be considered. I prefer assigning smaller groups of no more than four students. Such groups allow each student more opportunity to contribute and more turns to talk; small groups also prevent some students from drifting along silently in a larger group. In addition, I will attempt to group students both homogeneously and heterogeneously in terms of their language performance. When I group students with different proficiency levels, the objective

is that the higher performer should help the lower performer. Peer support is often effective. However, periodically I also will group more advance students together, so that they can challenge each other and be pushed to exceed their current abilities.

*Activities for developing oral interpersonal communication.*

I can select from a wide variety of activities to help students develop their oral interpersonal communication, such as: jigsaw activity, information gap, group discussion, literature circles, movement activities, and so on. Now, I will discuss some of my favorites.

The jigsaw activity is one that I use frequently. This technique was first published by Dr. Aronson and his students in 1971 (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997). In this activity, students need to participate in discussions with two groups: an "expert group" and a "home group". Each member of the home group assumes responsibility for a given portion of the lesson. These members will work with the members from the other home groups who have the same assignment, thus forming "expert groups." The members must learn by listening to and sharing information with others in the expert group. Finally, each member will bring the information learned in the expert group to the home group. For example, I use a famous Chinese fable "Xiǎo Mǎ Guò Hé" as text in this activity. In the story, "xiǎo mǎ" (the small horse) asks three different animals including "niú bó bó"(Mr. ox), "xiǎo sōng shǔ"(a small squirrel), and his mother about the depth of a river, however he gets a different answer each time. Following the introduction, I divide the story into three parts; each part includes a conversation between "xiǎo mǎ" and one of the three characters. I only show one part of the story to each expert group. At the end, I want every home group to retell the story according to the collective information. The first step of the activity is to divide the class



heterogeneously into three expert groups. Then I give each group a handout which is one part of story. Next, I direct students to work cooperatively with their members so that each member learns what "xiǎo mǎ" gets from the character in that part. Each student is an expert for his or her own part of story. Also, I need to label students within each group A, B, C. In the second step, students regroup into three home groups according to the letter assigned to them. And each home group collects information from the three experts who come from different expert group so as to retell the whole story.

Information-gap activity is another useful activity. Johnson (1979) explained that the activity is: one student has information that another student needs but does not have. Therefore, the two students need to negotiate or ask questions to get the answers that they both want to know. Here is an example of using this activity in my class. Two students are assigned in a group. The task is finding an hour that they both have free this week to have dinner at a Chinese restaurant. Each student has a copy of his or her personal schedule for this week (I will provide the form, but students need to fill out it by themselves). One student has to use the sentence "nī... (time) yǒu kòng ma?" to ask questions and the another student needs to give an answer according to the schedule saying as "... (time) wǒ yǒu/meǐ yǒu kòng, ...." in order to find out when the other person is free.

In addition, I also like a modified format for group discussions, which I developed based on the standard of format of discussion. My adaptation provides a non-threatening and relaxed environment for students. Before the discussion, I collect all students' questions and put them into a box. We can sit in a circle, and each student picks one question from the box to read it out loud. Then, all students can give answers, or they can ask me for my

perspective.

*Teacher feedback in the classroom.*

In my view, the teacher's feedback can greatly influence the students' oral participation. There are two types of interaction between teacher and students. One is IRE, in which the teacher initiates an assertion or asks a question, a student responds, then the teacher evaluates by giving an evaluative statement such as "very good" or by asking the same or similar question of another student (Hall, 1999). Another one is called IRF: the teacher initiates an assertion or asks a question, a student responds, then, the teacher provides feedback in order to encourage students to think and to perform at a higher level (Well, 1993). In IRE discourse, students do not have a chance to negotiate meaning or develop higher-order thinking. The feedback of IRE only indicates right or wrong. Shrum and Gilsan (2010) have said that if learners are to obtain the skills necessary to participate in conversations outside the classroom, then they must participate in more than just the typical IRE. If teachers use IRF, students are encouraged and pushed to think, to perform at higher levels, and to integrate content and topics (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991). And students can have real opportunities to engage in turn taking. The assisting questions I can use in IRF are: What do you mean by this? Could you explain that a little more? Are you saying that...? and so on.

Oral feedback frequently includes error correction, which deserves careful attention. What kind of error correction is most effective? When should I correct? Both are important questions. In my opinion, language teachers should not be too picky with some pronunciation errors and grammar mistakes, but rather should focus on comprehensibility of the message itself. In particular, we should not interrupt students' talking to supply error correction. If the

error affects comprehension, or the error is the language form on which we are focusing in our class, we should use an appropriate strategy to correct it afterwards.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) examined the effect of teacher correction strategies on student uptake and identified six types of teacher feedback: explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. They found that clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, and repetition were effective strategies for eliciting uptake from students, and the most effective strategy for uptake was elicitation. According to this study, the effective way of correcting errors is not providing the correct form directly, but giving a signal to the student that there is a problem and letting students correct it from my hints by themselves.

***Develop students' written interpersonal communication.***

Two-way interpersonal communication can also be accomplished through written means. To teach interpersonal writing, I prefer to use dialogue journals. A dialogue journal is a written conversation in which students communicate individually with the teacher (Peyton, 1993). Journal writing can help students create personal meaning and increase their motivation to write (Peyton, 1993). Shrum and Gilsan (2010) mention two advantages of using dialogue journals. First, they can help students make sense of new content that they are learning in the language classroom. Second, they serve as an alternative formative assessment since students continually provide feedback about what they understand in class as they build their language proficiency. A dialogue journal could be used with any level of CFL learners. If learners were at the beginning level, I would ask them to write or copy the words they have learned in class and combine them with pictures, even allowing them to

using a few English words. If learners are at intermediate or advanced levels, I would direct them to use the journal to discuss cultural and social issues as well as more personal feeling and opinions.

Furthermore, modern technology has made it possible for learners to share ideas and receive responses immediately through chat, social network site or text-based instantaneous communication, such as MSN, QQ, Facebook, etc. Kroonenberg (1995) mentions two benefits of computer-mediated communication (CMC): it allows students to practice fast interaction and it allows students to pause and reflect in chatting, thus encouraging students to think critically. She also observed that students are more expressive in CMC than in written composition or in oral conversation. Therefore, I will make effort to find Chinese native speakers who are interested in serving as study buddies, pen pals, or perhaps Facebook friends for CFL learners and encourage my students to use modern technology to chat with their Chinese buddies.

### **Teaching interpretive communication mode.**

The next mode of teaching that I adopt in practice is interpretive communication. This mode is between persons and oral or printed text, with no opportunity for listeners or readers to negotiate meaning with speakers or writers. This sort of the communication can happen in activities such as listening to a broadcast, reading a story, viewing a film, etc. Worth mentioning here is that the interpretive mode refers not only to literal comprehension of a text, but also the interpretation of it, including cultural perspectives, personal opinions, and points of view (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). Therefore, I will draw students' viewpoints and cultural perspectives into interpretive communication.

### ***Using authentic materials.***

To help students establish a meaningful context and introduce them to Chinese language and culture, authentic materials can be a great resource. Authentic materials are the written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group (Galloway, 1998). Many language teachers might have mistaken views that authentic texts are too difficult to language learners, and that adapted texts are more suitable for them. However, Maxim (2002) proved that college students in their first semester of German were able to read a full-length authentic novel successfully in German. This experimental research shows that language learners, even beginners, can use authentic materials, if they receive guidance, training, and carefully selected materials. Furthermore, using authentic materials, students have the opportunity to see and hear real language that serves a purpose as they also gain rich cultural content (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). In other words, authentic material can develop students' target culture and language competence. Besides written authentic materials such as novels and magazines, I use audio visual media in my classroom. Such materials are not only attractive for students, but also effective as they increase comprehension by combining visual and auditory processing. Moreover, audiovisual media can show cultural information directly.

### ***Selection of authentic materials.***

Authentic materials can help students develop interpretive communication, but only if they are carefully selected.. First, I will choose topics based on students' interests and their background knowledge. A high interest level can foster persistence. Topic familiarity or background knowledge facilitates comprehension regardless of the learners' proficiency level

(Hammadou, 2000). In addition, I will consider the level of vocabulary and grammatical structures of texts in order to avoid frustrating students. Further, I will select texts that have clear structural organization. For instance, the story format texts include rich signaling cues. Last not but least, children's literature can be a very good choice for Chinese as foreign language learners in various situations.

***Strategies of teaching interpretive communication.***

Foreign or second language (L2) learning strategies are specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques students use, often consciously, to improve their progress in comprehending, internalizing, and using the L2 (Oxford, 1990). I have several favorite strategies for teaching interpretive communication. The first important strategy I will teach is how to use both bottom-up and top-down processing in concert. Listening and reading can best be understood as a highly complex, interactive operation in which bottom-up processing is interspersed with top-down processing (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Bottom-up processing refers to text-driven comprehension, which requires the listener and reader to approach texts by concentrating on the combination of letters and words in a purely sequential manner (Martinez-Lage, 1995). In other words, the listener or the reader combines all small things, like characters, and sounds to form larger units such as sentences and paragraphs in order to get the meaning. It is the most basic processing and indispensable. For training students in this processing, I will do some intensive reading or listening exercises with my students to teach them how to distinguish different sounds or characters, recognize word order, analyze sentence structure, and examine vocabulary meaning in context. More importantly, I will also encourage students to use top-down strategies with bottom-up processing together. Those

strategies are reader or listener driven and help the reader or listener to acquire meaning through the use of contextual clues and activation of personal background (Lally, 1998). For example, I will guide them to look for key ideas, make predictions for the story, infer the author's meaning, connect their own background to the context, and so on. Bottom-up processing is the foundation of comprehension, while top-down strategies are essential in interpretative communication.

The second strategy I will teach my students is purpose-driven reading and listening. Before students do interpretation, I will explain and assign specific purposes or tasks based on the reading or listening before students do interpretation. For example, I will list some questions or tasks to make them focus on important parts, or ask learners to read or listen from a particular point of view.

Third, I like to incorporate a pre-reading or pre- listening phase to introduce key vocabulary, and cultural information, and to discuss with students some related topics which can link the text to their background knowledge. According to my experience, discussion during the pre-reading phase effectively increases comprehension.

Fourth, I will use some workshop-style activities too, such as literature circles, role play, and competition games for checking comprehension. For example, in literature circles activity, I will group four students in a group. Each group member has his/her own role, which are culture connector, vocabulary enricher, and summarizer, and discussion director. The connector's job is to find connections between the text and real life outside school and in the community, relating the text to similar events and issues elsewhere or at another time in history. The vocabulary enricher's job is to look for important words in the reading and look

them up in a dictionary. During circle time, the vocabulary enricher needs to point these words out and discuss with other members the meaning of these words and the reason these words or phrases are important in the reading. The summarizer's job is to prepare a summary of the reading. The other members of the group will be counting on the summarizer to give them a quick statement that captures the main points of the text. The discussion director's job is to write a list of questions that the group might want to discuss about the text. The questions come from the discussion director's own thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

Fifth, I might use "silent viewing" to interpret audiovisual materials. For this strategy, I can choose some film clips, short videos, or commercials. The first time, I will play the material without audio to let students explore the possible message and cultural perspectives implied by the visual images. Students can dub according to their guess. Then, I will expose students to the audio portion, and ask them to verify whether their visual comprehension matches their understanding of what they hear.

### ***Teaching Chinese characters and vocabulary.***

There is a consensus that Chinese character recognition is a challenging aspect of CFL learning because the Chinese writing system is totally different from an alphabet spelling system. Nevertheless, character recognition is closely related to the ability of interpretive communication. There are some rules about Chinese characters that can help students remember and learn their meanings. For instance, most Chinese characters consist of a radical plus a phonetic part. The radical part is a clue to the meaning of the character, while the phonetic part indicates the pronunciation of the character. Thus, by learning the meaning of the individual radical parts and the sound of the phonetic parts, students will be able to



guess new characters that have the same radicals or phonetic parts. Moreover, to help students remember new vocabulary, it needs to be learnt in context, practiced, and then reviewed to prevent students from forgetting. "Knowing a word is more than being able to recite a list of facts, and there is something hollow, not quite right, about hearing someone explain a word as a list of facts (Nicholson & Dymock 2010, p36)." They point out that vocabulary becomes more salient through reading (Nicholson & Dymock, 2010). Therefore, I will encourage students to pay attention to new vocabularies in their reading. When students learn new vocabulary, I will ask them to use the new words and phrase in their writing and speaking. In addition, I will design flash cards and vocabulary games with online tools and use classroom games such as charades and jeopardy to help students review vocabulary. Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely (Richard-Amato, 1988). From my teaching experience, students love games. And games have the positive effect of making students participate actively and promoting vocabulary retention.

### **Teaching presentational communication mode.**

The third communication mode I will teach is presentational communication. This mode features formal, one-way communication in written or oral form to an audience of listeners or readers (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). Examples include giving a speech, and writing a paper or essay. According to my observation, many foreign language learners think this is the hardest communication mode, which makes them nervous about presenting. However, through some scaffolding, I can enable learners to become successful presentational communicators. In the following, I will talk about how can

I scaffold instruction to help my students to develop written and oral presentations.

***Teaching written presentational communication.***

*Teaching writing presentation as process.*

In writing instruction, we should view writing as a process, and focus on steps that learners complete in order to create a written product (Silva, 1990). Flower and Hayes (1981) proposed a comprehensive problem-solving model of the writing process. This model includes planning, articulating, and reviewing. I will teach my students to follow this model to develop their written products.

In the planning step, writers need to generate ideas, organize thoughts and set goals. I can assist my students in three ways in this step. First, I can help students find the purpose or the goal of the writing task. Lee and VanPatten (2003) claim that the goal of writing affects the quality of the written product. However, unfortunately, students in the FL classroom typically have only one purpose for doing their writing assignment, which is "getting the assignment done" (p. 247). The suggestion from Lee and Vanpatten is to make students select an audience aside from the teacher and appeal to the interest of the readers. As long as the goal is set, organization of thoughts will begin to build up easily under the guide of the goal. Second, I will encourage my students to look for resources about the writing topic in order to acquire more knowledge, such as in the library, on the Internet, or by interviewing experts. Research has shown that reading to write can have great benefits. For example, Scott (1996) concludes that reading can facilitate writing, and a well-read writer has more knowledge about the conventions and features of writing. Kern and Schultz (1992) state that composition instruction integrated with the reading of texts helps learners improve their

writing performance. Third, foreign language learners may possess a limited amount of vocabulary which naturally influences the quality and quantity of their writing. Therefore, I think it is necessary to help them recall words, phrases, and expressions associated with the topic before writing, such as asking them to brainstorm vocabulary by using mapping or clustering strategies. Morin and Goebel's (2001) study demonstrates the effectiveness of semantic mapping and semantic clustering as strategies that help learners recall and organize L2 vocabulary. Semantic mapping refers to grouping words of any number of parts of speech around a thematic topic, e.g., jiǎo shì (classroom), lǎo shī (teacher), xué shēng (students), kǎo shì (take a test) and dú shū (read a book). On the other hand, semantic clustering refers to words of a similar semantic nature being grouped together, e.g., kù zi (pants), wà zi (socks), qún zi (skirt), mào zi (hat).

The next step of the writing process is articulating (Flower & Hayes, 1981): putting ideas into writing. This is the stage in which students convert ideas into written language. As Pinker (1994) mentions, we think in "mentalese", which we then re-cast in whatever language we are using.

The last step in the writing process is reviewing. Students should be encouraged to self-revise and self-evaluate their writing by reading, examining, changing, and correcting at any time during the writing process. When they are drafting, I will provide a guideline to help them self-revise content and organization. Additionally, I will lead peer-evaluation discussions in the class relying on rubrics and guidelines. Peer feedback is often effective, and also gives students additional perspectives to help them recognize weaknesses and strengths. Also, teacher-student writing conferences are helpful in the reviewing stage. In the

conference, students receive the teacher's personalized feedback, and engage in negotiation of meaning as a two-way process, thus students can clarify or explain their ideas to the teacher.

*Feedback on written work.*

In the reviewing stage, feedback from peers and the teacher are important for learners as it helps them revise their work. Research indicates that learners want feedback on their writing (Leki, 2006; Schulz, 2001). Feedback from teachers and peers is effective for presentational development. Should we only focus on the content rather than on form? Much of the literature supports the claim that learners' writing skills improve in responses to feedback that focuses on content rather than on form (Kepner, 1991; Semke, 1984). Focus-on-form feedback may cause students to simply copy the correct forms into the next draft, and it may reduce students' big picture thinking (Ashwell, 2000; Truscott, 2007). However, it is necessary to give form-focused feedback on the types of mistakes that are being emphasized in class at that time, because accuracy can largely affect the quality of a writing product. To avoid students simply copying the feedback, form-focused feedback can be given through correction codes. An example of a focus-on-form error correction feedback system is Lalande's (1982) Essay Correction Code, used for marking errors, and his error awareness sheet, used for tracking errors. I would like to develop an error awareness sheet for Chinese language forms, based on common mistakes. When I studied English at BYU, my writing teacher used this method to mark our grammar mistakes in writing, and it was effective for me.

As Flower and Hayes (1981) claim, the writing process is not a linear sequence of stages,

but a set of thought processes that do not happen in a specific order and that influence each other. For example, generating ideas may require evaluation, and evaluation may force the writer to think up new ideas.

*Using portfolio.*

Beside a process approach to teaching writing, using portfolio is another of my instructional approaches to help students develop written presentational communication. Portfolios can provide a multidimensional perspective on student growth over time as well as a unique opportunity for students to learn to monitor their own progress (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). My main purpose for using portfolios is to let my students see their progress and their own strengths and weaknesses by comparing their work at different points in time.

*Classroom Activities.*

For in-class activities, teachers can select from a wide variety of options. I have three favorite activities I have found to be helpful. The first is sentence combining. For this activity, the teacher cuts a text into strips, with one sentence per strip. Students work in groups of three or four. According to sentence meaning and transition words, students determine the correct order of these sentences and restore the complete text. The second is an error correction activity, also done in groups. When they finish correcting, a representative of each group writes the sentence they corrected on the board and we compare to see which group did the best job. The third one is fixed-form poetry. I give students a poem frame. They only need to contribute their own content to the pre-existing pattern. There could be various correct answers in the blank. For example,

快 乐

kuài lè

Happy

1. 快乐 的 ( 同学 ), 快乐 地 ( 学习 ),

kuài lè de ( tóng xué ), kuài lè de ( xué xí )

happy ( students ), happy ( study ).

happy students, studying happily.

2. 快乐 的 ( 老师 ), 快乐 地 ( 教课 ),

kuài lè de ( lǎo shī ), kuài lè de ( jiāo kè ),

happy ( teacher ), happy ( teach ),

happy teachers, teaching happily.

3. 快乐 的 (小朋友), 快乐 地 ( 玩耍 ),

kuài lè de ( xiǎo péng yǒu ), kuài lè de ( wán shuǎ ),

happy ( kids ), happy ( play ),

happy kids, playing happily.

4. 我们 都 (生活 ) 得 很 快乐。

wǒ mén dōu ( shēng huó ) de hěn kuài lè.

We all ( live ) very happy.

All of us are living happily.

Laidlaw (1989) suggests this activity to tap the creative process of learners while enabling them to synthesize information. I think the fixed-form poetry activity is suitable for beginner foreign language learners who have not been exposed to much target-language input exhibiting a variety of sentence structures. It can also increase their writing confidence.

### ***Teaching oral presentational communication.***

I think a high quality oral presentation also requires a similar process of planning, articulating, and reviewing, although Flower and Hayes' (1981) model deals with the process

of writing. Many speakers often prepare their presentations in written form, and then convert them to an oral form. Similarly, teachers need to provide detailed criteria, clarify all requirements, and lay out the teacher's focus before students set about planning. My requirements for oral presentations relate not only on the content and language forms, but also on students' speech performance, such as eye contact and natural pauses. In addition, I encourage students to use multimedia, including music, pictures, cultural artifacts, video, PowerPoint, etc., to enhance their oral presentation.

To develop students' oral presentational communication, teachers should give them various opportunities to do presentations in the class. For example, students should give reports on their reading or writing, give speeches on cultural or social issues, narrate a story, and so forth. Moreover, I think it is necessary to do at least one cooperative project every semester. For example, I offer a list including several tasks, such as being a tour guide of a city or place, explaining how to make a Chinese dish, introducing a traditional Chinese holiday, talking about a Chinese book, and so forth. All tasks will be based on our class content. Each group picks one task and they prepare the presentation cooperatively.

## **Conclusion**

I will use these three modes of communication to help my students develop their language skills. These three modes of communication are not isolated, and many times, students need to use two or three of them to complete a task in real life. Therefore, students should be able to use these three modes of communication in an integrated way.

To be an effective teacher, I will need to be a humble learner, learning from my students, reflecting on my own teaching, and learning from other educators. I will serve as a facilitator

to help students learning the target language. No matter what the language, the function of it is always for communicating in our lives. Because of this primary goal, teaching the three modes of communication is the central theme of my teaching philosophy. I am confident that the role of an ideal teacher, the communication-based teaching approaches, and those teaching strategies will make me become a qualified language teacher. To teach is to learn. My learning journey has just begun.



## **ARTIFACTS**

### **Artifact I -- Language**

**The Complexity in CFL Class: Analyzing 的 (de) , 地 (de), 得 (de)**

## **Background and Structural Analysis**

Generally, the vocabulary of languages can be divided into two kinds of words: content words, which usually have a specific semantic meaning, and function words which play a syntactic role (Liu, Jin, Wang, & Wu, 2010). One of the most important distinctions made in the Chinese linguistic tradition is that of "xū cí" (empty words) and "shí cí" (full words) (Ye, 2004). Chao (1968) points out that the classification of empty and full words relates very closely to the division of content words and function words in modern linguistics. The category of "xū cí" includes adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, particles, etc. In most situations "xū cí" do not express concrete lexical meaning, however they are far from unimportant, because Chinese does not rely on morphological affixes (Ye, 2004) and displays no morphological change in the strict sense (Li & Cheng, 1988). If a learner does not use the "xū cí" correctly, a sentence might not make any sense. Many studies show that it is difficult for learners of the Chinese language to grasp "xū cí". Lu and Ma (1999), who analyzed the kinds of mistakes made by L2/ FL learners of Chinese, found that 65% of such mistakes were related to the usage of "xū cí".

The main aim of this paper is to look at three "xū cí": 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de), which are typically challenging for CFL learners. I will offer an analysis and present teaching approaches to benefit CFL learning. Grammatically, these three "xū cí" are called structural particles; they are the most widely used "xū cí" in the Chinese language.

To investigate CFL learners' difficulty with these three particles, I did a small study in a CHIN 3010 class at Utah State University. The proficiency level of the students (n=15) in the class range from high-intermediate to advance. They had studied Chinese for an average of 3 years. Thirteen participants had lived in Chinese-speaking countries for 2 years. I designed a questionnaire and a small quiz for this study. The questionnaire had four open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The quiz had 10 blanks, and each blank was worth one point (see Appendix B). The questionnaire data showed that 12 participants were often confused with the usage of three particles: 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de), and at times mixed them up in their writing. Two participants seldom used the target form inappropriately, and one participant did all questions correctly. In addition, 12 participants agreed that the most complex **de** was 地. Only three participants thought that 得 was the most complex one. The average score on the quiz was 50%. And from the incorrect responses, I concluded that the majority of learner cannot distinguish adequately among these three de.

I call these three 的 (de), 地 (de), and 得 (de) complex rather than complicated grammatical forms because I believe Chinese teachers can make them simpler through detailed analysis and examples. Both "complex" and "complicate" can mean intricate and difficult, but in fact there are significant distinctions between these two words. If something is complex, it may seem intricate and difficult because it is composed of many interconnected parts, but it could become simple through detailed dissecting. Whereas if something is defined as complicated, then it means to be difficult to analyze, explain, and understand.

The majority of CFL learners in my sample typically confuse these three particles: 的

(de), 地 (de), and 得 (de). One of reasons may be that their commonalities might make students ignore their distinctions. First of all, their pronunciation is the same with the neutral tone "de". Thus, in spoken Chinese, there is no way to distinguish them phonetically. Second, grammatically, they are structural particles, which mean they are used in connecting content words in the sentence. Third, none of these three particles carry any semantic meaning.

If CFL learners clearly understand the difference in use of these three particles, they may be less confused. I will discuss two types of difference among these three similar particles: their usage in sentences and their typical collocations.

First, let us look at the usage of de (的). In Mandarin Chinese, the particle de (的) has two common usages. One is as a possessive modifier. Another is used in describing objects or people. For example,

1.我	的	朋友
Wǒ	de	péng yǒu
I	Poss	friend
My		friend

In example 1, de (的) is a possessive modifier, which is used after the first (pro) noun.

**Wǒ + de (的) = I poss** Therefore, from example 1, we can predict the following possessive pronouns:

wǒ de(的) = I poss	wǒ de(的) shū = my book
nǐ de(的) = You poss	nǐ de(的) shū = your book
tā de(的) = He poss	tā de(的) shū = his book

tā de(的) = She poss

tā de(的) shū = her book

tā men de(的) = they poss

tā men de(的) shū = their book

wǒ men de(的) = We poss

wǒ men de(的) shū = our book

In addition, the de (的) particle can be used with any noun, not only with pronouns. For example,

2. 图书馆	的	书
Tū shū guǎn	de	shū
Library	poss	book
Library's		book

3. 张教授	的	笔
Zhāng jiào shòu	de	bǐ
Professor Zhang	poss	pen
Professor Zhang's		pen

The second common usage of de (的) is to describe objects or people. For example,

4. 这	是	一	件	美	丽	的	衣	服	.
Zhè	shì	yí	jiàn	měi	lì	de	yī	fú	.
This	is	a	beautiful	cloth	.				
This	is	a	beautiful	cloth	.				

5. 院子 里 都 是 红色 的 花。

Yuàn zi lǐ dòu shì hóng sè de huā.

Yard in all is red flowers.

In the yard, there are all red flowers.

Now, let us look at the second type of de, namely 得. This particle indicates the result or evaluation of an action or event. The word after the particle de (得) is a complement. For example,

6. 老师 讲 得 很好。

Lǎo shī jiǎng de hěn hǎo。

Teacher speaks good.

Teacher speaks well.

In the example above, the de 得 particle comes after the verb jiǎng 讲 (speak), and the following phrase (hěn hǎo) describes how the speaking is done. For example,

7. 老师 讲 得 很快。

Lǎo shī jiǎng de hěn kuài.

Teacher speak quick.

Teacher speak quickly.

In example 7, the adjective phrase "hěn kuài", which means quick and describes how the teacher speaks.

Finally, let us look at the third de (地). This particle is called an adverbial marker, which is used to indicate the intention, manner, or method in which an action is done. For example,

8. 同学们 都在 安静 地 写字。

Tōng xué meng dōu zài ān jìng de xiě zì.

Students all silently writing.

Students are writing silently.

In example 8, the adjective "ān jìng" with de (地) forms an adverbial to describe "xiě zì" the action of writing.

9. 老师 大声 地 讲话。

Lǎo shī dà shēng de jiǎng huà.

Teacher loud speak.

Teacher speak loudly.

Likewise, in example 9, the adjective "dà shēng" with de (地) forms an adverbial to



describe "jiǎng huà" the action of speaking.

Here I want to point out is, both the third de (地) and the second de (得) connect with verbs. However, the most clear distinguish is: the position of the verb is different. The third de (地) comes before the verb and always combines with the former adjective to form an adverbial phrase to describe the verb. While, the second de (得) comes after a verb and connects an adjective, which is the result or evaluation of the verb.

In addition to the different usage of these three particles, there is another difference among them which can help CFL students to distinguish them clearly. The type of word preceding or following these three particulars in the sentence is different. The way to discover this difference is to underline the preceding word and the following word for de (的) , de (得), and de (地), and compare them.

The first de(的) :

10. 图书馆          的          书  
Tū shū guǎn          **de**          shū  
Library          Poss          book          ⇒          **Noun + de (的) + Noun**  
Library's                                  book

11. 我          的          朋友  
Wǒ          de          péng yǒu  
I          poss          friend          ⇒          **Pronoun + de(的) + Noun**

My friend

12. 这 是 一 件 美丽 的 衣服.

Zhè shì yí jiàn meǐ lì de yī fú.

This is a beautiful cloth.  $\implies$  **Adjective + de(的) + Noun**

This is a beautiful cloth.

From the examples above, we can see when the particle de (的) is used as a possessive modifier. It is put between two nouns to indicate a relationship of possessor to possess. When particle de (的) is used in describing objects or people, it follows the adjective and precedes a noun.

Here, let us see second de (得).

13. 老师 讲 得 很好。

Lǎo shī jiǎng de hěn hǎo。

Teacher speaks good.  $\implies$  **Verb. + de(得) + Adjective**

Teacher speaks well.

14. 我 听 得 懂。

Wǒ tīng de dǒng。

I listen understandable.  $\implies$  **Verb. + de(得) + Adjective.**

I can understand.

This particle de (得) follows a verb. The word after de (得) is an adjective or verb,

which means a result or an evaluation of the verb.

Here is the third de (地).

15. 同学们 都在 安静 地 写字。

Tōng xué meng dōu zài ān jìng de xiě zì.

Students all silent writing.  $\implies$  **Adjective+de(地)+Verb**

Students are writing silently.

The adverbial de (地) is used after an adjective and before a verb. After analysis the preceding and following words among the three particle de (的), de (得), and de (地). We can see a fixed rule: the following word of de (的) is a noun; the following word of de (地) is a verb, while the following word of de (得) is an adjective. There is a interesting children's song which can help learners remember this rule:

的地得，不一样，用法分别记心上，

左边白，右边勺，名词跟在后面跑。(left "白"，right "勺"，a noun runs following)

美丽的花儿绽笑脸，青青的草儿弯下腰，

清清的河水向东流，蓝蓝的天上白云飘，

暖暖的风儿轻轻吹，绿绿的树叶把头摇，

小小的鱼儿水中游，红红的太阳当空照，

左边土，右边也，地字站在动词前，(left "土"，right "也"，"地" stands before a verb)

认真地做操不马虎，专心地上课不大意，  
 大声地朗读不害羞，从容地走路不着急，  
 痛快地玩耍来放松，用心地思考解难题，  
 勤奋地学习要积极，辛勤地劳动花力气，

左边两人就是得 ,形容词前要用得 ,(two person radical in the left is "得", using "得" before an adjective )

兔子兔子跑得快，乌龟乌龟爬得慢，  
 青青竹子长得快，参天大树长得慢，  
 清晨锻炼起得早，加班加点睡得晚，  
 欢乐时光过得快，考试题目出得难。

Now, I will introduce a couple of special uses of two of the particles: de (的) and de (得).

The de (的) particle is sometimes used for emphasis or affirmation, which is put at the end of sentence. For example,

16. 我 会 去 的!

Wǒ huì qù de!

I will go !

I am going!

17. 他 是 做 生意 的.

Tā shì zuò shēng yì de。

He is do business.

He is a business man.

The particle de "得" on the other hand is sometimes used with the character bù 不 (no), forming a phrase bù de 不得, which mean "cannot". When the particle de (得) is used in this way, the sentence is a suggestion, and the tone is very strong. For example,

18. 下雪天 开车, 我们 可 粗心 不得。

Xià xuě tiān kāi chē, wǒ men kě chū xīn bù de.

Snow day driving, we careless cannot.

we cannot be careless when we are driving in snow day.

The particle de (得) has another special use. In this special use, the particle de (得) is in a phrase, which expresses a comparison. 比 ... + adjective + de (得)+adjective. For example,

19. 香港 比 中国 大陆 小 得 多。

Xiāng gǎng bǐ zhōng guó dà lù xiǎo de duō.

Hong kong compare China mainland small many.

Hongkong is much smaller than China mainland.

### Practical Application

Structural analysis by itself does not usually lead to mastery of language forms. Teachers must also design in-class activities to get students to practice the language form in

communication. I will discuss three such practice activities.

The first is sentence combining activity. First, I put students in groups of four. Each group will receive a bag with small pieces of paper. Each piece of paper has a phrase or a character. Three 的 (de), 地 (de), and 得 (de) are included in the pieces of paper. Students need to make sentences with these pieces of paper. Every sentence must include at least one de, and they have to use all of three 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de).

For example, the vocabularies and characters in the bag could be: 你 (you), 是 (are/is/am), 学生 (student), 差 (bad), 优秀 (outstanding), 老师 (teacher), 一位 (measurement) 认真 (careful), 学习 (study), 看书 (read), 的 (de), 地 (de), 得 (de). Many sentences could be created by students such as

1. Nǐ shì yì míng yōu xiù de xué shēng.

你 是 一 名 优 秀 的 学 生。

You are a outstanding de student.

You are a outstanding student.

2. Lǎo shī rèn zhēn de kàn shū

老 师 认 真 地 看 书。

Teacher careful de read.

Teacher is reading carefully.

3. Nǐ xué xī de rèn zhēn

你 学 习 得 认 真。

You study de careful.

You study carefully.

After a set amount of time, each group will send one student to write the answers on the board. Then, teacher and students together evaluate the sentences generated by each group.

The second activity is fixed-form poetry. Laidlaw (1989) suggests the use of fixed-form poetry to tap the creative processes of learners while enabling them to synthesize information.

I give students a poem frame, and they only need to contribute their own content to the pre-existing pattern. There could be various correct answers in the blank. There could be various answers in the blank. Additionally, this activity can help students to review vocabulary and increase their writing confidence. For instance,

快 乐  
kuài lè  
Happy

1. 快乐 的 ( 同学 ), 快乐 地 ( 学习 ),

kuài lè de ( tóng xué ), kuài lè de ( xué xí )  
happy ( students ), happy ( study ).  
happy students, studying happily.

2. 快乐 的 ( 老师 ), 快乐 地 ( 教课 ),

kuài lè de ( lǎo shī ), kuài lè de ( jiāo kè ),  
happy ( teacher ), happy ( teach ),  
happy teachers, teaching happily.

3. 快乐 的 (小朋友), 快乐 地 ( 玩耍 ),

kuài lè de ( xiǎo péng yǒu ), kuài lè de ( wán shuǎ ),  
happy ( kids ), happy ( play ),  
happy kids, playing happily.

4. 我们 都 (生活 ) 得 很 快乐。

wǒ mén dōu ( shēng huó ) de hěn kuài lè.  
We all ( live ) very happy.  
All of us are living happily.

The third activity I will use is filling in the lyrics. First, I find a song of which the lyrics are appropriate for the level of the students. Then, I will underline all instances of the three particles in the lyrics, and replace the preceding word and following words of these particles with blanks. Students will listen to the song and fill in the blanks.

In conclusion, in this paper I have analyzed the usage of three particle de (的) , de (得) ,de (地), and explained their commonalities and compared their differences. Also, I have introduced several activities that can be used in teaching these three particles. My aim is to assist CFL learners in mastering these three particles.

## **Artifact II -- Culture**

### **Comparing American and Chinese Language Teacher**



## **Introduction**

Hofstede defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another" (1984, p. 51). Due to differences between Chinese and North American cultural backgrounds and their respective views of education, there are numerous differences between Chinese teachers and American teachers. In this paper I will examine four differences between American teachers and Chinese teachers, including teaching methods, teachers' relationship with students, teachers' beliefs, and teachers' social status.

### **Different teaching methods**

Though teaching methods vary widely within any country, it is easy to find obvious trends when comparing American teachers and Chinese teachers. In this paper, I will concentrate on a comparison of language teaching methods.

Let us begin by considering the methods of Chinese language teachers. Under the influence of Confucian teaching, most Chinese language teachers use teacher-centered

methods in class. Generally, teachers are leading actors and students are audiences in the classroom. Chinese teachers make the decisions about what to teach and learn, how to teach and learn, when to teach and learn and where to teach and learn (Geng, 2007). The content of classes is chosen mainly according to teachers' lesson plans, which are based on textbooks. Teachers strictly adhere to their own predetermined lesson plan (Xie, 2009). In addition, Chinese students are expected to learn in class by listening (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Thus, Chinese language teachers do not have much interaction with students, and teachers expect their students to be attentive listeners in the classroom. Students seldom ask questions during class because teachers do not like to be interrupted by questions. If students do not understand and want to ask questions, they need to raise their hand and wait to be called on. Xie (2009) investigated Chinese teacher-student interaction during teacher-fronted class time in English classes at a Chinese University. The data from the study show that excessive teacher control leads to the reticence on the part of students. In the study, the author found that teachers tended to reject replies that did not conform to the answer they wanted. In addition, teachers elaborated on student contributions, but give students little opportunity to speak. We can see that in students' mind, teachers are authorities of knowledge. Therefore, Chinese classrooms lack the spirit of equality. Students cannot challenge teachers, who tend to focus on basic language instruction, such as repetitive drill, vocabulary memorization, grammar rules, and so forth. These are the most important elements of language teaching in China. Much class time is spent on basic language instruction, and students seldom have an opportunity to speak the target language because teachers think students can practice after class when they have learned the basic knowledge.

On the other side, American language teachers use quite different teaching methods and approaches. Huang (2009) posits that North American teaching methods are affected by the conception of Socrates, a great western thinker who valued the questioning of both his own and others' beliefs, the evaluation of others' knowledge, self-generated knowledge, and teaching by implanting doubt. Therefore, American language teachers like student thinking and discussion, encouraging students to be active in classroom and praising critical and daring ideas (Upton, 1989). According to Xie (2009), Western teachers facilitate learning by producing more opportunities for student participation in the learning process, leading to longer student responses and more complex and topically related student thoughts. Thus, we can infer that American language classrooms are student-centered. Teachers typically provide opportunities to perform, encouraging student participation, being "questioned" by students and expecting students to think critically and be creative. Moreover, Upton (1989) claims that North American teachers often like to use humor and a variety of informal teaching methods in the classroom. For instance, they devise games and activities to help students practice their language skills. They even use music and film to teach grammar. These kinds of teaching methods can impress students and engage them. Furthermore, the content of class by no means depends rigidly on the textbook. In the classroom, most teachers will not use much time to teach the content from the textbook. They think learning from the textbook should be done outside of class. Textbooks are used to assist students to better understand the teacher's lectures. Mostly, teachers only ask questions about the textbooks and sometimes explain some difficult and key points (Zhang & Mcgrath, 2009). Also, teachers may talk about something that is not in the predetermined plan, such as teacher can develop a new

topic from students' question. Using these kinds of teaching methods, Socratic-oriented North American teachers are usually regarded by students as facilitators of learning, but authorities of knowledge (Huang, 2009).

### **Different Teacher-Student Relationship**

Besides the distinct teaching methods in the classroom, the teacher-student relationship is another obvious and important difference between Chinese teachers and American teachers. In this part, I will focus on the teachers' role and the time teachers spend with students.

In China, teachers are authorities of knowledge in their field as well as students' moral mentor (Huang, 2009). As a result of teacher-centered methods, the teachers' role in class is that of giver, lecturer, and authority. In addition, Chinese teachers are like strict parents in many cases. According to Zhang and McGrath (2009, p. 169), "the teacher-student relationship is thought as comparable to that between parents and their children." From experience, I agree with this. There is a famous Chinese adage: "teacher for a day, father for life." Fathers are the head of their family; they are usually strict and have big responsibilities for their children. In China, teachers are ascribed many of the same characteristics as the father. Zhang and McGrath (2009) indicate how Chinese teachers are strict and conservative like fathers, as reflected in the Chinese saying: "rearing without good education is the fault of the father, teaching without strictness is the negligence of the teacher."

Ho (1996) mentions that Chinese teachers are influenced by the Confucian principle that teachers, like parents, are very much responsible for good behavior in students. Indeed, most Chinese teachers intervene in student behavior even outside of class on matters such as smoking, dating, and dressing. For example, if a student is found smoking by a teacher this

will be seen as very serious and equivalent to taking drugs and the student may be expelled from middle school or high school, even university. If students are in love with someone at middle school or high school, teachers must call the students' parents and voice their disapproval. If students dress improperly in the teachers' mind, they must criticize them and give a warning. Chinese teachers use various punishments such as copying the code of conduct 100 times or more, writing a long self-critical essay and reading it in front of other classmates, asking the students' parents to come to the office, and so forth.

Moreover, Chinese teachers always push students to study hard and finish assignments. For instance, if students cannot finish their homework, U.S teachers often just give students a zero or "F" and will not ask students about their missed homework. However, Chinese teachers might force students to finish, even monitor students to make sure they finish the homework. From these particulars, it can be seen that Chinese teachers are strict and conservative, and that their responsibilities are far beyond teaching subjects such as language, art, or math in the classroom. Chinese teachers are expected to take charge as moral mentors of students in and out of the classroom.

The roles ascribed to teachers also influence how teachers spend their time. In Chinese schools, teachers usually have to stay and work in their office all day except when they are in the class. They work in their office in order to be available for contact by students (Zhang & McGrath, 2009). Chinese teachers stay in their office to be available for waiting for students and give their help and advice in studies or life when needed. Students do not have to make appointments with their teachers; they can talk with their teachers any time. In China, most high schools and middle schools require English teachers to supervise extra morning and

evening study periods. English teachers will come to school earlier than students to supervise these morning-reading periods and also stay in the classroom to supervise evening self-study classes. Also, English teachers will sometimes do some volunteer tutoring for their own students after class or on weekends. From these examples, we can see how much time language teachers spend with their students in China.

In the U.S, the teacher-student relationship is quite different. They are foremost facilitators, enabling students to study. There is generally an equal relationship between teachers and students in North American classrooms. For example, students can call teachers directly by name during class to ask questions and interrupt the lecture at any time. Teachers usually do not command students. Because teachers think students should be responsible for their own studying, teachers will not force students to study. Moreover, in most situations, American teachers do not concern themselves with matters that have no relation with studying or class; such as students' affection, behavior, or dress.

Compared to Chinese teachers, American language teachers spend much less time working with students. After class they do not have to stay in their office all day. Instead they have their regular office hours for meeting with students. If students want to meet them out of their office time, students can make an appointment with teachers. American teachers are like "part-time" teachers in many Chinese students' mind because students seldom see their teachers on campus except in the classroom. American teachers may have much interaction with students in class, while they do not have much interaction with students outside of class.

### **Different teachers' beliefs**

Clark and Peterson (1986) state that teacher behavior is substantially influenced and

even determined by teachers' thought process. Therefore, the different teaching methods and different teacher-student relationship could be attributed to different teachers' beliefs.

One of the most different teachers' beliefs in these two countries concerns examination scores. In China, in teachers' minds, examination scores are the most important criterion to measure student success. Geng (2007) states that the main academic criterion in China is high scores on examinations rather than competence and commitment in school. Therefore, in Chinese schools, students can only use examination scores to prove themselves. What is more, teachers and students spend much of their time reviewing and preparing for the examinations. The purpose of English teaching in China is for helping students to get a good score on the exam rather than to use the language. For instance, in a whole year of high school in China a teacher might not give any new lecture, the only thing done in class is taking tests and reviewing tests.

Secondly, Chinese teachers often think they should take charge of students' behavior and habits in and out of the class. Teachers in China think students' behaviors have a close connection to their studying. For example, Chinese teachers would regard it as immoral if students are in love with someone. Chinese teachers think students are morally degenerate if students play computer games after class, and will confiscate their laptop. If students voice disagreement with school policies, Chinese teachers would see them as rebels who need punishment.

Thirdly, many Chinese teachers believe treating students strictly, even punishing them, is beneficial for students. As evidence, Zhang and McGrath (2009) explain that many Chinese teachers believe that criticism and punishment help students remember their shortcomings

and this will be good for them. Praise and encouragement are not considered necessary because doing well in school and behaving properly is simply to fulfill one's duties as a student. These teaching beliefs may result in teachers' harsh words and even humiliation of students (Zhang & McGrath). There is a Chinese proverb which says, "beating is loving, scolding is caring". Thus, it can be understood why Chinese teachers use severe methods is to care for their students.

Fourth, many Chinese teachers believe that students' achievement was certainly related to the teachers' efforts. In other words, if students' grades are not good, teachers will blame themselves. This is the reason teachers push students to study, devote their lives to their students, spend a lot of time with students, and even sacrifice their personal time and family.

American teachers hold largely opposite beliefs. While they do value students' scores, but they are also concerned with aspects of students. I will use applying to a U.S. university as an example. Besides authoritative test scores, the admissions committee will evaluate an applicant's personal statement, recommendation letters, and work experience. All of these materials are important in the admission decision. The examination score is by no means the only criteria on of success in American teachers' mind. Their evaluation of a student is based on a more comprehensive consideration.

Unlike their Chinese counterparts, most of American teachers believe that students should choose their own course of action and make their own decisions (Zhang & McGrath, 2009). For instance, they think students' dating is normal and natural. They think students playing computer game after class is not a big deal because students have a right to decide how to spend their free time. They do not have much concern about students' dress and



students have the right to voice disagreement with school policies. Also, they think students should be responsible for their own studying. If students skip class or do not hand in homework, they will just have a zero put on their record.

In contrast with Chinese practices of scolding and punishing, many American teachers believe that encouragement and positive feedback can foster progress and promote student's confidence. Therefore, they avoid shaming students in front of others. They think scolding or punishing students will give them low self-esteem and emotionally hurt them, which is viewed as detrimental to their studying. Zhang and McGrath (2009) provide a table about teachers' words and feedback which clearly presents the difference between American and Chinese teachers

Table Two. Comparison of Teachers' Words and Feedback

Chinese Teachers	American teachers
Don't be complacent!	Nice job! You did a fantastic job!
Don't show self - satisfaction!	Well done! Brilliant! You rock!
It is not a big deal!	Absolutely wonderful!
How come you asked such a question?	That is a good question!
What are you thinking about?	
You did not plagiarize, did you?	Surprisingly good!
Did you do it by yourself?	Much better than I had expected.

We can see here that American teachers often give positive comments to students in order to encourage and engage students. This is opposite from Chinese teachers' beliefs.

### **Different teachers' social status**

The social status of teachers is a significant area of inquiry that offers insight into the importance attached to education in each country (Fwu & Wang, 2002). In both America and China, the governments value education, however teachers' social status in these two countries is very different.

In China teachers are broadly respected throughout society (Cavanagh, 2007). The high status of teachers is rooted in traditional Chinese Confucian culture. In Chinese traditional culture, a teacher is not only the authority of knowledge, but also a role model for moral behavior (Fwu & Wang, 2002). There is a Chinese maxim, "One should respect one's teacher as if he were one's father even if the teacher-student relationship exists only for a single day."

In modern society, a Chinese teacher's social status is still high and rests on three pillars. Firstly, the Chinese government attaches importance to the cultivation of teachers. The Chinese government concluded that the key to success of national modernization is to increase the talent and the training of the workforce. The government in China also maintains that education will further develop the basis of economic development (Li, 1999). For example, to encourage more outstanding young people to become lifelong educators, Chinese Premier Wen Jia Bao has said that the Chinese government will take steps to ease the financial burden on teachers by providing free tuition for college students majoring in education. I have studied in Si Chuan normal university. As I know, the tuition of all normal

universities is just half of other comprehensive universities. Additionally, all students in normal university can get a certain amount of benefits every month from government. Moreover, most teachers in China have a good income and can be counted as "white collar" level. In recent years, the Chinese government has raised teachers' income many times. In large cities, teachers in public schools can earn more than 6000 Yuan per month or about \$1000, a solid wage. Thirdly, admiration and esteem for teachers pervade homes and schools, even the whole society (Fwu & Wang, 2002). For instance in China, the first day of September every year is Teacher's Day. Therefore, many young people would like to or dream to be a teacher.

There is little data regarding American teachers' social status. However, we do know there is a shortage of public school teachers in the United States. Also, teacher preparation institutions are not producing sufficient numbers of teachers to cover losses due to teacher retirement (Ingersoll & Perda, 2009). Additionally, Ingersoll (2001) found that overall teacher turnover was higher than all employees: 13.2% annually for teachers versus 11% for all jobs. As evidence, Fwu and Wang (2002) explain that in the United States most teachers are satisfied with the intrinsic aspect of teaching such as helping students learn and modifying their behaviors, but are dissatisfied with extrinsic factors such as compensation, workload, community criticism, and the public image of teaching. We can infer that American teachers' intrinsic satisfaction is often offset by the external constraints because American teachers' social status and treatment do not meet their satisfaction. From my personal experience studying in the United States, although university teachers in the United States have high prestige and reputation, but teachers from K-12 are not like that.

## **Conclusion**

In language teaching, Chinese teachers and American teachers have their own teaching methods and preferences. In student- teacher relationships, each group of teachers holds their own principles. In teacher beliefs, the two countries' teachers have many opposite thoughts and opinions. I like Chinese teachers' devoted spirit and serious attitude in the teaching profession. On the other hand I also like American teachers' active language classroom. For me, there is no good or bad when judging Chinese and American teachers. Through listing these different aspects, my purpose is to find a balance for myself between American and Chinese teachers in order to better help my future students.

**Artifact III -- Literacy**  
**Using Literature Circles in CFL Classroom**

## **Introduction**

Many language learners might be good readers in their native language but when it comes to the target language, they chose not to participate, and they are reluctant to read. Sullivan (2002) argues students who do not read for pleasure but only do so when they are completing school assignments is a problem that can affect students' future learning and academic success. According to Daniels (1994), there are many reasons that prevent students from reading, such as, be lack of reading skills, be not quite confident of their ability, and vocabulary's background is not rich enough to express their thoughts and ideas, also their culture background. Keeping this in mind, teachers around the world have tried to find ways to engage their students in the reading process. One approach that has been proven effective is the use of literature circles (Daniels,1994; Sullivan, 2002; Carrison, 2005; Hsu, 2004; Li, 2009). In this paper, I will explore the concept of literature circles to shed some light on their benefits in CFL classrooms and introduce how will I use this technique in the class.

## **Definition of Literature Circles**

Daniels (2004) one of the first to write about literature circles, defines that literature circles are small, temporary groups who have chosen to read the same story, poem, articles, or book. Each member prepares to take specific responsibilities in the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with the notes to help perform that job. Additionally, he emphasizes the twelve elements of literature circles in the book.

- 1- Students choose their own reading materials.
- 2- Small temporary groups formed, based on students' choice or teacher's direction.
- 3- Different groups are usually reading different books.
- 4- Groups meet on a regular predictable schedule to discuss their reading.
- 5- Students use written or drawn notes to guide both their reading and discussion.
- 6- Discussion topics come from the students.
- 7- Group meetings aim to be open, natural conversations.
- 8- In newly forming groups, students play a rotating assortment of task roles.
- 9- The teacher serves as a facilitator.
- 10- Evaluation is by teacher observation and student self-evaluation.
- 11- A spirit of playfulness and fun pervades the room.
- 12- When readings are finished, readers share with their classmates, and then form new groups.

### **Teacher and Students' Role**

In addition to these twelve elements, Daniels (2004) discusses students' roles and the teacher's role in the literature circles. Typical students' roles include: connector, questioner, literary luminary, illustrator, summarizer, researcher, word master/word wizard, and scene setter. The job of connector is to find the connection between the book he/her is reading and his/her real life. The questioner needs to write a list of questions that group members might want to explore, and guides group members to discuss the questions in the meeting. The literary luminary's job is to choose a paragraph or sentences from the book which he/she think are interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling or important and to ask the other members to read and discuss these sections. The job of illustrator is to draw a picture related to what

he/she read in the book. It can be something that she/he read, something that the text reminds him/her about, or an element of the story, such as plot, character, and setting. The summarizer's job is to prepare a summary of the text and tell group members the key points of the story. The researcher locates information related to the book such as something about the author, culture reference, and the history about the book. The person who is word master needs to look up a few important words in the book and help group members find and understand these words. The scene setter tracks where actions happen and when the scene changes.

The teacher's role in the literature circle is that of facilitator. Before meeting, the teacher's job is to collect an assortment of great texts. In the meeting, the teacher groups students and provides help when a student or a group struggles with their text. Also, the teacher needs to monitor learner's performance in the meeting and keep assessment notes. Martinez-Rolddn and Lopez-Robertson (1999/2000) describe that the role of the teacher is an assistant who provides students with a safe learning environment, respecting their experiences and ideas, and helping them gain confidence and grow as learners.

### **Benefits of Literature Circles**

Literature circles are a great technique that can motivate students read and talk in the class. First, literature circles endow all students with a sense of responsibility. The responsibilities compel students to devote themselves to reading more closely than otherwise might be the case (Hsu, 2004). Literature circles are cooperative learning groups, in which every student has his or her own role and purpose. Each member needs to prepare for a



specific task in the upcoming discussion. Therefore, motivation and engagement are increased.

Second, literature circles provide students more opportunity to talk, which enables teachers to return the power and time back to students. Li (2009) demonstrated that in a traditional language class, due to limited class time, students' personality, and so on, not every student has an opportunity to talk and practice. Literature circles offer more and fairer opportunities because every student has a role to perform.

Third, literature circles foster a non-threatening environment in which students can interact actively in group discussion. In literature circles, students share their ideas and ask questions of their group members. The talking is casual and relaxed. Also, students are able to ask for repetition and clarification as often as needed in this kind of collaborative atmosphere of group work (Carrison , 2005).

Fourth, students can share different perspectives and discover new meanings through literature circles. Generally, students in CFL classrooms have various social, academic, and culture backgrounds. When they have discussion in the LCs, they offer their unique insights and perspectives about the text. Therefore, students' diverse backgrounds and ways of thinking can bring new meaning to literature circles discourse new meaning (Hsu, 2004). Hancock (2002) claims that meaning results from the interaction between the text and the reader, so readers' diverse comprehension adds in new insights to the group.

### **Application of Literature Circles in CFL Classroom**

Due to these advantages, I would like to use the technique of literature circles in my CFL class. In the following, I will introduce how I will apply it into CFL classroom.

### **Modification.**

To make the literature circles more suitable for my CFL classroom, I want to modify some of the elements in Daniels' (2002) definition. The first modification is that I will choose the materials for my students. I think in most situations, CFL learners may not have enough experience to find authentic and appropriate text for their levels. Li (2009) claims that students prefer that instructors choose materials for them due to the difficulty on their part to find appropriate reading materials. McQuillan, Tse, and MacGillivray (1995) also mention that learners might feel uncomfortable with choices when they are asked to select texts.

My second modification is that all groups will read the same materials at the same time. This makes it easier for me to assess their performance in the meeting. In addition, it is challenge to find appropriate reading materials for student themselves because the selection of materials should consider several aspects, including vocabularies and grammar, structural organization, topics, students' background and so on.

### **Selection of reading materials.**

Li (2009) points out that the selection of reading materials is the key to success of any literature circle activity. What kind of materials will I choose for my students? There are five aspects I will consider. First, I will choose authentic materials, which are materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community (Peacock, 1997).

Nunan (1999) claims that authentic material helps bring the connect to life, and makes learning and using language more meaningful. Also, Speller (2002, p. 3) states that authentic materials can help learners “bridge the gap from the classroom lesson to real life by making immediate use of classroom lessons in their lives”. In addition, I will choose texts which are at an appropriate language level for my students. For example, there are not too much new words or phrases, and the reading is easy to understand. Moreover, I will choose a text with interesting content which can entice students to read. For example, the reading has a funny plot, or contains many interesting culture elements. Furthermore, I would like to use texts which are not too long. Long reading materials may frustrate foreign language learners and may discourage them.

### **Roles and procedures of literature circles in my class.**

Although Daniels (2004) suggests eight typical student roles in literature circles, I will only use six of them: discussion director, summarizer, vocabulary enricher, connector, literary luminary, and illustrator. I will prepare a role sheet for each role. The discussion director talks first and invites other group members to talk, elicits others' opinions, and keeps the discussion going. The summarizer gives short summary of the story with key points after the discussion director's introduction. Then, the vocabulary enricher will explain some important words or unfamiliar words. These first three roles should speak in order. But the other student roles can speak in any order. The connector makes connections between the reading and students' real life experiences. The illustrator's job is to draw a picture based on the reading. And the literary luminary guides everybody to discuss interesting sections of

reading. Students should fill out the role sheet before the meeting. During their discussion, I will move around from group to group, monitor their performance, and answer their questions.

### **The approaches to assess learners' performance.**

Some people might think that assessment presents quite a puzzle for teachers using literature circles. Fortunately, we do have many good means of assessment. Daniels (2004) suggests many approaches to assessing learners' performance in literature circles, including daily stamp, checklist, students' self-assessment, book project, student-teacher conference, portfolio, and so on. I especially use book projects and students' self-assessments. In book project assessment, each group of students can compose a book report cooperatively at the end of a literature circle. This product is easy to grade. For students' self-assessment, I will provide a scoring sheet for every student in which I list the ingredients of students' successful performance, such as having a good idea, asking a good question, sticking to the book, etc., with different ingredients having different point values.

### **Conclusion**

One of most important principles in my teaching philosophy is cultivating my students' communicative abilities in interpersonal, interpretive and presentational modes. Literature circles is the activity which synthesizes all these three communicative abilities in an integrated way. First, students need to do an interpretive communication, which is

interpreting the texts with their own opinions and perspectives before the meeting. Later, students will do interpersonal communication, which is interacting orally with other group members in the meeting. Also, when students are declaring their opinions during the meeting, they are doing oral presentational communication. Therefore, the use of literature circles can help me teach and help students practice the three modes of communications.

Literature circles is a new technique for me in foreign language teaching. I am eager to use literature circles in my future classroom, and learn through experience how best to modify literature circles activities for specific groups of students.

### **Analysis of Teaching Video**

This was a practice teaching lesson in the course of LING 6400, Second Language Teaching: Research and Practice. There were 15 students in total who were my classmates in the MSLT program. Most of them had strong language background. There was only one student who had learned Mandarin before. Other students were novice learners who had not ever touched Chinese Mandarin.

In this class, I taught how to do greeting and simple self-introduction in Chinese Mandarin. The objective of the class was that students would be able to greet people and introduce their name, nationality, and ages and that they would understand how these sentences were built.

The first thing I did in class was greeting students one by one in the class. I used the greeting words “ni hao “as an example to simply introduce the four tones in Chinese. Here, I asked students which was the right tone of the "ni" and "hao" respectively. All students were able to identify the right tone by listening. Then, I began to teach how to introduce names in

Chinese. Before that, I presented Chinese culture about names. For example, Chinese people always put the family name first to show the importance of family, and when Chinese people introduce their names, they will say their full name rather than just their given name. I showed the example sentences that illustrated how to introduce one's name. I used the explicit way to teach how these sentences were built in Chinese by analyzing the sentence structure. After explanation, I asked students to practice introducing their name and asking their friend's name in pairs. I monitored their performance when they practiced orally.

Next, I taught how to introduce nationality. I showed images of national flags and country names one by one through a Powerpoint. I think pictures are good visual aids for teaching vocabulary. Additionally, I listed the words representing the people of the countries and the names of countries. When we read these out loud, I intentionally stressed the difference between countries' name and the words representing the people of the country. Later, I asked students to explain how to describe someone's nationality. Most of the students were able to do this and were able to apply this insight to other examples. I listed the sample sentences of introducing the nationality and highlighted the sentence structure on PPT. What students need to do is filling the frames. In this part, I asked them to practice orally in groups.

In the end, I played a short video which included all content we learned in class. After the video, I asked some questions about its content, such as what is the name of the boy? Where does he come from? etc.

In this lesson, I provided opportunities for students to use the target language and to interact in class. Also, I used many interaction strategies, such as allowing sufficient wait

time, helping students maintain the floor, giving positive feedback, and so forth. I used scaffolding to help them answer questions. Moreover, I introduced Chinese culture. At the end of class, I think almost all students reached the class objective.

However, I think I still need to improve in many aspects. First, I used too much explicit teaching to focus on grammar points. Second, the class only involved speaking and listening, no reading or writing. I should have taught some Chinese characters and how to write strokes. Third, I should use English as little as I possibly I can, and let them get used to listening to the target language rather than relying on the English explanation. Last but not least, at the end of class, I should present the day's objective again let students check whether they have reached the objective.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY



Moran, P. R. (2001). *Teaching culture: Perspectives in practice*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

**Summary:**

This book is organized into three parts: culture content, culture learning, and culture teaching. In the culture content part, the author begins by outlining his own approach to teaching culture and four kinds of culture learning or culture knowing. He thinks that teachers need to link cultural content to the learners' engagement, leading to knowing about, knowing how, knowing why, and knowing oneself. He presents culture learning as a process with five dimensions: products, practices, perspectives, persons, and communities. The author demonstrates that culture is an evolving way of life consisting of shared products, practices, and perspectives of persons within specific social settings and communities. In particular, he focuses on the interrelationship between language and culture. In the culture learning part, the author examines culture learning and presents six goals for culture learners: culture-specific understanding, culture-general understanding, competence, adaptation, social

change, and identity. He discusses the learning process and examines the development of culture learning, how culture is acquired. In the last part of the book, the author illustrates the teaching emphases and options in teaching culture, along with a discussion of the particular roles required of the teacher for each of the knowings. In the end, he reviews the cultural knowings and the experiential learning cycle from the perspective of teaching.

**Reaction:**

I appreciate this book for showing me that culture and languages are inseparable in our lives and in language teaching. The book offers multiple viewpoints on the interrelationship between language and culture and how they serve to teach meaning. In addition, the author uses many of his own experiences and those of other language teachers in this book. It is easy to understand for me. When I was reading the book, it naturally made me think about my own encounters in culture learning, while it helped me envision how to be a good teacher of both language and culture.

Decapua, A., & Wintergerst, A. (2004). *Crossing cultures in the language classroom*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

**Summary:**

The goal of this book is to help teachers become more culturally aware. Every chapter begins with an anecdote, followed by a theory section, practice section, and further readings section. Each anecdote is closely related to the chapter theme, and effectively raises the key issue. The theory section supplies an integrated perspective from the research literature. In the practice section, numerous experiential activities focus on the theme. The book is divided

into six major themes. First, the author examines the issue of culture in shaping our behavior, attitudes, and perceptions of the world. Second, he states the definition of culture and talks about different aspects of culture, and the relationship between culture and language. Third, he offers an examination of what culture is and how culture influences people's behaviors, their social relationships, and their perceptions of the world around them. Fourth, he addresses culture shock, discussing its roots and ramifications. Fifth, the author investigates various aspects of nonverbal communication and cross-cultural differences. Sixth, he considers social roles and expectations cross-culturally and discusses family roles, religious beliefs, medical practices, and the role of women. At the end of the book, he explores how speakers use language in social contexts.

**Reaction:**

Due to this book, I have become more aware of my own culture and other cultures around me. Also, I achieved a deeper understanding of the relationship between culture and language. From reading this book, I learned that we should draw conclusions about culture based on observations rather than preconceptions. This book helped me develop a greater understanding of cultural differences and greater respect for such differences.

Li, X., & Hedeouw, E. (2009). The use of literature circles in CFL teaching:“太棒了”. *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 44, 43-71.

**Summary:**

This article presents the technique of Literature Circle for an intermediate-high Chinese Foreign language classroom at a U.S university. Firstly, the authors list current trends in

foreign language education and the benefits of incorporating literature into language instruction. In the following, they introduce the original concept of LC as defined by Daniels. Then, they present a study on the use of literature circles in a CFL class. There were 20 student participants. The authors used some modifications of Daniels' approach in the study and explain why those are justified. Additionally, they introduce the materials used in the study. Further, they describe five participant roles and the procedures of LCs in her class. Based on students' reactions, they conclude that LCs have four benefits. First, LCs provides ample opportunities for integration of four skills and more/fair opportunities to talk. Second, LCs creates an effective context for meaningful interaction and mediation. Third, LCs set an appropriate platform for language modeling and culture teaching. Fourth, LCs helps students to be responsible and skillful readers and gain stronger motivation. At end, the authors also discuss some issues and recommendations for applying LC in Chinese teaching contexts.

**Reaction:**

I am interested in implementing LCs in CFL classes. I read Daniels' book on Literature Circles and some other articles about LCs in ESL teaching. However, there is little research about LCs in Foreign Language Teaching, especially the CFL classroom. In this study, the authors modified some elements of the original definition and successfully applied LCs to an intermediate- high CFL class. Using LCs is a good technique for a communicative class, which could develop students' integrated language skills. In addition, I believe LCs can work even in CFL beginner classes if we adapt them to students' level and interests.

Maxim, H. H. (2006). A study into the feasibility and effects of reading extended authentic

discourse in the beginning German language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, 154-165.

**Summary:**

This article addresses reports on a study of extended reading with beginning college-level language students who read a 142-page romance novel in their first semester of German. First, the author mentions research articles supportive of introducing longer texts into L2 classes. However, those sources lacked obvious evidences. Thus, the author carried out this study to test two questions: are students able to read a long, unedited text in the beginning of studying a foreign language? Does time spent reading disadvantage students in preparation for tests? The author divided students into a treatment group and a comparison group. The treatment group followed the same standard first-semester syllabus as the comparison group, but they read a romance novel in class rather than reading selections in the textbook. The effects of the treatment are assessed on the basis of the two groups' results on three departmental exams, a pretest and a post-test. The results of each test indicate no significant difference between the two groups' in scores. The data shows that both groups made substantial gains. Therefore, students are able to read a full-length authentic text in the first semester. In addition, the treatment group performs as well as the comparison group on the three department tests and post-test, which demonstrates that time spent reading in class does not adversely affect beginning language learners' second language development.

**Reaction:**

I like this article because using long authentic text in the beginner foreign language class is an innovative and adventurous approach. The results prove that it could work. In my own

experience of learning a second language, every time I finish reading a long authentic text, I have a great feeling of achievement. A longer text can drive meaning by making connections between segments, episodes, and events in the text. Therefore, longer texts are not always difficult to understand. We should encourage students to read some appropriate authentic novels at their level.

Winke, P.M., & Abbuhl, R. (2007). Taking a closer look at vocabulary learning strategies: A case study of Chinese foreign language class. *Foreign Language Annals*, 40, 697-712.

**Summary:**

The authors investigated what vocabulary learning strategies were used frequently by CFL learners at a university in the U.S. At the beginning, the authors introduce Oxford's six learning strategies and various researchers' categories of vocabulary learning strategies. Later, the authors propose their own categorization of language learning strategies, including input-based strategies, output-based strategies, and cognition-based strategies. In addition, the authors offer examples of each type of strategy encountered in the study. For instance, input-based strategies include asking for one-to-one translation of a word or phrase, using or accessing people in the local Chinese community, etc. Output-based strategies include practicing or rehearsal within self-regulated learning, and so on. Cognition-based strategies include guessing. The researchers used classroom observation, focus group session, and questionnaires to collect the data. They demonstrate that students use various input-based, output-based, and cognition-based strategies in class and out of class. However, students use output-based strategies for learning vocabulary much more than the other two types of

strategies. Finally, the authors illustrate the importance of controlling the amount of input the learners receive. They also believe that students should have the ability to transform their needs to action.

**Reaction:**

The authors categorize vocabulary learning strategies into input-based, output-based, and cognition based. I think these three types of strategies are not only useful for vocabulary learning, but also for many other aspects of language learning. All three types are worth learning. Input-based strategies help students internalize the basic language knowledge. Output-based strategies can strengthen the knowledge they have learned and construct new knowledge. Cognition-based strategies can improve students' comprehension abilities. Therefore, I believe if students can make use of these three types of strategies in balance, they will benefit.

Dong, Y. (1999). The need to understand ESL students' native language writing experiences. *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, 26(3), 277-285.

**Summary:**

According to Dong, teachers should understand ESL students' native language writing experiences to design instruction which is responsive to their needs. First, the author describes non-English speaking students as having rich home cultural, educational, language, and literacy backgrounds. Teachers should consider students' native language and literacy learning experience when planning instruction. Next, the author investigates how these participants learn to read and write in their native countries. In the investigation, he collects

various students' responses about native language learning experience and the instructional methods from their native language teachers. From the responses, he finds many students are already successful writers in their native languages, however significant differences in language, rhetoric, and stylistics cause these ESL students to struggle with writing in English. Moreover, the author demonstrates five instructional principles for teaching ESL writing: 1) instructors need information about students' native literacy learning, 2) teachers should expand their teaching repertoire and adopt diverse teaching strategies for diverse students, 3) ESL students are from different educational and cultural systems, so teachers need to find ways to accommodate students' needs and to build on students' strengths. 4) Teachers should provide ESL students the time and opportunity to learn new English vocabulary and to use it in their writing. 5) the purpose and functions of reading need to be expanded to address a wide range of demands and needs.

**Reaction:**

I felt a strong connection with this article. As a second language learner, I met many difficulties due to language differences. Even now, I am still learning how to adapt to these differences. Therefore, I believe that when I become a Chinese foreign language teacher, I will have greater empathy for my students' native language learning experience and their struggles, which will help me design more effective instructions.

Carbo, M. (2009). Match the style of instruction to the style of reading. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90, 373-378.

**Summary:**



This article talks about Reading Style Teaching and its results. First, the author shows that there could be no improvement in reading comprehension when ineffective teaching practices are used. The author proposes that reading instruction should use students' reading style strengths and preferences, and should also be engaging. With Reading Style Teaching, even the most at-risk students have made extraordinary gains. Additionally, the author mentions that reading is affected by five factors including reading environment, emotional needs, sociological preferences, physical needs, and style of processing information. Furthermore, the author lists four Reading Styles Teaching strategies, demonstrating how each reading method and set of reading materials demands different strengths of the learner.

**Reaction:**

I believe in student-centered instruction. Therefore, I like the author's proposal for Reading Style Teaching, because it is built on each student's reading style. Moreover, the focus is on comprehension and enjoyment. I think we should aim to have students be deeply interested in what they are reading. "For reading to become a lifelong habit and a deeply owned skill, it has to be voluntary, anchored in feelings of pleasure and power "(Daniels, 2002, p.19).

Xie, X. (2009). Why are students quiet? Looking at the Chinese context and beyond. *ELT Journal*, 64(1), 10-20.

**Summary:**

This article is part of a larger project on teacher-student interaction. It reports that the reticence of Chinese learners is caused by the environment that the teachers create in their

interactions with students. The project uses a qualitative approach to investigate teacher-student interaction in English classes at a Chinese university. It involves case studies of two instructors of integrated reading and their respective first-year English major classes. The two Chinese teachers involved are highly experienced and qualified teachers of reading. In this project, the data are collected through observations, audio and videotaping, and stimulated reflection (SR). The results demonstrate that both teachers impose tight thematic control over classroom interaction in four ways: they adhere to their own regimented plans, they elaborate on student contributions whenever possible, they evaluate students' replies on matters of opinion, and they decide upon the relevance of student-initiated ideas. Therefore the author implies that the students' passive speech role does not seem to be solely attributable to cultures of learning, limited language, or anxiety but also to an absence of opportunities for interaction as a result of too much teacher control. In the end of the article, the author suggests some possibilities for improvement, such as engaging the students in talk, scaffolding the students in expressing what they want, helping to establish links between the old and the new information, and so on.

Reaction:

I quite agree with the author that we cannot solely attribute students' reticence to students' culture, limited language abilities, or anxiety. The reason may be due to teaching practices. In my mind, a good language teacher is a facilitator in the classroom, neither judge nor authority. A communicative environment in the classroom is good for language learning; however, too much teacher control still could be ineffective.

Huang, J. (2009). What happens when two cultures meet in the classroom? *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 36(4), 335-342.

**Summary:**

The author investigates four Chinese graduate students' perceptions of the major differences between North American and Chinese classroom teaching styles. He interviews four Chinese graduate students, two from an American university and two from a Canadian university. The major differences identified include the teacher's role, the student's role, class organization, teacher expectations, and student expectations. All participants agree that teachers are authorities and moral mentors in Confucian-oriented Chinese culture, whereas in the Socratic-oriented North American setting, teachers are facilitators. Students in China listen to teachers, take notes, and learn by heart, while students in North America actively participate in classroom discussion and ask questions. In terms of class organization, Chinese teachers are serious and prefer to lecture formally. In contrast, North American teachers often use humor and various informal teaching methods. And, in these two cultures, teachers and students have different expectations. Chinese teachers want students to be good listeners. But North American teachers expect students to think and participate. Students in Confucian-oriented classrooms expect teacher to provide detailed explanation, pointing out the important points and summarizing the key points. However, in Socratic-oriented classrooms, students expect their teachers to give them opportunities to ask questions, express their ideas, and to discuss and debate these ideas. The author examines these four Chinese students' North American classroom learning reality. Finally, the author investigates how these four students adjust their classroom learning strategies and approaches to adapt to

the North American classroom environment.

**Reaction:**

Comparing Chinese and American cultures, many differences can be observed, including in the classroom. I do not think that North American classes are always better than Chinese classes. However, at least, in language classes, I do believe that students need more opportunities to practice. I want my students to participate, discuss, and ask questions in class.

Zhang, Y., & Mcgrath, I. (2010). Teacher-student relationships in an International Baccalaureate school in China. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 8(2),164-190.

**Summary:**

This article describes a case study conducted at an International Baccalaureate World School for college students from around 18-21 ages in mainland China. The authors investigate and compare the teacher-students relationships of Chinese and non-Chinese teachers, with a specific focus on the teacher's role and time spent with students. The research employs a variety of qualitative methods: observation, individual and semi-structured interviews, focus group with students, narrative inquiry, and document review. The study includes two groups of teachers from this school, Chinese teachers and teachers from Anglophone countries at this school. The authors find the role of the two groups of teachers to be completely different. Chinese teachers are stricter and more conservative with students than non-Chinese teachers, and they see the teacher-student as

comparable to that between parents and their children. Chinese teachers emphasize teacher authority, stern punishment towards student misbehaviors, and moral responsibility for students. In addition, Chinese teachers spend more time with students after class. They devote S-time (self-time) and O-time (out of school hour) to students. In contrast, non-Chinese teachers are more courteous to students, praise students frequently, and punish them less. At the same time, they make a clear distinction between C-Time (class time), S-Time, and O-Time.

**Reaction:**

I received my education K-16 in China. And now, I am being educated in the United States. I think both types of education have their advantages. This article compares the teaching methods and teaching beliefs between Chinese teachers and non-Chinese teachers in a college. Also, it helps me realize students' reactions to these different teaching methods and beliefs, which help me adjust my own teaching philosophy. I am looking to strike a balance between Chinese and American ways.

Wiltse, L. (2006). "Like pulling teeth": Oral discourse practices in a culturally diverse language arts classroom. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(2), 199-223.

**Summary:**

This article examines community language use, especially oral discourse practices. The author studied a teacher who had little interaction with students in a junior high school classroom of Western Canada. Qualitative research methods were used. The study was conducted in a 9<sup>th</sup> grade language art classroom. Most students came from Cambodian,

Chinese, or Vietnamese backgrounds. The class also had a few First Nation (Native American) students. The teacher participant claimed to value discussion, but the curriculum featured very little structured classroom dialogue. The teacher said that getting students to talk is just like "pulling teeth". The teacher attributes this to students' traditional culture. Even if the teacher did various activities and tried to offer more classroom interaction, the resulting group work was less successful than it could have been for the students, which was at times, frustrating for the teacher. The author concludes that the students played crucial role in determining the way in which oral discourse is enacted in the classroom. He also mentions his concerns about the study and his future research ideas about discussion-based lessons in the end.

**Reaction:**

From this article, I learned that we should respect students' culture, but more importantly, we need to teach and let students adjust to the target culture. When teachers find a problem in the classroom, they should do class reflection so as to improve the problem from each reflection, rather than give up an instructional approach when they get frustrated.

Geng, J. (2007). Removal of toxic English teaching & learning styles in China. *US-China Education Review*, 4(5), 42-45.

**Summary:**

The author discusses unique English teaching and learning styles among some Chinese teachers and learners, which contain toxic and healthy teaching and learning styles. The first toxic teaching and learning style is authoritarian style, which is characterized by command

and control, with teachers making decisions about everything during class. In this style, the main criterion for progress is the students' scores on examinations. The second style is rigid style, which means no change in teaching. Year after year, teachers use the same dominant texts, which are often authorized by officials. Third is the Chinese-based style. Teachers believe that translating English into Chinese is the core of work, and they spend much time on the comparison of English grammatical rules with Chinese grammar. On the contrary, the first healthy English teaching and learning style is the cooperative style, where teacher and students are equals in cooperation and discussion. Second is the flexible modern style. It requires both teachers and students to adjust quickly to various kinds of change. Teachers choose a variety of materials from real life. Third is the English thinking style. Students need to be fully immersed in an English language context without constant comparisons or thinking of equivalence. The last healthy teaching and learning style is the individual style, where teachers employ various teaching approaches depending on regions and persons. Students are required to find their individual learning style for different contexts.

Reaction:

I agree that foreign language learners cannot blindly search for equivalence by doing comparisons between their native language and target language. When we learn a language, we should learn to think in the target language instead of engaging in excessive comparison. "Chinglish" is the product under the situation, which is created by Chinese English learners according to the Chinese language; however it is not correct in English. For example, no thanks, good good study, day day up.

Echevarria, J., Short, D. J., & Vogt, M. (2007). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

**Summary:**

This book mainly talks about how to use the SIOP protocol to plan and implement high-quality sheltered lessons for English learners and other students. Each chapter begins with an explanation of a SIOP model component and its features, offers classroom activities, and then follows with descriptions of the same lesson taught by three different teachers. There are eight components in SIOP model, including lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. Therefore, Teacher need to make content and language objectives, choosing appropriate content, choosing meaningful activities, build background knowledge for students, by finding links between past learning and new learning, make messages understandable for students by using appropriate speech, clear explanations and a variety of techniques is important in the model and teach learning strategies and using scaffolding to assist students. In addition, teachers need to create ample and frequent opportunities for interaction, give students a chance to practice with the new material and with the teacher carefully observing, allow students to demonstrate how well they are learning it and pay attention to how well the objectives are supported during the lesson, pace the lesson appropriately, and promote student engagement. Furthermore, teacher need to review and assess students throughout each lesson and then again as the lesson concludes.

**Reaction:**

I think the SIOP protocol is a very good tool for measuring ESL teaching. Meanwhile, it



is a good model for helping teachers with lesson planning and implement. I believe the components in SIOP could be used in other instructional situations as well, such as a CFL class.

Krashen, S. (2004). The case for narrow reading. *Language Magazine*, 3(5), 17-19.

**Summary:**

Krashen states that narrow input is much more efficient than wide topic input for second language acquisition. In the beginning, he mentions that most foreign and second language classes provide students with exposure to a variety of topics. Many teachers think that exposing students to different topics, genres, and styles is beneficial. But Krashen argues that narrow reading can facilitate second language learning for couple reasons. First of all, narrow reading can increase comprehension because of accumulated background knowledge. Second, narrow reading is potentially motivating. In the end of this article, he also lists some other researchers' evidence about the advantages of narrow reading and provides recommendations for the implementation of narrow reading.

**Reaction:**

Narrow reading is a good way for students to practice extensive reading, especially for beginner and intermediate learners. However, I think the definition of narrow reading does not only constrain students to one author's work, but does narrow to one content area. For example, a student might wish to read something about earthquake or tsunami. I would like to encourage my students to try narrow reading on one type of topic in different time periods. For example, reading something about geology in this period, reading something about

sports in the next period. And, the selection of content should depend on students' interest.

Reagan, T. (2000). *Non-Western educational traditions: Alternative approaches to educational thought and practice* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

**Summary:**

This book provides a brief overview of some non-Western approaches to educational thought and practice, which include Africa, Mesoamerica, imperial China, Rom, Islamic, and five other non-Western cultural and historical educational traditions. In the beginning, the author introduces a theoretical foundation for the study of non-Western educational traditions. A better understanding of the educational traditions of other societies and cultures will be beneficial to our understanding of our own traditions. The first non-western educational practices addressed are African. In traditional African education, learning is a central feature of the intellectual training of the children. Children learn from proverbs, word games, parents, elders, village storytellers and so forth. For different vocations, they have various traditional paths of apprenticeship. Later, the author moves the focus onto indigenous education in Mesoamerica, mainly examining the Maya and Aztec traditions. Among the ancient Maya, children were trained in an apprentice system. Custom and religion governed all parts of a person's life. In Aztec society, people valued discipline, good manners, a reserved attitude, responsibilities, respect, courage and so on. In the indigenous North American experience, the education of Indian children was mainly based on oral tradition. Education in imperial China was largely influenced by Confucianism. Imperial China had a special emphasis on the imperial examination system, which involved a long and tough process for the purpose of

finding high-quality civil servants. Further, the author provides an overview of the educational tradition embedded in Hinduism and Buddhism. In Hinduism, formal education was traditionally the domain of males. Buddhism was primarily concerned with psychological education, which was carried out within the context of monasteries. Moreover, author presents an overview of among the Rom, Gypsy culture. The heart of Rom culture is the concept of ritual purity, which is difficult to understand for outsiders. Rom people value, love, and respect their children. Childcare is viewed as the responsibility of the entire family. In the Islamic tradition, educational thought is based on the Qur'an and developed by Muslim Philosophers. Traditional Islamic education includes religion, language, and skills for professionals.

**Reaction:**

This book helped me learn about many different customs, religious beliefs, educational perspectives, and teaching practices of different cultures. This will help me better understand diverse students. As I better understand the educational traditions of these societies and cultures, I can anticipate what conflicts may arise when different cultures meet in the classroom, and I might solve the conflicts.

Brown, J. D., & Rodgers, T. S. (2002). *Doing second language research*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

**Summary:**

This book presents research techniques commonly found in the second language teaching field. Its purpose is to help classroom teachers become better consumers of research

studies relevant to their own teaching. In the first part of the book, hands-on exercises help readers understand what research is. It introduces the research approaches which are available to second language teaching, the contextual factors in SLT, the definition of qualitative and quantitative research, and the significance of research. In the second part of the book, the author talks about qualitative researches. Three research methods are introduced in this part: case studies, introspective research, and interaction analysis. In the third part, the author talks about quantitative research methods, including survey analysis, correlational research, and quasi-experimental research. In the last part of this book, the author introduces mixed research methods of qualitative and quantitative approaches. In each of the chapters, authors clearly introduce the research type with examples. Then, the reader experiences simple research through a few tasks. In addition, the authors demonstrate how to compile and analyze the data. Next, they guide readers to design their own research study. They explain how to interpret the results. In the end, they ask questions to help readers reflect on the research.

Reaction:

Before reading this book, I used to think that a teacher's task was only to convey knowledge. I did not know that teachers should also do research on their classes, students, and teaching. The most important thing that I learned from this book is the benefits I will receive from my own research. I already knew that teachers need to do reflection before, during, and after class in order to make future classes more efficient and more suited to students. However, just reflection is not good enough. If I collect my own research data, I can clearly analyze various aspects of my teaching, and it is because I have my data as proof.

Moreover, teachers are the persons who are most familiar with their students and their teaching. Therefore, learning how to do research by myself will help me uncover trends and make my teaching more efficient.

Tsou, W.L. (2005). Improving speaking skills through instruction in oral classroom participation. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38(1), 46-55.

Summary :

This article reports on a study about Participation Instruction (PI) to increase Taiwanese students' oral participation. The purpose of the study was to find whether PI will increase students' oral participation in the class and whether PI would lead to the improvement of students' speaking proficiency. This study used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The participants involved one teacher and 63 English learners. First, an experimental research method was used. The students were divided into a control group and an experimental group. There were three phases in the experiment. Both groups did a pre-test and a post-test. Pre-test scores revealed no significant between the two groups. However, after being exposed to PI, students in the experimental group on average significantly increased their scores in motivation.

The qualitative research consists of three parts: students' self-evaluation, course evaluation, and an interview with the teacher. In the students' self-evaluation, students were asked the same three questions about their performance. The results showed that 83% of students in the experimental groups participated more at the end of semester and the PI activities were helpful. On the other hand, 33% of students in the control group believed that

they participated more at the end of semester. In the course evaluation, they were required to fill out course and teacher evaluation forms. These two forms were then analyzed and their average scores calculated. The results revealed that the experimental group had much high scores than the control group. In the interview, the teacher reported no difference between these two classes at the beginning of the semester. However, the teacher believes that PI helped the experimental group make the difference. Therefore, from the result of quantitative research or qualitative research, we can see PI changes students' passive participation behavior and increase their oral participation.

Reaction:

The significance of this article to me is that it proves that teaching approaches are the primary factor in fixing the problem of Asian students' reticence. Many researchers believe that traditional culture has more influence in this point, such as Confucianism, holistic/collectivism society, face issues, and so forth. However, I believe that appropriate teaching belief and methods are essential to solve the problem of reticence in the language classroom.

Jian, C. (2006). *New concept Chinese*. Bei Jing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

Summary:

*New Concept Chinese* is a series of Chinese text books for students who are not native speakers of Chinese. It can be used by 4 years old student all the way to high school students. The series includes 24 books. The eighth book in this series is written for students whose are around 10 years old . The whole book has 10 lessons, each lesson contains a main

text, a rhyme, a riddle, and a humor story. In the main text students are introduced to language form and vocabulary. Every lesson has English translations for new vocabulary. The additional readings (rhyme, riddle and humor story) at the back of the text allow students to practice reading skills and help them be more interested in the lesson. In addition, the book introduces two Chinese radicals in every lesson with activities. The texts in this book are children rhyme in the beginning and then gradually transition to short stories.

Reaction:

I am using this textbook in my weekend Chinese class for Chinese heritage students. This book's focus is character recognition and reading. However, I design my own lesson plan and combine this text book with communicative approaches. I ask my students to act out the stories, use the key vocabulary in the text to make their own dialogue and act out the dialogue. We have done open-ended discussions and continue to add on to the stories orally and so on.

Shrum, J. L., & Glisan, E. W. (2010). *Teacher's handbook: Contextualized language instruction (4th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Heinle Cengage Learning.

Summary:

The central theme of this book is the contextualization of language instruction. The most two important things conveyed within this book are: teaching language in meaningful contexts and using integrated language instruction. First of all, Shrum and Glisan provide an introduction to the profession of language teaching. They include content about professional organizations and their resources, the expectations of teacher performance in schools, and

language policy and language educational policy in contemporary U.S. society. Second, Shrum and Glisan also explore the role of contextualized input, output, and interaction in the language learning process. A learner's engagement is essential in acquiring a language. Third, the book examines an integrative approach to language instruction in which language is presented and taught in meaningful contexts. Shrum and Glisan discuss the standards framework in the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (SFLL)*. Moreover, the book teaches how to organize content and plan for integrated instruction so as to reach standards-based goals. Fourth, the book gives special attention to foreign/second language learners at elementary school and middle school levels of instruction. It illustrates how to choose suitable approaches and strategies for different cognitive levels of students. Fifth, Shrum and Glisan explain three modes of the Communication Standard: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational communication. They present ideas for developing interpretive communication through the use of authentic input and building of interpretation strategies. They also introduce a contextualized approach for teaching grammar, which is through the use of dialogic story-based teaching. They discuss strategies for teachers to help students develop oral and written interpersonal communication through meaningful contexts, as well as opportunities for classroom interaction. Sixth, they present ideas for helping students develop oral and written presentational communication through practices, for example, through writing across the curriculum, and process-oriented writing. Seventh, there is a presentation of ideas on how teachers handle the diverse needs of their students that affect classroom language learning, such as: cultural background, learning style, and multiple intelligences. They also mention what strategies a teacher should use for the diverse needs of



students. Finally, the book explores many alternatives for assessing learner progress that go beyond paper-pencil tests, such as: authentic assessment, portfolios, and rubrics.

Reaction:

This book contains many useful theories and research about teaching languages. Many ideas of my teaching philosophy have come from this book. I appreciate reading this book before I become a foreign language teacher. It is a very useful summary of all updated teaching language resources. Therefore, I can choose teaching techniques which are best suited to my future class and apply them to my teaching.

deSantis, P. (2008). Text enhancement and the acquisition of English verbal inflection -s by L1 Haitian Creole Speakers. *Applied Language Learning*, 18(1&2), 27-49.

**Summary:**

Santis investigates the effect of textual enhancement on the acquisition of third-person present singular format by adult L2 speakers of English by quasi-experimental research. First, she explores many studies about attention and input enhancement in SLA and finds that textual enhancement is an effective way to draw learner attention, and facilitate attention to language form and meaning. Next, she introduces the study. The research question was that type of typographically enhanced input would better facilitate acquisition of the target form. The participants were 15 adult L1 Haitian Creole speakers with limited classroom experience. The target form was the English third-person present indicative verb morpheme -s. The study employed a pretest, post-test and a delayed post test design. Each test included three tasks: a grammatically judgment task, a reading task and a picture description task. Participants were

divided into three groups for treatment. One group read textually enhanced target forms by enlargement and color red. The second group read enlarged and boldfaced target forms. The third group read unenhanced target forms. The results showed that the enhanced groups significantly outperformed the control group on the post-test and the delayed post-test. In other words, textually enhanced input promoted greater noticing of the target form than unenhanced input.

**Reactions:**

The article proved to me that textual enhancement can help learners acquire certain grammatical forms. Therefore, I will use textual enhancement in reading practice to draw students' attention and help them review the language features which they are learning in class. I may also ask my students to make enhanced texts by themselves through underlining or circling target forms. However, I will not use it as an approach to teaching grammars. I think language teachers need to use explicit methods to teach grammar for beginner and intermediate learners, especially for adult, because it is hard for them to acquire numerous linguistic features through naturalistic input. Students cannot acquire certain language forms by themselves, even given some support, hints, or enhancement.

### **LOOKING FORWARD**

In the MSLT program, I learned about many teaching theories and techniques. My time in the program is about to end. Although I am completing the master's program, my learning journey has just begun. I believe that teaching is a long learning process which will never stop. Also, to teach is to learn. As I mentioned in my teaching philosophy, I will be a humble learner, learning from students, and through self-reflections. I will stay informed of innovative teaching approaches and techniques. Furthermore, I will try my best to help my students overcome their challenges and maintain their interest in the Chinese language and culture. I am greatly looking forward to my future teaching experiences.

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## **Appendix A.**

### Questionnaire

1. 你们在写作中会不会混淆“的” ，“得” ，“地” ？
2. 在这三个"de" 中，哪一个是你们认为最难的一个？
3. 你学习中文有多长时间了？
4. 你曾在讲中文的国家学习过中文吗？几年？

## Appendix B

### Quiz

选择正确“的”“地”“得”填在句子当中。

Write down the right "de" in the blank.

1. 这 一 次 考 试 ， 我 ( ) 成 绩 有 小 小 ( ) 进 步。
2. 农 民 ( ) 生 活 越 来 越 好 了 ， 家 家 户 户 都 盖 了 新 房 子。
- 3 你 叔 叔 是 干 什 么 工 作 ( ) ？ 他 是 做 生 意 ( )。
- 4 从 下 周 起 你 要 多 穿 点 衣 服 ， 因 为 天 气 开 始 渐 渐 ( ) 冷 了。
- 5 不 要 打 扰 他 ， 他 在 认 真 ( ) 学 习。
6. 这 个 笑 话 太 好 笑 了 ， 我 笑 ( ) 肚 子 都 痛 了。

7.这个箱子不是很重，我拿( )动。

8 下雪天开车，你可粗心不( )。