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Building 6C's (Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Culture, Connectivity) in the Chinese Learning Classroom

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BUILDING 6C's (CRITICAL THINKING, COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, CREATIVITY, CULTURE, CONNECTIVITY) IN THE CHINESE LEARNING CLASSROOM

by

Weixi Dong

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

This teaching portfolio is a product of the author's studies in the Masters of Second Language Teaching Program at Utah State University and her experiences as a teacher of Chinese at the elementary school level in the State of Utah's public school Dual Immersion program. The author provides a selection of teaching reflections and research that have had the most impact on her teaching practice. First, the author offers personal reflections and a theoretical framework for her pedagogy in the Teaching Perspectives section, through a discussion of her professional environment and teaching experience; this is followed by the Teaching Philosophy Statement, which explains the lens through which she views her teaching practice, and a discussion of a selection of teaching observations conducted. The Teaching Philosophy Statement speaks to the importance of connectivity and how learners may best connect with language. The Teaching Philosophy also offers some best practices for a student-centered, task-based, communicative, classroom environment and how best to facilitate language learning. Second, the portfolio focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning, in the Research Perspectives section, in which the author includes two selected papers written in the course of the masters program, including: a paper that investigates teaching culture in the elementary Dual Language Immersion context and a paper that explores teaching Chinese as a foreign language through task-based learning and Computer-Assisted Language Learning. It concludes with an Annotated Bibliography that represents a literature review and crystallization of the topic of humor in enhancing learner engagement. Through these select theoretical and practical discussions of teaching, the author suggests that language teachers need to be mindful of 6 C's: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, culture, connectivity, offering a modification of the 5 C's in the American Council of Teaching of Foreign Languages standards. The portfolio

culminates with the author's career plans and the continuing journey to improve and innovate in

her teaching.

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CONTENTS

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ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

AP = Advanced Placement exam

CALL = Computer-Assisted Language Learning

CFL = Chinese as a Foreign Language

CLT = Communicative Language Teaching

CMC = Computer-mediated Communication

DLI = Dual Language Immersion

EFL = English as a Foreign Language

ESL = English as a Second Language

L1 = First Language / Native Language

L2 = Second Language

MI = Multiple Intelligences

MIFT = Multiple Intelligences Film Teaching

MSLT = Masters in Second Language Teaching degree

SCMC = Synchronous Computer Mediated Communication

SLA = Second Language Acquisition

TBLT = Task-Based Language Teaching

INTRODUCTION

In our current era of global economic integration, cultural exchanges and communication between countries are more prevalent than ever before. In the galaxy of many languages Chinese stands out as a bright star. After the global use of the English language, according to most scholars, Chinese is the second most spoken language throughout the world and, Chinese language, mostly Cantonese, are collectively the third most spoken language in the United States. Learning Chinese facilitates global communication and cultural exchanges. Through the learning of the Chinese language, the extensive and rich history of Chinese culture also becomes more accessible to current and future generations alike. For these reasons, as a native Chinese-speaking language teacher, teaching Chinese as a second language and promoting the teaching of Chinese for learners of all ages are long-term goals to which I remain committed.

This portfolio offers insights into some useful ideas for teaching Chinese as a second language, particularly in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) context. It is based on my own teaching experiences as well as on the scholarly literature that I have encountered in my program. The portfolio contains two sections: teaching perspectives and research perspectives. First, the teaching perspectives section articulates my teaching philosophy and reflects on teaching best practices. Here, I highlight the importance of connectivity, context, and other essential elements of language learning. I discuss the classroom environment, student-centered, task-based learning, and communicative language learning. I suggest that language teachers need to be mindful of 6 C's: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, culture, connectivity, thereby offering a modification of the 5 C's in the American Council of Teaching of Foreign Languages Standards. Second, the research section includes two papers and an annotated bibliography, exploring the topics of: the importance of teaching Chinese culture in the

elementary DLI classroom; teaching Chinese as a foreign language through task-based learning and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL); and using humor to enhance learner engagement, all of which are vital to my teaching practice. The final section looks forward to my future career plans and the continuing journey to improve and innovate in my teaching.

TEACHING PERSPECTIVES

Professional Environment

Much of my teaching career so far has focused on teaching Chinese Dual Language Immersion (DLI) in the United States, teaching at the elementary level through the state of Utah's public schools DLI program. The DLI program provides a very different learner experience and approach to teaching than the more traditional approaches I remember from my own education in English as a second language. The current environment in which I teach is more immersive, collaborative, communicative, creative, and frankly, fun, than some of the language learning classrooms I experienced as a learner myself.

Prior to teaching Chinese, I taught English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) classes. I began my journey teaching children and adolescents between the ages of three and eighteen years old. In 2012, I was teaching ESL in Guangzhou, China. I am very grateful for my first job because it exposed me to different teaching methods. Every day the high-intensity workload had us go around to different classes and work with different levels and age groups. Life at that period of time was fruitful, fresh, and meaningful to me and we were on the road of learning every day.

Over four years ago, I was fortunate to get a teaching post in the United States in a Dual Immersion Program (DLI), where I am currently still teaching US students Chinese. It was the opposite of my previous teaching experience in terms of language content and student population, teaching older students English. Even if my current elementary students all have different personalities and different backgrounds, and the language learning problems encountered are also very different, there are still some similarities between my current and past teaching positions. Certainly, I have learned a lot from both experiences.

My long-term goal is to teach Chinese language learners of all ages. I have obtained my DLI teaching endorsement. Training from the Masters of Second Language Teaching (MSLT) program at Utah State University has helped me to vastly expand my knowledge of second language acquisition and pedagogy in both theory and practice. I believe that these educational experiences and accomplishments give me the necessary foundation to advance my professional teaching career and to teach learners of different ages and proficiency levels. I hope to broaden the scope of my teaching to include secondary education and learners of different age groups, backgrounds, and proficiency levels. The papers contained in this teaching portfolio address the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language effectively and engagingly to all learners.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

I have become a foreign language teacher first and foremost because I think language connects the world, and because I want to make a difference. By becoming a language teacher, I can light a small spark and help to inspire others to connect with language and culture. I know what a positive impact teaching may have on students and learners alike, because I have felt it in my own life. Teaching lights up my life. Learning refreshes it. Teaching is my life-long career and passion. Ultimately, I hope that my teaching can have a profound and positive impact on my students, whether in the classroom or outside the classroom, for their entire Chinese language learning journey now and in the future.

Connectivity is key in language teaching and learning, I believe. There are many ways in which I can facilitate connectivity and help students to connect with language, culture, each other, other worldviews—to the world. Every day, I strive to have a positive impact in the day-to-day classroom experience first by caring about each individual student's background, feelings, concerns, and struggles. I can use more specific approaches, seems like "threading the needle" to bring the class topics to bear on the real life of students to help make what we are learning relevant. Third, I can teach language in context. I can provide context through task-based learning. Or, I can also help students with context and negotiating meaning by incorporating texts and literature into the curriculum of teaching language to provide students with more abundant authentic language materials and input. Teaching with texts will provide context and opportunities for critical thinking, address universal human issues, and increase interaction between students, because reading literature in another language even enriches "personal worldviews" from different perspectives towards life (Jones & Schwabe, 2016, p. 16).

For teachers that subscribe to the traditional teaching model, knowledge needs to be taught directly and explicitly, which may sound logical for some subject areas, but it is a not so appropriate for language teaching. In one sense, many language teachers believe that language needs to be more than just explicitly taught; it can be "caught" from exposure, input, immersion, and practice in context. Students have to "catch" the information and features of a second language (L2), to be processed in the inner language system. As teachers, we can teach by guiding a student to slowly walk through trial and error to acquire language proficiency. Given enough input and opportunities to practice the output, they will automatically "catch on," and acquire the language around them. The more input and opportunities to practice output, the better. Therefore, from my point of view as a teacher, we can teach students language, and guide and support them to help them connect with the language effectively.

As a DLI teacher in a very unique program, I came to my realization that although I am an ordinary language teacher, I am also a game-changer. I love all the experiences and challenges that my work brings me. I like the word "game-changer," which I learned from professional development training at our school district. I also regard myself as a member of the game-changers, always ready to support my students and team. I am also a program builder and member of the larger DLI educational project. Maxwell (2012) is a leader in DLI in Texas, Utah, California, and nationwide, and praises the approach and DLI's affordances for young learners: "They preserve their primary language, they develop a broader worldview that they take into college and the work world, and they gain huge advantages in their cognitive development that translates into flexibility of their thinking and the ability to tackle really rigorous coursework" (Maxwell, 2012). I am very honored to be a member of this innovative and expanding program. I can do my part to build the very foundations of the DLI program at my school, in my district, in

the state, and beyond. In my current teaching position, I am always doing my best to teach every student well. Especially in the global village of the 21st century, I hope that through the DLI program, students are more likely to connect with language, culture, and people when they learn and speak Chinese.

The Learning Environment

The classroom environment and ambiance are crucial to learning. Lots of input, positive corrective feedback, and being in a safe, comfortable place to learn and make mistakes are needed for language learning success. Moderation is important, so one job of teachers is to maintain a balanced ambiance and "Ensure that the social atmosphere of the classroom is neither too serious nor too light-hearted" (Senior, 2006, p. 272). Balance and comfort are important. Accuracy is also very important, but teachers should not be too strict on students, and should realize that mistakes are a natural and necessary process of language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

First language acquisition begins early, of course, with early language development occurring slowly from an early age when a mother verbally describes the surroundings or common objects to her baby, for instance. A large amount of input is the leading factor in language learning, whether in the L1 or in L2 later. We acquire our mother tongue and language system through constant input, and by constantly trying new things and making mistakes, require interaction of the surroundings. Similarly, second language acquisition also requires a lot of language input. However, many novice and beginning language learners are afraid, timid, have anxiety, or feel embarrassed to speak in the L2. Many are afraid to make mistakes. To remedy this, I boldly tell my students that together we are learning languages and should have no fear of

trying. I try to foster collaboration between students and give lots of opportunities for them to interact and connect. I want learners to be able to communicate so that they feel that connection. that the listener and the speaker can feel that connection. I want my students to feel that we are all in the same zone, we are in a safe, collaborative, inclusive learning community and that we care for everyone. I want them to know that everyone matters. Although a teacher's influence could be very limited due to space and time constraints, I think the influence can still reach and be relevant to other parts of the students' lives. If the teacher establishes strong and positive relationships with their students, it will help build healthy connections between students and teachers, which in turn will help facilitate students' comfort in the classroom and better academic performance. Whether they are a child or an adult, learners can get a positive influence from the teacher and this connection can benefit their learning. Imagine that, if a student feels that a learning environment is tense and uncomfortable, they may feel they shut down to some extent during their studies. Even if there is a large amount of intelligible input, they may not be able to really get it due to a high "affective filter;" this is because motivation, self-confidence, anxiety and personal traits are the main variables, as first suggested by Krashen (1986). Language teachers are most effective when they strive to lower the affective filter. It is important to create a safe learning environment for language acquisition to occur. Again, an inclusive, safe, and even fun learning environment in which everyone feels comfortable enough to make mistakes will boost motivation during students' learning.

Student-Centered Teaching Model

The syllabus, classroom activities, lesson plans, assessments, and everything related to teaching can help us in supporting students in their language learning goals. For several decades now, teachers have begun to realize the importance of student-centered teaching. Letting students

really engage in the learning process and every portion of learning makes it meaningful to them. Students need to take responsibility for their own learning, be given agency in their learning, and have accountability. All voices should be heard, not just the teacher's voice. Students need to collaborate and learn from each other, as well. Some teachers could be overzealous. They may be very enthusiastic and optimistic. They may have a desire to just want to just share with and "teach," or lecture on all that they know. But language teaching and learning is about connecting and communicating and thus is a two-way street, just like language is acquired during language interaction and communication happened. Therefore, teachers should create more learning opportunities for students to take charge of their own learning and learn from each other. One way to make the classroom more student-centered is to carry out task-based learning and teaching (TBLT) activities for the purpose of communication. I regularly use TBLT to maximize the most effective student-centered learning while supporting our students.

Task-based language teaching can help provide context and cohesiveness for input and output. Ellis (2003) defined the task and advocated for TBLT, reminding us that a task should be connected to meanings when we communicate pragmatically using the target language. Chomsky (in the well-known study, as cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 94) points out the dangers of some types of input, and that there is a logical problem arising from discrete, scattered, and fragmented input during the language learning process; when input is fragmentary and often without context, it generates abstract concepts and understanding based on limited examples. A learner's exposure to the language is called input (Gass & Mackey, 2007). VanPatten (2004) defines input in part as "language that learners can hear or see in a communicative context" (p. 48). For lower proficiency levels, teachers should especially mindful of the amount and type of input they provide to students. It cannot be just any input. In addition, Krashen's theory points

out that the fundamental part of second language acquisition is "comprehensible input" and that input which can be understood to some extent can also be consolidated and retained as it "gets processed in learners' working memory" (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 31). This is how intake happens. The intake will eventually become a part of the communicative language through different situations and occasions for practice; this is transformed into the form of output. (Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Swain, 2005). TBLT provides a route to more comprehensible input and meaningful output.

Starting from the perspective that language can be caught and acquired, and realizing that teacher-center teaching without context is not conducive to the development of language acquisition of students, I may then begin to better understand the essence of student-centered task-based teaching. There are old Chinese proverbs that may further illustrate this approach. As the saying goes, "it would be better to teach someone to fish than to give him a fish." And "Blue is extracted from the indigo plant but is bluer than it; The pupil learns from and outdoes his teacher." Thus, Teachers are guides and facilitators, knowing that students build their own language architecture and create their own output, building up their proficiency on a blueprint of structure guided by the teacher. The students themselves should always be the designers of their own learning. Communicative tasks can provide context for this.

Task-based Communicative Activities

VanPatten (2017) defines communication as "the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning with a purpose in a given context" (p. 12). This sounds simple, but when it comes to teaching, there are many dimensions present physically and theoretically. Context is crucial to language teaching and learning, because, as VanPatten states, "Context is a powerful dimension of any communicative event. Referring to physical setting and participants, context

constrains how people communicate" (VanPatten, 2017, p. 5). Context cannot be ignored in teaching. Granted, this can be a challenge in the static teaching environment of the face-to-face traditional classroom. With four walls, the same teacher, and students, our space is limited and our role is fixed. But, like performers, we can try our best to create context and create a stage on which for students to shine. From what I have learned in reading about TBLT, teachers cannot always start with the most sophisticated forms of language to begin; the task is a small step to build that language use capacity. First, the task must be meaningful. The task should not just focus on grammar or forms because forms often affect meanings. If our chosen task is based on context, it can better touch the aspects of language use we wish to use for communication.

It is evident that organized, thoughtful lesson planning is fundamentally important in creating tasks and providing context and opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning during communicative language teaching (CLT). The well-designed lesson planning will help students develop their linguistic skills based on real-life situations. In CLT, it is also responsible for the interpretation and expression of authentic and real-life information through language, providing opportunities for students to communicate. In CLT, teachers are not only questioners, but also students can work in pairs or groups and ask questions of each other, interacting and connecting without a script. In addition to some controllable exercises, they can also have more open dialogues (Lee & VanPatten 2003). CLT is thus an approach I find useful in fostering student collaboration and encouraging creativity. For example, as a DLI Chinese teacher, we teach content (the math, science, and social studies curriculum) and Chinese language use for communicative purposes. During this process, we offer many interactive and collaborative activities for them to generate ideas, investigate the phenomena, find out the solutions and solve

problems; and all of this can be built on the CLT approach that would be beneficial for our L2 learners.

Also seen in Lee & VanPatten (2003) and as demonstrated widely by many researchers, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a complicated process. As for how it works, it is important to remember that there are at least three different sets of processes involved in language acquisition: input processing, system changes, and output processing. SLA is dynamic but can be slow. In the developmental stage, as Lee & VanPatten (2003) explain, learners obtain specific characteristics of the language or specific system. At each stage, learners will make mistakes and reorganizations in their minds. They make progress and retain patterns this way. Some things will produce a certain general acquisition pattern, which will evolve over time. Researchers of second language acquisition have accumulated an immense body of work, too broad to review here. However, we may generalize and draw this useful conclusion: as teachers, we can only provide opportunities for real, meaningful communication and interaction, context and collaboration; also, language can explain and be expressed, and meaning can be negotiable in class in order to make more acquisition happen.

Paul Nation and Azusa Yamamoto (2012) give us an insightful idea on how to better balance the language course based on the following break down: focused input (25%), meaningful input and meaningful output (25%), language focused on fluency development (25%) and language focused work (25%). In for example Nation (2007), and Nation and Newton (2009), the key idea to applying time-on-task principles is simply put: the more a student focuses on doing something, the more they will get out of it. If teachers want students to talk more about something around a given topic, or want them write and present their project on the topic after

that, then teachers need to design a series of specific, smaller meaningful tasks to make it happen.

To give an example from my own teaching practice to illustrate this process in my teaching philosophy, I taught a Mandarin Matrix story about a water park in my Chinese 4th-grade Dual Language class. The story is mainly about two brothers who wanted to go to the water park, but they could not go that day. At last, the dad built a simple homemade water park in the backyard where children can play in the water. "Couldn't we make a water park?" I asked my students. They have the desire to talk and write about the topic but they don't have so much meaningful input from the textbook, which lacked vocabulary. The tasks I created helped them to further engage with this authentic text and negotiate meaning. For an extension of knowledge, I found a video for them, which was a vlog visit to Chimelong Water Park in Guangzhou, China. The presenter showed us the different interesting projects in the water park and a variety of vocabulary about this topic. There was an aquatic project based on the functional concept of a washing machine. Later I created a task and context for the students: "Imagine, if you were the potential future designers and you would design fun water park projects for people, what would you do?" I gave them a big task: do a group presentation about their own water park project. Five or six students worked on each team to design a 3D water park. After making the 3D water park, each student or designer explained the design concept during the presentation and persuaded us in how to attract more customers to the fun water park. However, before they can finally do their presentations, they need to creatively "design" and think out a series creative idea how to use advertising words with second language to gain the popularity. For gaining the ideas and expand the vocabulary, I also offer some appropriate authentic texts for them to read, they read for gaining more thoughts and how to express how the ideas origins from and what it can benefit

people and why do you think people can get joy at it etc. by target language. Two Chinese classes in the lower grades (3rd grade) and the two upper grades (5th and 6th grades) voted for them to choose their favorite water park that they would be most willing to pay for. According to the results, we also compare and make a contrast and analysis why do you think it wins and how can we improve their projects: the many activities in this task offered opportunities for the 6 C's that I value in my teaching philosophy (critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, culture, connectivity). Many tasks I create for my students encourage these 6 C's.

At first, students were asked to express certain design concepts, they did not know how to say them in Chinese at the very beginning so they used body language or drawing. Students and teachers, just like playing with a ball, took turns to negotiate a specific meaning. In this back-and-forth process, students expressed and interpreted, and negotiated with teachers about something they want to express in the target language, and they focused and learned and developed language skills implicitly and explicitly. As they engaged in the creativity and critical thinking of the design process, we all shared one purpose. We wanted to create and show our water park design to people, and language learning happens naturally with purpose. Everyone showed great interest and students were well engaged. In the end, students were tasked with discussing and designing their parks and there was unscripted negotiation of meaning in this communicative lesson.

Conclusions

Second language teaching involves many aspects, from curriculum planning to student collaboration in tasks. Teaching to the syllabus, organizing new lesson plans, creating materials, inventing activities and tasks, learning teaching methods, and employing strategies, are all part of our teaching; for example, letting students collaborate in small groups can cultivate their other

learning strategies (Ensnawy, 2016; Hautemo, 2016; Huang, Liao, Huang, & Chen, 2014; Sarobol, 2012) and so on.

Teaching design and activities should be communicative, have context, and centered around students. Creating more opportunities for students' collaboration based on communicative tasks, while connecting with Chinese culture, ultimately may help to broaden an L2 learner's vision and encourage them to think of different perspectives, thereby cultivating students' soft skills such as critical thinking and creativity.

Professional Development through Teaching Observation

There is an old Chinese proverb cautioning against "drawing a dipper with a gourd as a model," which means that before you really understand something, you should observe, feel, think, and even imitate its shape at the beginning stage, then apply the knowledge you have to the new situation, and then slowly inject your thoughts and creativity. In fact, teaching involves a similar process. When we are new to the teaching field, it is helpful to observe other teachers;' classes so that we can absorb tried and true best practices and innovative new ideas from others, so that we can see how others practice their craft and discover new ideas. Similarly, for a veteran teacher, we should maintain an "empty cup mentality," and have a humble attitude to continue to learn and explore some of the valuable lessons that others have to share with us. As teachers, we too are learners and are always ready and open to any new things that we can learn from others. Observing colleagues has a way of inspiring and helping to reflect on one's own classroom. I think as a student of MSLT, I have had ample opportunities offered and available for me to observe different types of lessons and approaches of teachers in different languages, such as Spanish, French, Chinese, and English. These observations allow me to absorb knowledge from

different content subjects including science, mathematics, and languages. Each time I observe teachers in their classrooms, I am able to have rich experiences and take away ideas and knowledge from them. Below I summarize and synthesize just a small selection of observations I conducted while in the MSLT program.

Empty Cup Mentality

There is a famous anecdote from art history that is applicable here. At the very beginning of his study of painting, Leonardo da Vinci began by drawing eggs. As a beginner, the young artist was puzzled. To draw an egg was so simple, so why the need to repeat the exercise and why keep drawing eggs all the time? What is the point? His teacher explained that if you thought painting eggs was easy, then you were wrong. A similar scenario happened in my early childhood life when I was learning traditional Chinese painting; painting bamboo was an introductory course. The teacher also asked me to keep drawing the simple shape, which only contains three strokes imitating the small part of bamboo. I was also confused at the time. The teacher said that after painting the bamboo, it would be no problem to paint other plums, orchids, bamboo, and chrysanthemums. A similar event happened to me again when I began my teaching career. Although I had the teaching theories, pedagogical approaches, and educational content knowledge I learned in school, I still did not know what to do exactly in the concrete classroom. I remember that the lead teacher let me observe her class, and other teachers' lessons, and then record the useful parts, so as to learn from example and then eventually form my own style. Although I am not a new teacher now, I feel that the empty cup mentality is still very important. If you feel that your cup is full, then it will be difficult for you to accept the constant infusion of new things. Therefore, as a veteran teacher, I can have the opportunity to observe the classroom of other teachers. I should maintain this mentality and learn the classroom activities from others

that are worthy of learning, as well as the teaching skills and pedagogies, classroom management, etc. I feel that observing other teachers' classrooms is an opportunity to make myself a student again.

Supportive Environment for Making Connections

By observing other teachers' classrooms, I have the opportunity as an observer to have a closer look at the entire classroom, not only the teacher's teaching, but also the interaction between students and teachers, the way students interact and connect, the layout of the classroom, and the opportunity to read some student work in the classroom. I have the opportunity to reflect on my own classroom and how there may be more or fewer problems of one kind or another, similar existing challenges in my classroom, and how other teachers deal with them.

For the many elementary level language classes I observed, I can summarize briefly some challenges and offer the solution of moving toward a more student-centered classroom. Often the students are chatting or distracted, or getting bored, or they need to get the teacher's attention. Behavior and engagement are always concerns. A classroom, a fixed setting, a teacher, a number of students: these elements form a small stage, and many dramatic plays are performed every day. The teacher will also perform in a sense, using a teaching persona while educating the class. If some student audiences are not very engaged, they will be distracted and miss the exciting or crucial part of the teache'''s class. It is important to help students focus and draw their attention away from their many distractions from the moment they enter our classrooms (Lang 2020). Then what if we do this the opposite way, where students are the performers and teachers are the stage director? Then students will be less distracted and the teacher will also be more relaxed.

We may allow more time to meet every individual's needs and help every student become engaged.

As a Chinese elementary school teacher in a DLI program, in addition to teaching language knowledge in class every day, we also need to design some classroom activities that can attract the attention of students, so those exciting, fun, contagious activities can be as engaging as possible for most students. In addition, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activities such as role play and activities that involve real-life, everyday tasks help language acquisition happen, as I witnessed in other DLI courses.

Through dozens of observations over the last few years, I feel that there are many interesting classroom activities and games that involve effective scaffolding and engage students quickly. I think they can be directly applied to my classroom. I think that only by finding the connection and interaction with the students and infusing that connection into the classroom activities you can maximize the participation of the students in the classroom. This is why I focus on students' level of engagement and techniques other teachers use to boost engagement while observing other teachers' classes.

Through observations, I learned that visuals were very important in raising student attention. For instance, in a National Taiwan University Open Course I observed as part of my MSLT program Teaching Literature course, Professor Biming Cai added a lot of vivid and exquisite animations so that students can visually imagine the content described by the teacher and the story in the text or poem. I really like this part; it draws students' attention in visually and helps bring the texts to life. I now try to incorporate more animations and other visual aids, such as emojis and cartoons into my own teaching and have found this effective.

In addition to visuals, I observed many games being used successfully to boost engagement. Though far too numerous to list here, I have observed in several classes how adding some fun elements and games will make the classroom atmosphere very relaxed and help lower students' affective filter when tackling a difficult language task. For example, I observed one teacher who ingeniously modified an English game when doing Chinese vocabulary practice, derived from a game which is played traditionally in elementary school: "Heads up, Seven-up." The students liked it very much as a fun way to practice characters, because Chinese characters are difficult to write as there are many strokes. Through such a fun game, students want to participate in it, and the atmosphere in the whole classroom is very active with students talking and moving. I also improved and expanded this game and used it myself after the observation. I gave it a fun name called, "Who is the Greatest Detective," which has become one of my DLI students' favorite classroom games. Some games are very student centered and provide many opportunities for collaboration and connection. They also offer more context for communication.

Student-Centered Learning Opportunities

To see whether the classroom is teacher-centered or student-centered, a very simple and easy way is measuring the total time of students' speaking. Many teachers allow more opportunities for students to interact with communicative role-playing, story performance or readers' theater, task-based group projects, open-ended questions, student-led presentations, group collaborations, self and peer reflections, etc. I also observed fellow teachers from my MSLT LING 6800 course as they taught lessons that incorporated these types of activities to teach Spanish, Portuguese, French, or Chinese literature and many of them had the learners speaking for a longer amount of time during tasks than the teacher was speaking about the texts.

Scaffolding and Meaningful Activities

   Many diverse lessons I observed were actually doing the same key thing: scaffolding. Whether it is to let students independently resolve math problems in content-based lessons or to allow students to independently think about the problems after reading a literary text, a lot of scaffolding has been done in the early stage, such as following "I do, we do, you do" strategies. I observed this strategy used effectively for instance in the two elementary Spanish lessons I observed that involved reading, speaking, drawing, and group story telling. In every classroom activity, it is useful to follow the development of students' cognitive psychology process. First, the teachers I observed started with comprehensible input gradually building on students' cognition so that they can learn by doing. Every teacher I observed followed some form of scaffolding. They also did chunking, thereby packaging new information into small chunks for students by telling and explaining, checking their understanding with pause and asking questions and review, supporting with gestures, visual aids, videos, etc. which shape students' thinking and understanding.

   Scaffolding is an important part of meaningful task-based teaching activities, as I observed among fellow teachers. The task-based teaching method transfers the learning process to students themselves, and it also promotes critical thinking to collaborate to solve real-world problems. It is necessary to be able to use authentic language and communication strategies to think and tackle problems. Therefore, I think that task-oriented teaching methods will enable students to learn usefully and truly use spontaneous and authentic language to communicate. Scaffolding and chunking are really important to effectively use TBLT, though, to help students accomplish the tasks. For the lower-level language learner for example, if there is a collaborative task in which students need to adapt the story according to the story outline together, they need

to have warm-up activities first. For instance, sometimes reviewing a structure used in the task is necessary first. Or sometimes, brief opinion gap activities are needed to begin negotiating the themes, characters, settings, plot, conflicts, etc., with the group members before tackling the rest of the task. For example, as I observed in a Spanish beginner lesson, the instructor step by step scaffolded information for students before the task, starting from Step 1: Language Point Check in which students type one thing they know about the verb SER, and one thing about ESTAR; Step 2: show different visual aid slides and check with every the differences between SER or ESTAR; Step 3: Summary and quick check with students, questions with discussion; Step 4: Guessing game "Who am I?"; Step 5: Break-out Zoom rooms for students to collaborate on tasks; Step 6: instructor feedback. This is just one brief example I observed of helping students through scaffolding at the beginning of a task.

Classroom Management

Classroom management really begins first at the elementary level, as my observations revealed. By observing the classes of different teachers at the elementary level, I found that their students can learn and do their own work in class quietly either collaborating or individually. For example, in watching a colleague in French, even though I don't know any French, I was amazed by their class management models. The teacher organized the class so that each student had the chance to speak and interact with their group, but not everyone was talking at once or talking over each other. I used to think that language class should be noisy, that everyone should open their mouth at all times, but I learned some new techniques for classroom management to make sure all voices were heard.

When I observe colleagues in other languages that I do not speak myself, I often look at the learning habits of students in class. I have noticed (for example, in two of the elementary

Spanish lessons I observed that involved drawing, summarizing, creative writing, and speaking all in a few short minutes) that several activities and different skills can be addressed in a very short amount of time with good classroom management and clear instructions. I have learned through my recent observations that classroom management is very important, especially at the beginning of the new semester and especially with different proficiency levels in class. The first few weeks are focused on the construction of classroom management when students and teachers are getting familiar with each other at that period of time. Once good behaviors are formed, students can follow the model of classroom management and they know what they are supposed to do or not. Teachers do not need to speak loudly to students to keep them quiet, because they know how to regulate their behavior in class and they only need the teacher to remind them when necessary. As long as the students develop good behaviors and habits, then classroom teaching activities can be successfully carried out and delivered in engaging ways.

Through classroom observations also serve as professional learning and development for me personally. As educators, only by keeping the growth mindset, can we continue to meet and satisfy the gradual changes for students' needs and remain resilient as new challenges arise. For example, in one Chinese class that I observed from a sixth grade Chinese DLI teacher, I liked the way the teacher inspired her students to engage on a topic using fun, relevant videos to attract student attention away from distraction; she then raised 7 questions taken directly from the daily life of students and their interests. This way she used individual interests to make the lesson relevant to things students said they wanted to explore and discover. I found that whether she was explaining science content in the phenomenon of inertia, or asking students to move two different tables, asking why some tables can be moved easily but others are hard to move, or bringing in an egg to conduct an experiment and demonstrate, she was actually covering the

science content using relevant real-life examples. She inspired students to present their own argument using examples that were relevant to real life. This was also made possible by the orderly classroom management. The same orderly procedures I watched from another native-speaker English teacher's class, where I saw that every third grader followed all the instructions well due to the classroom management and good organization, for example behaviors like students knew how to go to the carpet and go back to the desks or they knew how to use the computer and go to the designated page and do the quiz. They knew when to discuss with each other and when to stop talking. They showed thumbs up and down or to one side to show how much they know during a formative assessment. I learned from these techniques and try to incorporate some of them in my own efforts to improve classroom management. And I also label this as the importance of establishing classroom routines.

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

LANGUAGE PAPER

Promoting Chinese Language Acquisition through Task-Based Technology

ORIENTATION & REFLECTION

In my second semester of my MSLT degree, I completed the Research in Second Language Learning Linguistics course. I got the chance to read many research articles about how multimedia or technology aid would support teaching and motivate learning. I am interested in innovations in multimedia technology and the growth of online teaching. In fact, with the rapid development of science and technology today, it affects our work and life and brings many possible conveniences to our teaching. Especially during COVID pandemic, technology and online teaching techniques became more common and I found they offered many affordances for language learners. During my professional training of last summer vacation, there were many aspects regarding the potential strong support of technology for teaching, such as the application in Dual Language Teaching with Nearpod, Duolingo, Adobe, Google classroom, etc. The effective use of these platforms enhances our teaching. Integrating these and other known technology resources and using them in daily teaching has practical significance.

Especially at the last semester of my master's, I began to focus more on technology in my own teaching practice. I took LING 6520, which allowed me to delve into applying technological tools for L2 teaching both theoretically and practically. In *Engaging Language Learners through CALL* (Arnold and Ducate 2011), which begins with SLA theories and Practice in CALL, I learned that CALL entails more issues with second language teaching, pedagogical approaches, materials/ activities, and technologies tools comprehensively. I got opportunities to know their benefits and challenges after I used some of them in the classroom, giving me at least a snapshot

of what we have and how we can use them wisely. I am more confident to use online synchronous and asynchronous communications (such as Zoom or Google Meet), gamified multiple-choice or true/false quizzes (in apps such as Quizlet or Kahoot), matching/drag-and-drop exercises, reordering sequencing, game and augmented reality experiences, web quests and searching with digital tools etc. These tools have proven a good supplement to support daily teaching and learning in my classroom as I expand my own digital learning environment. Below I summarize a selection of the research that I have found most useful in raising my awareness about potentially promising technologies for my own teaching, more specifically in teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL).

Shengrong Cai &Wei Zhu (2012) delve deeply into the research on motivation in the CALL and CFL. In this study, there are 44 university students enrolled in an existing online community (www.chinese-forums.com) during their lab time. Their results demonstrate that a short-term online community project can promote students' motivation and increase engagement. The site offered 28 forums on various aspects of Chinese study (e.g., culture, life, work in China), so it would definitely extend the opportunity for the L2 learners and L2 speakers to share learning experiences which in turn shape their self-motivation and construct social identity in other language groups. In this study, CALL helped to build community and increase student interaction. Measures on at least one dimension of motivation (overall L2 learning experience) are higher than the pretest and the statistic changes significantly. Their research results have encouraged me to look for further opportunities to involve my students in an online learning community so that they would have more chances to learn outside the classroom.

In Blake and Guillén (2020) the third chapter of the book illustrated that second language acquisition (SLA) is very different from native language learning. In reading this chapter, I was

reminded that SLA is a time-consuming process. It is also interesting to read that from the authors' research, the Foreign Service Institute estimates that it takes on the average about 700 to 1320 full-instruction hours to master a language to what they consider to be the functional fluency level. Curiously, Russian and Chinese learning hours are among the 1320 hours of language learning, therefore demanding more hours and more input to reach a desired proficiency level than some other languages studied. It also explains how CALL help with L2 learning and advocates for the use of technology. Technology can facilitate the process and provide comprehensible input to the greatest extent. And CALL can help to further incorporate Krashen's well-known i+1 theory, one of the cornerstones of SLA, into the L2 curriculum, creating more repeated learning exposure to allow learners to acquire the target language as much as possible. Except for the input, intake, and output mentioned, to be precise, the "forced output" (Swain 2000) encourages or pushes the learners to convey meanings from semantic and syntactic processes. This process encourages appropriate use of the target language and the negotiation of meanings process to get to the intended meanings the moment the learners want to express it. As Blake and Guillén (2020) have argued, CALL will significantly enlarge the chances that L2 learners contact native speakers virtually thus overcoming challenges of time zone, travel, or geography. Meanwhile, it would make language learning automation from comprehensible input (implicit and explicit instructional tasks), exposure to the positive evidence, trigger Chomsky's universal grammar system, and encourage the formation of more meaningful output (with Swain's notion of "forced output"). In addition, task and project-based learning with the support of online learning networks would allow more interactions and connectivity with other language speakers which could result L2 acquisition (for example with some social networking such as Tandem or many other online culture-based projects).

In the field of second language learning, the combination of language learning and technology is increasingly prominent, almost to the point of becoming inextricably linked, especially in post-pandemic pedagogies, e-textbooks with online learning components, and hybrid or blended learning. Foretelling the current situation perhaps, Garrett (1989) stated briefly, the phenomenon of combining computer technology with second language education could be regarded as "new humanism" so that in a way we might say that CALL "represents one of the most exciting developments coming out of the participation of advanced technology in education." Broadly speaking, especially in second language acquisition, technology provides more choices and possibilities for increasing learning opportunities and learning models. My teaching philosophy above expresses the value of meaningful task-based communicative activities, inspired in part by the approaches advocated by Bill VanPatten (2020) and others. I want to dedicate myself to creating more remote, online, and in-person opportunities for students to communicate, to connect, and to make acquisitions happen more effectively.

On another level, CALL also promotes automaticity via task-based learning. To define automaticity for language learning, Segalowitz (2003, p. 402) defined automaticity as a more efficient, more accurate, and more stable performance. Automaticity underpins fluency, it is not incompatible with task-based learning, so the mixture of the features of the two can enable positive communicative practice. (Segalowitz 2003). CALL and the use of certain technologies can enable this effectively. As is mentioned in De Ridder, Vangehuchten, and Seseña Gómez (2007), the task-based approach motivates the process and generates more automation than pure communication courses. Therefore, based on task-based teaching, along with relying on contemporary science and technology and multimedia teaching, can help us promote students' learning motivation and enhance automaticity.

In the past few years, with the increasingly rapid improvement of some websites and mobile applications, learning can not only be completed in the classroom but also can be realized in multiple mobile scenarios. We can make more use of fragmented time to strengthen language learning. When I was learning my second language in my early childhood, I still relied on print dictionaries. Later, I had electronic dictionaries, and then later mobile phone dictionary apps became widely available. Language learning does not just rely on the teacher, textbooks, exercises, and worksheets. We have Chromebook, iPad, Zoom, Flipgrid, Nearpod, Quizlet and countless other varied apps and useful tech tools at our disposal. For example, Quizlet is good for vocabulary study which gets us back to the last paragraph's reference to atomicity. Quizlet is the high-tech version of vocabulary flash card. It aims to strengthen vocabulary recognition in the memory via the effective process of deliberate study mixed with gamification in the games it offers. Or, we can now choose to integrate the Nearpod Live version with drawing, in which students can write the vocabulary or draw a picture for a word and the instructor can view all students' processing simultaneously after they learn the vocabulary through Quizlet. All of these kinds of activities (or others on other platforms) could be small tasks to provide context and practice in vocabulary learning. Therefore; learning is no longer just a matter of print on paper. We can do more individualized and personalized learning though technological applications. In the future, if teachers make use of the curriculum integrated into the classroom, make the language system more systematic, and make full use of these technology resources, it will benefit students a lot. On a personal note, I am continuing to explore in my own classroom an effective way to help L2 learners by conducting communicative task-based approach activities using more digital tools and am finding that students benefit from the self-paced and interactive aspects.

Video and Multimedia Annotation Modes

      Multimedia and computer technology have offered countless innovative ways of Second Language Teaching. Even in an example of one study from over 20 years ago, the affordances for working with texts and literature in L2 reading were made clear: Khalid Al-Seghayer (2001), a hypermedia-learning program was designed for reading comprehension by researchers. The 30 ESL participants were provided with annotations or glosses of printed text, pictures, videos, graphs, and sounds to facilitate comprehension and learning the unknown words in the narrative English text. In order to test the effectiveness of different modes for vocabulary learning, two tests were performed in recognition and production. The analysis of the results shows that the material of video clips is more effective for vocabulary learning than simple and still pictures of vocabulary terms. Researchers explained that because the video clips are vivid and dynamic which is easier to attract students' attention and interest with an intuitive mental image. Through this modality, it is easy to arouse students' curiosity and build their concentration to learn.

      Although this case is older and about ESL vocabulary study, it has direct meaning in second language teaching today. Second language teachers should get the most use of more edited videos for students as real corpus materials for specific content design, so that vocabulary learning not only has a reasonable context but also allows students to learn the authentic language, just like the article also gives a lot of other Second language literature examined the impact of multimedia programs on vocabulary acquisition. In addition, many world languages textbook publishers (such as McGraw-Hill, Cengage, and Vista for example) offer instructors editable video related to texts and also offer interactive texts and video that can be digitally annotated by students.

Elsewhere, Chun and Plass (1996) conducted 3 studies using a multimedia program called CyberBush with second-year German Students. The study also provided students with annotations through pictures, printed texts, and videos. And participants were given a vocabulary test and a recall protocol. The study results showed that the recall of visual annotations was higher than the pure text, along with another finding is that it increases the rate of incidental vocabulary learning. Therefore, from reading the papers about the impact of multimedia on vocabulary acquisition, I think that we as second language teachers should be encouraged to provide more video clips with authentic language with visual annotation and sounds for students which will be of great benefit to students' second language acquisition.

The two older studies above have foreshadowed and provided a framework for some of the ways in which we are using video and other related tech today. Since the early 1990s it has become common practice to use video clips and other audio-visual materials to augment the language teaching classroom, as researchers such as Lonergan (1991) have noted. The challenge for teachers of course is to use video effectively and to select videos (including animated cartoons, news stories, documentary films, cultural performances and more) with relevant topics and appropriate for learners' proficiency levels to provide comprehensive input and opportunities for output.

According to my own recent peer observations as mentioned above, our second language teachers are actually using YouTube videos to show to students. Imagine that our language teaching has its limitations: the same classroom, the same group of students, and the same language teacher, so most of the second language knowledge that students can learn comes from the teacher. Therefore, in order to enrich the language of learners, it is also an effective method to let students watch videos. The same is true when it comes to vocabulary learning. Videos can

intuitively provide students with a reasonable context and can quickly build students' curiosity as we mentioned at above. As an example, I let students watch a promotional video of the movie "Peppa Celebrates Chinese New Year'" during Chinese New Year. The promotional video is a live-action preview called "What is Peppa" 啥是佩奇 ? The story is set in the Chinese countryside and a grandpa wanted to prepare for his grandchildren a New Year's gift. He learned that the child likes Peppa, but he doesn't know what Peppa is, so he walked around the neighborhood trying to figure it out. Most people offer help and they help guess what Peppa is, students learn different things about the guessing. The last person he asked told him the right answer and he finally made one. It looks like Peppa Pig's air blower. The whole film revolves around "What is Page" as a clue. Grandpa asked a lot of people. In the process, different people have different guesses. The whole film aroused the curiosity of the students. They knew what Peppa was, but the grandfathers in the countryside of China didn't know it. This formed a very interesting impression of poor understanding between generations. Students can guess the meaning of the word itself through the frequently occurring words and the context. In the final question and answer session, it can be seen that students understand the story and can accurately guess the meaning of some vocabulary. I also use Quizlet to check their understanding with some new vocabularies (the vocabularies showed repeated in the video), students need to play the live mode individual/ group game to match the vocabularies with annotation. We use the Kahoot app polling and game aspects to check the main ideas of the whole story. And with Nearpod to support their further learning like leading the open-end questions, students can leave comments to the story by typing or recording their voice or can use the collaborative board to share their thoughts. The whole learning process is relaxed and enjoyable and the learning effect is

remarkable. All the output is interactively and collaboratively shared and supported by visual

pictures and videos. The audio-visual features boost engagement and enhance language learning.

Communicative & Meaningful Task-based Approach in CMC

In the study by Yu-Wan Hung & Steve Higgins (2016), it investigates the different

learning opportunities in both text-based and video-based synchronous computer-mediated

communication. Twelve participants are six English speaking learners of Chinese and six

Chinese speaking learners of English were paired up as reciprocal partners. I learned more

communication strategies in both texted based and video-based synchronous computer-mediated

communication environments (CMC). This approach provides learners with more and broader

language learning opportunities via CMC. There are perhaps endless advantages of CMC-based

activities and tools that help L2 learners to engage with material and connect with other learners

or native speakers. However, there are limitations that L2 learners experienced and encountered,

in this study, in which some did not meet expectations. For example, when aware of the problem,

in order to communicate more smoothly, learners know to use alternative wording to achieve the

original language expression goals. They used achievement strategies (including compensatory

strategies and retrieval strategies) or they change the communication goals to achieve the

language influence (reduction strategies). In this study, the results showed that the CS used by

the model of SCMC (synchronous computer-mediated communication) in text and video-based

communication is different. The text-based form generates more task-like language forms, while

video-based is particularly effective for developing the learner's fluency and pronunciation.

In my reading on learners' reflection in my literature review, I found a very interesting

phenomenon and the phenomenon in my own class is very similar. It mentioned that because

there is no time pressure when participants use SCMC text-based, they will use online resources

such as simultaneous dictionaries and Google Images to help with the interaction. Students have more time to explore and learn by themselves. They have more time to look up individually what they were not sure about before and they have more time to figure out whether a certain expression is grammatically correct or even pragmatically appropriate in the culture. At this time, if the teacher intervenes to provide some help, they will know whether the sentence that has just been carefully worked out is complete and correct.

Before I read this research, I preferred to use video-based SCMC because I thought it could enable students to speak spontaneously, and that just communicating with native Chinese speakers online could improve language fluency. But through reading this research report, I also gained a deeper understanding of text-based SCMC, which allows students to more carefully consider whether the language is appropriate, and have more time to explore and learn the words and structures they need to express themselves, so that the language they use is relatively more standardized and form oriented. On the other hand, for my elementary DLI students, employing text-based can allow them to practice and use PinYin more frequently and improve the accuracy of word selection (note that in Chinese, words with the same pronunciation have different meanings). Therefore, I think both text-based and video-based have their own advantages. And we can get us to improve language use accuracy and language proficiency.

Even with the limitations, I am putting my effort into exploring more possibilities and additional digital tools to conduct fun and engaging activities in my L2 classroom teaching. In Hedgcock & Ferris (2018), I learned that Chinese is *logographic*, which is very different from the *alphabetic* orthography system. I am seeking supplementary tools to help L2 learners build connections, not simply drawing and recognizing different Chinese word systems without visualizing and meaningful awareness. With the digital tools, I began using emojis and gifs to

visualize the words with vivid annotation, and it helps them to build and facilitate the new way of processing visual formations with meanings. I also found useful Chinese Etymology https://hanziyuan.net/, which displays oracle characters, bronze characters etc., to enable our L2 Chinese learners to visualize the concepts of the word origins and the evolution. For example, L2 Chinese readers should adjust themselves with decoding the words with meanings not using phonemes and grapheme correspondence from their L1. I am more mindful of this in my own teaching practice now.

In Oskoz, A., & Elola, I. (2019), they both theoretically and practically introduce the use of some social tools such as: digital storytelling software, blogs, social networks (e.g., Facebook and Instagram), Twitter and wikis, and Google Docs. This study exploits familiar theoretical frameworks (sociocultural theory, activity theory, and socio-semiotic theory) and implements the digital social tools in the L2 classroom informed by these approaches. First, sociocultural theory says our interactive experiences with others and the environments shape our individuals' minds, thoughts, and learnings. The symbolic and psychological tools and signs construct our mental process of function. Based on this theory, the co-construction of writing with digital tool support would be good meditation and scaffolding. Second, activity theory holds that digital tools shape our mental structure culturally and socially. The writing process is complicated and would include many new tasks and tools. Third, in socio-semiotic theory, the learners become the designer; they may select, arrange, and rearrange the semiotic resources (sound, image, text) to express meaning. This 2019 study showed how digital tools and platforms would be useful to addressing these three approaches and I look forward to exploring them.

Conclusions

During this brief exploration of integrating CALL into L2 teaching, I not only completed an extensive review of the literature, I also conducted some hands-on testing of the digital tools. For example, I explored possible and innovative ways to guide my students in doing collaborative writing with Book Creator and Google Docs. I used digital storytelling like PowToon to make my own presentation of materials more vivid with animation tools. I have found that designing task-based activities into the L2 curriculum with the help of CALL would be a win-win for both L2 instructors and learners alike. I will continue to use digital tools and apps to enhance student learning and engagement. Recent advances in technology and multimedia have made enriched our learning content and offered more diverse learning modes. Thus, digital tools are may offer more stages for students' creativity. As stated in my teaching philosophy, I value connectivity and CALL technology helps my students to better connect and communicate. With this technological power, students can to grow in their language proficiency and broaden their horizons for language use far beyond my classroom walls.

CULTURE PAPER

Teaching Chinese Culture in Chinese Dual Language Immersion at the Elementary Level

ORIENTATION & REFLECTION

What is Culture

In the USU MSLT LING 6010 course, I had the opportunity to explore the influence of teaching Chinese culture in Chinese DLI in the US Elementary school context. China is often regarded as one of the four oldest and longest living civilization together with ancient Egypt, Babylon, and India, its written. Chinese culture is responsible for its rich culture. Culture is the most important component of its language. Conversely, Chinese culture cannot be taught without its language. We usually think of culture includes music, dance, art, martial arts, cuisine, literature, traditions, architecture, festivals, linguistic pragmatics, a very rich history, and more. There are more complex ways of carving culture. I would like to use what I read in Nolan Weil's textbook (2017), where he shows how culture refers broadly to everything humans do to survive in groups and regulate relations. And specifically, music, dance, art, literature, etc. This has been referred to "high culture," and the daily life cuisine, habitations (e.g., houses and buildings) are part of "material culture." Social conduct reflected in norms and values and ways of thinking (including beliefs and ideologies) are also culture. Understanding Chinese culture will in turn help facilitate and enhance Chinese language learning and intercultural communication.

Challenges of Teaching Culture in the Context of DLI

Culture comes with its rich contents and is responsible for L2 learners' linguistic comprehension, and it would, in turn, provide a lens to view language use. For example, certain words are used to support culture. Culture and language would go hand in hand: intertwined culture in language

teaching, motivating students, and facilitating interaction and communication. However, based on my teaching scenario, it is tricky to teach 4th grade Chinese in the United States. 1. We don't have a culture curriculum, specific culture lessons, or textbooks for teaching culture. 2. How to select what cultural aspects (high culture, martial culture, cultural values, etc.) to integrate into our L2 classroom? 3. How to teach culture in Chinese DLI classroom?

Incorporate and Develop Cultural Awareness in DLI Elementary Classroom

Kramsch (2004) states that "if…language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching." Cultural awareness can then be viewed simultaneously as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency. Cultivating students' cultural awareness is very important for teaching language, for students to master language skills, pragmatics, and intercultural communication. However, gradually deepening understanding of the concept of culture and cultivating students' own sense of identity with Chinese culture is very useful for students when they enter the intermediate and advanced stages of language learning. For example, our school has a collaboration with the local middle school Dual Language Immersion (DLI) teacher once a month. The middle school teacher noticed that some simple and basic cultural concepts, such as (财神爷 God of Wealth) for example, should have been learned by her grade level**,** but had become evident in her lessons that students did not know such cultural concepts. This is because we had not yet taught Chinese Mythology at the elementary level. Mythology and cultural values are not treated in out textbook. Since the scope of culture is so wide and deep that students could not achieve it overnight upon arrival in middle school**,** so we are beginning to make our own curricular changes to at least introduce more culture at the elementary level in our program. We could have elementary and middle school bridging collaboration.

Chinese culture includes music, martial arts, cuisine, literature, traditions, myths, architecture, festivals, technological innovations, pragmatics, values, beliefs, and much more. Teaching culture is broad and hard to pinpoint if there is no curriculum, how every teacher fellow to develop the cultural classroom activities. But at lease, by understanding Chinese culture will in turn help facilitate and enhance Chinese language learning and intercultural communication. We all know from the middle school stage; the cultural curriculum is studied systematically. We can through collaboration to make sure we are at the same page, what knowledge of cultural aspects they want us to touch on at the elementary level. We have the awareness that we may integrate some culture contents in our DLI elementary classroom.

The similar statements expressed by L. Zhang (2011, p. 202) caution us that many current elements of Chinese culture that are taught in existing textbooks tend to be quite superficial and focus on material objects or cultural products: "Chinese culture instruction in the language classroom tends to center on Chinese products and their origins – such as moon cakes, red envelopes, and festivals – that do not delve into a deeper layer of Chinese ways of thinking or their mentality, values, and ideology" (p. 204). It is important to keep in mind that there are an almost infinite number of other cultural elements that we could include as teachers beyond the products featured in our textbooks, from creative practices to animals, from technological advances to crafts to linguistic pragmatics and beyond. Just to name a few examples: Chinese martial arts practices, mythology, Peking opera, Chinese pandas, calligraphy, Chinese painting, blue and white porcelain, traditional crafts, Four Great inventions, medicine, and Chinese Tea ceremonies, may all be added to daily class teaching by the teacher's own willingness to enrich the language learning content by introducing students to cultural material.

Current Situation: teaching Culture in Elementary Level DLI

At the elementary level, in the research of DLI immersion teaching, academic subject and literacy skills are distinguished achievements in both languages, which is a win-win situation. Thomas & Collier (2012) mentioned that the DLI program academic results are gratifying, "lead to grade-level and above-grade-level achievement in the second language, the only programs that fully close the gap" (Thomas & Collier, 2012, p. 11). As to the elementary level in the DLI program in Utah, Chinese culture is not a sole subject. From first to six grades, the target language curriculum includes Chinese literacy as well as the content subjects (Math, Science and Social Studies content). Most of our time is spent on content instruction. Another challenge is that Chinese culture including poetry, prose, or fables are not the focus in the Chinese Mandarin Matrix either, unfortunately. So short literary texts may be added by the teacher to introduce cultural elements and provide context, if time permits. Mandarin Matrix textbooks are mainly based on fun, short stories with the simplified target language, and the portion of culture brief and mainly about some festivals. So, the cultural part of the curriculum is not involved much. Therefore, if we teach students something about Chinese culture in the first grade of elementary school, they may forget it for their future studies, but every later grade level will mention this cultural concept again**,** and students will begin to have a better understanding of that event each year it is reviewed. The teaching and learning of culture should not be a one-time lesson or assignment but should continue to be built upon, step by step, so that they have a sense of cultural experience and understanding instead of a vague understanding of such Chinese culture.

The same ideas have roots in Ana Navarro & Katie Marín (2017), as the study explores the three perspectives of culture teaching. The first perspective is from a 2nd-grade Spanish DLI teacher. She reports the cultural teaching as "extremely important." This is because, as many

studies have shown, the relation between language and culture is absolutely essential (Byram, 2015; DeCapua, 2004; Kohler, 2015; Moran, 2001) The teacher in the case study reflects the current practice of culture teaching and its thoughts of improvements. One of the ideas that she mentions is the idea of allowing DLI teachers to benefit from the interaction with exchange teachers to enhance cultural exchanges, as well as participate in in-depth cultural experience to know more about the education system and society of the country, and eventually enhance cultural awareness. She especially mentioned the goals for teaching cultures divided into short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals. From the beginning of a single teacher's task limited in a classroom, to the interaction or collaboration with other teachers, and then to the cultural events of the whole school to create more opportunities for expanding students' cultural knowledge and even extend to their parents.

Implementation for Current DLI

Likewise, whether DLI Spanish, Portuguese, French, or Chinese teachers, I think when we know the critical relationship between culture and language teaching, we can positively impact the students in the program and our practice by incorporating teaching culture into the current curriculum. Not only to prepare for the topics in future middle school and high school and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, but more importantly, the knowledge of culture should be incorporated concisely and consciously by the L2 instructor into the curriculum and build a solid foundation from elementary level.

There are two approaches which are content-based lesson and mini lesson that I would implement culture into my current curriculum. Take content-based lesson for example, when we are teaching science observation and patterns in the sky (4th-grade 4.4 strand science Seed story), the universe and the stars would be taught and so as to integrate the culture portion, we can

extend the topic to the Chinese lunar calendar, the 12 signs of the Zodiac and the twenty-four

solar terms which are determined according to the position of the earth on the ecliptic. In the

Chinese lunar calendar, there are 24 specific seasons (seasonal divisions) representing the change

of seasons. Teaching science content in Chinese even offers an opportunity for a discussion of

cultural practices and values and invites ACTFL cultural comparisons between Chinese culture

(here calendars and signs) and the students' own cultures.

The other way to integrate culture is a mini-lesson. For example, when we talk about a

Chinese character, we can employ the chance to view culture and language are overlapped; this

can make us take an in-depth tour of its cultural aspects. I like encouraging extensive reading

activities that show Chinese culture and values in both text and image. For example, when we

talked about the Chinese character "让, " "togive way, give around, yield" in English, in order to

help learners better visualize the character, we read the texts about an ancient story, the Kong

Rong Share Pears. Students discover how Chinese culture emphasizes giving the best to others

and bringing convenience and always think of others first. I share with my students how this

value can also be passed down generation to generation: we can also see in Chinese everyday

signs we see with reserved seats in the public places for the elderly, the disabled, pregnant

people, or those with infants in arms.

Ideas for capitalizing on the use of technology

From Haning Z. H (2019), the advance level Chinese language and cultural courses are

using film as authentic materials to provide foreign language (FL) students many pedagogical

opportunities. I have read that conducting student-centered content or theme-based curriculum by

teaching Chinese culture through the film makes authentic target language discourse available

for students. Students are provided with more opportunities to learn and deepen their

understanding of the target language from the film's cultural aspects and political and societal activities. They are not only involved with film reviews but also with presentations and assessments, thereby practicing analytical and presentational skills and interacting as a group. In this study, a group of students led the class discussion in the target language, compared and contrasted the similarities and differences from the cultural perspective they comprehended, and incorporated the new language concepts into their daily language usage. This could also cultivate their critical thinking, require students learning culture through a film is a valuable tool, providing them with an opportunity to learn Chinese from the decontextualized textbook and the visual cues and film setting full of cultural aspects and linguistic elements, as this research suggests. Films offer similar affordances to literary texts in teaching language and culture through context.

In the paper by Wang, M., Bauer, C., & Devitt, A. (2019), the Needs Analysis Workshop format was used, focusing on three parts: think-pair-share, discussion of the most important elements of Chinese culture, and technologies used. The learners studied had limited opportunities to communicate with native language speakers outside of class, but the study suggested that through technologies including YouTube videos, and gamified websites like Quizlet, Gimkit, Kahoot, and others students can be more engaged learners. The technologies offer innovative tools for students developing vocabularies, models, and showcasing accurate authentic language use. These digital tools provide students with an authentic communicative environment in which to interact with each other or even to have increased interaction to L1 speakers on the internet. Again, as stated above, CALL and technology are valuable to increase interaction and collaboration, too.

Sara Ganassin (2019) pointed out that when the instructor is teaching Chinese culture, due to instructors being from different regional areas of China or other parts of the world, their understanding of "Chinese culture" is different and can be regionally specific. In her study, the Chinese culture was viewed as a social construct and the Chinese culture was taught and learned not only in the classroom settings but also outside the classroom like school-wide (festival) activities.It also talked about how learners, teachers and parents negotiated the concepts of Chinese culture in the mandarin Chinese school communities in the UK. Ganassin shows how personal identity could have an effect on how an instructor may perceive the picture of the culture as well. On the other hand, learning about regional cultural differences enriches the CFL learning experience. When teaching culture, teachers may add many stories, fables, and legends elements to make students interested in understanding Chinese culture. Culture can be connected with students' lives while teaching traditional Chinese mainstream values and concentrating on letting students learn about values themselves. Sometimes textbook-centered culture teaching is often far from the life of students and only about morality education. Students in the United States cannot fully understand Chinese values or stories out of context. But, given the context, if students learn about why Chinese people might be humble and reserved in some context, they can understand their behaviors better. Therefore, in my opinion, it is true that we can not only teach the textbooks of Chinese culture but can make some adjustments according to different situations, we can make it more related to learner's life. Finally, for one example, we cannot just look at an image of a dragon boat in a textbook, but must also read and discuss the deeper stories and cultural values behind its origin. Each teacher's teaching philosophy, experience, and personal trajectory are different. There is a relationship, but the experiencing of Chinese cultural products mentioned in the article is a significant entry point.

Connecting with Chinese culture can remain a challenge for many L2 students. Many students passively participate in community schooling activities because they could not get those connections with the culture. Wang (2017) confirms this point of view that we need to pay more attention to how we incorporate cultural activities. Wang uses examples from well-known poems to contemporary clothing and dress codes, but cautions us in our choice of focus, because we do not want students to become alienated from culture or create a certain degree of stereotypes about Chinese culture, making it more difficult for them to connect with culture. Holliday (1999) distinguishes the two concepts of cultures, a "large" culture from a macro sense, in which culture is related to ethics, and can exist on a national or even international level. The "small" culture refers instead to the way an individual relates to social activities within a specific social group in daily life. And there is a very important conclusion made in this study: the participants constructed and analyzed the nature of Chinese culture most effectively through the lens of "small" culture (Holliday p. 170, p. 180). Students themselves play a very important role designing in the dynamics of the cultural activities. In order to prevent them from becoming passive cultural recipients, we should emphasize cultural content that is more relevant to their personal lives, studies, or outside interests. All of the above factors are worthy of our consideration as we endeavor to incorporate more culture into our lesson plans to help students connect with culture.

Ellen Yeh's (2014), Multiple Intelligences Film Teaching Model was emphasized in the study, which is called the MIFT model, and Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences (MI), and practical examples of activities and how to design lessons based on the theory. MI activities may include: recast, readers theatre, role-play, read aloud, oral presentation, negotiation, process writing, journal writing, and others. The MIFT model provides many strategies and techniques

and benefits to facilitate students' cultural competency using film as a starting point. For example, in readers theatre, selecting some parts for students to remember and adapt helps them to imitate the voice intonation and the expression of the performer; moreover, students can think about the mood and attitude of the protagonist in a certain situation and write further dialogue to express it. In the way of performance, the teacher uses recast and negotiation to let students notice what needs to be corrected or adopt appropriate pronunciation and intonation. This allows students to learn culture from what they see and hear in the film—from music and sounds, to body language and gestures, to emotions or aesthetics—and ultimately to gain a deeper meaning of cultural stories.

Shaohui Liu (2020) recently provided a compelling new study showing that dance is also a form of cultural transmission that can be explored in language teaching. Dance is not only a traditional mode of expression, but also an attitude, a spiritual transmission, and a cultural transmission that shows values, aesthetics, and more. So, organizing cultural dance classes for language learning can help convey an understanding of Chinese culture on many levels: audio, visual, emotional, kinesthetic. At the same time, through the identity of dance, students may better understand how Chinese people express their feelings and thoughts. Therefore, teaching Chinese cultures should incorporate Chinese dance elements, the study argues. This concept inspired me. In showing music and dance from a film, students can understand and later interpret and perform elements related to the movie; in watching and then participating in the physical dancing they are conveying the motions, appreciating the thoughts and perspectives, and relating to cultural norms and situations.

The interesting study by Meilin Zhao and Thanachart Lornklang (2018) shows how the Chinese cultural "picture word inductive model" may be used to promote vocabulary acquisition

in young students. It is a very effective guide because it provides learners with attention-grabbing and interesting images as visual aids to help interpret meaning. The study shows how we may use pictures to expand both vocabulary and cultural knowledge at the same time. Picture word inductive models activate and motivate young students' engagement and provide students the opportunity to apply what they learned in classes, as demonstrated in this study. I believe this model would be an innovative and effective finding and it can be applied to elementary and secondary DLI teaching when teaching Chinese culture. Each Chinese character has its cultural meaning, such as in Chinese pictographs. We need to share this meaning with our students and we need to establish the connection between culture and characters via sounds and forms with the help of pictures, so that they will have a preliminary connection to culture.

The recent study by Tinghe Jin (2020) provides data on perceptions of cultural courses based on student interviews. There are some potential negative factors that affect student perspectives towards learning Chinese culture. This study suggests that when we consider course design, curriculum, or lesson planning in teaching Chinese culture it is very important to evaluate its appropriateness and potential negative factors. We cannot just simply teach culture for the sake of teaching it, nor can we choose materials haphazardly. For example, looking back in time, Zhang and Li (2010) said that the materials used for Chinese cultural courses in the 2000s lacked real, substantial content related to Chinese culture. Even more recently, as Wang (2018) pointed out, the culture courses offered at the university level were superficial and stereotyped with simply offering some superficial cultural information (see also Wang & Guo 2017). In the examples given in this 2018 study, we are reminded that, without proper guidance, students will only get a partial understanding or partial cultural awareness, and not move beyond its superficial stereotypes. Jin and Dervin (2017) suggest first that that the teaching and learning of

Chinese culture should focus on interculturality and interactions between cultures; in addition, they emphasize that we should not just focus on materials, objects, and forms but more importantly we should focus on the practice of culture. So, I learned from this study that cultural practices and intercultural interactions are vital parts learning another language. Again, we educators cannot only teach cultural concepts and products, or barely touch on stereotypes or superficial things for the purpose of teaching culture. We must be careful of relying too much on only the brief content of textbooks, without an in-depth analysis of the culture and the meanings or values behind it for our students.

Some Thoughts about Application

After reviewing a great deal of the existing literature about culture and language teaching, I have begun to implement many of the ideas into my own culture teaching, specifically in incorporating more activities based on authentic materials and videos. I have become more aware of the selecting appropriate materials that invite a deeper understanding of culture and offer more opportunities for meaningful communication.

It is also worth mentioning, as suggested in my CALL paper above, that digital technology has created more novel, endless possibilities for our language classroom teaching and provided us, language learners, with more abundant language learning opportunities. As it said, "using digital technology is identified as a core component: the student uses technology and digital technology to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively" (NCCA, 2016, p. 6). In the age of self-media and social networking, many ordinary people record their own videos, such as Tik Tok. Teachers should be good at selecting language materials suitable for students to learn and applying them to language teaching. It is worth noting that some videos' language material and behavior are not suitable for all age groups or cultures

of language learners, which could leave a bad cultural impression on students if we select

inappropriately. Therefore, the instructor should identify and screen valuable materials in

cultural lessons that can reflect positive cultural impressions.

Based on what I have learned from the above literature review combined with my own

teaching experiences, I offer the following brief suggestions for key steps and useful types of

activities to keep in mind in course design that incorporates teaching Chinese culture more

effectively:

Some general principles that I may keep in mind:1. Reflect on aspects of the L1 before

engage L2; 2. Provide opportunities for them to reflect; 3. Offer clear expectation regarding what

learners should do with tasks.

Some ideas I may use to integrate culture into Course Design

> Step 1: Use the Chinese picture that symbolizes specific high culture or material culture
> or video clips to do course introductions and to promote initial vocabulary acquisition for
> novice students. Arouse their interest in a cultural theme.
>
> Step 2: Incorporate student-centered activity. Choose either appropriated content and
> theme-based, or mini-lesson about culture. Used video clips, make authentic target
> language discourse, or extensive authentic reading texts including pragmatic and cultural
> elements available for students.
>
> Step 3: Conduct MIFT (Multiple Intelligences Film Teaching Model) and MI activities,
> including: recast, readers theatre, role-play, read aloud, oral presentation, negotiation, and
> task-based activities, which would help students become more engaged in the cultural
> scenarios.
>
> Step 4: Make a comparison and contrast activity with Chinese culture and English
> culture. This depends on understanding and awareness. Discussion during the watching
> the video clips will be guided by the instructor. Invited students to relate Chinese culture
> with their personal experience and own culture, culminating in a group presentation of
> an element of Chinese culture.
>
> Step 5: As an extended activity, perform a dance with Chinese songs related to the
> cultural aspect after watching some Chinese performances. Could be a live performance
> or shared on an app such as Flipgrid or Tik Tok. The extended creative activity can help

students use what they have learned about Chinese culture and experience the rhythms or lyrics or movements in these cultural activities. Abundant video resources are available for students to research and emulate, such as: examples of Chinese New Year Song, Peking Opera performances, Kung Fu demonstrations, Poetry dance with classical Chinese music, etc.

Looking Forward: Teaching Culture in DLI

The learning of Chinese culture in elementary school and the positive attitudes that Chinese educators and learners hold toward different cultures will offer significant help to students when entering middle school and high school and eventually maybe college and the workforce. This will help learners to have a better transition to Chinese culture and literature courses in high school and help them specifically to prepare for the Advanced Placement (AP) exam or future studies of language and culture in general.

Conclusions

Through the MSLT process, especially through reading many different theoretical and practical research articles on culture in language learning, I have a deeper and better understanding of what I have taught in the past and what I will teach in the future, and how I can improve. In addition, I can advocate for broader, deeper, and more intentional teaching of Chinese culture, with the aid of technology. Taking to heart the research explored above on teaching culture, I will continue to support and enrich students' cultural learning opportunities in an innovative way.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Use of Humor in Teaching and How it Enhances Learner Engagement

Introduction

Sometimes, learning and teaching language both take much efforts and it would come with tedious repetition. In this annotated bibliography, I would like to delve into the use of humor in language teaching and how it may improve the happy learning environment or increase student engagement. Personally, as I recall my own student days, the most popular teachers all had one trait in common: a good sense of humor. They were able to make what could have been dull classes lively, interesting, and marked with occasional laughter. I remember that my Chinese teacher taught Ancient Classical Chinese enhanced with humorous stories. Similarly, one of my history teachers was able to make us laugh, but he himself keep a straight face. He often used his unique sense of humor to help students remember the material. I would like to be a humorous teacher like them so my students can learn in a relaxed and happy environment. I have dedicated eight years of my life to teaching. I am committed to letting students learn in a fun and engaging setting. While humor never seems to be part of a courses on teaching methods, we can definitely claim that it is an auxiliary tool available to all teachers. I believe that incorporating personalized humor in the classroom and using humorous materials need to be encouraged in the teaching profession for the benefit of students learning.

Through my deep dive into the use of humor in teaching, I have learned that humor is a very effective tool and, as **Nasiri and Mafakheri (2015)** write, "Nowadays, humor in teaching is regarded as an active learning strategy" (p. 27). They also explain that the big difference between humor in comedy and humor in the classroom is that the former needs a natural sense and ability to get it, while the latter involves learnable skills, not the original humor (p. 29). From my point

of view, as teacher we can use humor as a teaching strategy but also students can embrace humor as a learning strategy no matter the teacher is humorous or humorless. **Wanzer, Frymier, and Irwin (2010)** assert that proper use of humor in class can engage students and improve learning and achievements. These claims compel me to learn more about consciously using humor as a teaching strategy. Below I provide a review and synthesis of informative research in this area.

The title of **Smith & Wortley's (2017)** study is "Everyone's A Comedian" and thus implies that humor can be used effectively by all teachers. The authors examine the effect of humor in traditional and online classrooms. They claim that if humor can be delivered appropriately and naturally and instructors share their personal experience or other stories using humor, it will greatly improve the connection between instructors and students. In Smith and Wortley's paper, they reiterate that **Siegrist and Hupp (2015)** suggest that if educators use a sense of humor to positive ends in teaching, it will also allow students to have a positive perception of the teacher's expectations of their students' success. Thus, humor and expectations become tied. In addition, this paper presents a special perspective about applying touches of humor. They talk about how to integrate others' humorous materials and deliver the humor with personal characteristics (p. 19). While discussing different types of humor and how to use them, there are also some personal subtle humor traits that can be learned and used for example: raising an eyebrow, animated speaking, gestures, and tone changing, etc. (p. 19). Though different from the traditional classroom, online courses can also include humor, through embedding funny Youtube videos or some video clips or some funny comics pictures to connect course materials and humorous context can enhance students' engagement. The researchers also shared concerns that not only teachers need to use humor appropriately, but also the students. When some students tease someone's weakness, teachers need to mediate those bad humor situations. The

study reminds us that the teacher's responsibility is to portray a good sense of humor for teachers and also to mediate their students' humor in a positive, appropriate way.

Whereas Smith and Wortley (2017) offered an extensive literature review from which they drew some broader conclusions, **Shahid and Ghazal (2019)** used a different methodology and conducted a study for which they collected and analyzed data from university students on their instructors' teaching effectiveness and their use of humor. In this study on perceptions of humor, students rated their teacher's effectiveness, in terms of humor production, motivation, creation of engaging in lessons, anxiety reduction, stimulation of thought, and fostering positive relationships (p. 29). The results indicate that students rated teachers that can use humor well in teaching as more effective teachers than those who don't. This article pointed out at the very beginning that most educational institutes focus more on content and materials to ensure quality teaching, but less on the methodology. It is extremely necessary to address that "It could be incorporated into teaching methodologies and teaching training modules to enhance the learning process, however, we need to know when, why and how" (p. 34). Here, context is important, too.

Ardalan's 2017 book explains that the teacher is also a very decisive factor for students' willingness to go to the class or not, and humor has a positive influence on the attendance or absence of students (Ardalan, 2017). Ardalan explains that reason behind this is that humor has two dimensions: physical and a psychological. It relaxes the brain, promotes blood circulation, and releases stress hormones. Although this book is not about linguistics, it shows how humor and building good relationships between instructors and learners helps in any classroom.

Psychologically speaking, people experience a reduction in tension from humor, as it boosts learning motivation and interest, stimulates self-esteem, and enhances learning participation **(Cann & Collette, 2014)**. Moreover, the statistics prove that the grade-point

averages or level of achievement of the students who were taught with humor exceeds those students who were not (p. 33). At the end of the article, we can easily put forward the importance of the positive effect of teaching with humor. The author further proposes that the study of the use of humor in teaching should be included in the category of teaching methodology, and there should be a systematic training method to teach teachers how to use humor teaching in their professional development (p. 34).

When it comes to the integration of humor, there are always pros and cons. **Masek, Hashim and Ismail (2019)** This academic article mainly describes the study of 109 undergraduate students who participated in a 14-week lecture and then completed five-point Likert scale questionnaires. The questionnaire included two sections: students' perceptions of humor and classroom learning and whether humor can enhance student engagement in classroom learning. In the lecture, the teacher each lecture will use more than three humorous examples by graphics, pictures, videos, jokes, dialogues, etc., to alleviate some students' lack of concentration and appropriate pauses when necessary—student-centered Classroom. The first hour is mainly about teachers explaining theoretical knowledge, and the second hour is about students' practical and applicable learning through discussion, debate, demonstration, hands-on activity, etc. In our one-day class, students only have two breaks. The study found that through humor, students can understand the relationship between language and humor itself, which can help relieve students' distracted learning, improve students' participation and concentration, and thus improve their interest in learning. However, it should be noted that humor embedded in teaching scenarios should be age-appropriate, humor should be relevant to teaching content without using demeaning offensive or stimulating language. From my perspective, we all know that long lectures are a big challenge for lecturers and students. This is true for both colleges and our

public elementary schools in the United States. Home-room elementary school teachers need to teach the required content (math, language arts, science and social studies) except specialties with only two breaks for a day. That means students only have two recesses. I realized that the insertion of humor in the classroom could give students a temporary brain break, relieve tense nerves, and give teachers and students a chance to have the brain to take a break. Furthermore, in our DLI language class, when students can see and tell the humor in the target language they hear, is it also an improvement in language learning? Thus, pauses and breaks are important.

Machlev and Karlin's (2017) study investigates the different effectiveness of depending on its relevances and appropriateness, 3 types of humor studied be categorized as relevant, appropriate and irrelevant. 195 colleges students ages participated in the study. The study has found that the more relevant and appropriate the use of humor, the greater the student's interest in learning, whereas the less relevant it is, the less interest in learning. We should also make the touches of humor age appropriate and incorporate them according to students' grade level, another study **Ivy (2013)** talks about humor enhances teaching and students' engagement significantly in the students' learning. Students also perceive humor as a powerful tool and strategy to stimulate their interest in learning and benefits for their academic outcome. It also interprets the benefits of using humor and show us guidelines and examples how to use it. For example, cartoons have variety of rich and interesting themes on the Internet that can be used for language learning. Students can write dialogues for characters based on comics. Another example can be focusing on the students themselves to create topics, encouraging students to create their humor, and share them with others by adding pictures to slides. Whereas an article by **Makewa, Role and Genga (2011)** thinks the relations of students' recognition of humor and engagement is modest, Alias Masek, Suhaizal Hashim, and Affero Ismail (2019) shed more light

on the implication of humor, and attribute even more impact to it; they also remind us that teachers should incorporated humor into their pedagogical skill set but also remember to embed humor in teaching that is relevant to the topics and content being taught. Like Ivy (2013), they also caution teachers to not overlook the humor's appropriateness to the target students.

Bilokcuoglu & Debreli (2018) emphasize humor as a vital element of language teaching. They point out at the beginning of the article that humor represents one of the universal authenticities of discourse and speech acts. They advocate for the use of humor in the language teaching context because it can benefit not only the teachers but also the students (p. 1). Although humor is rarely mentioned in educational researchers and language studies, humor is an integral classroom element (p.2). This article draws attention to the theoretical background of humor, including the recognized theories of what makes something humorous: relief theory, incongruity theory, incongruity-resolution theory, superiority theory. The study then gives different examples of humor specifically. Humor is seen as a potential interpersonal tool, reducing the teacher's authority and making the relationship between students and teachers more harmonious. Language can be learned more naturally in communication if presented through humor. In a pleasant classroom atmosphere, mutual learning and cooperation among students can be more harmonious. Therefore, classroom humor can provide a better language learning environment. As a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher, when reading these examples, I am personally reminded of corresponding or similar examples (syntactic level) in Chinese humor so that I can apply them to future teaching.

Providing a useful typology that teachers can be mindful of in their own lesson planning and use of humor, Chee (2006) classified humor into a new typology of four categories: "(a) Textual: jokes, stories; (b) Pictorial: comics, cartoons; (c) Action/ Games: video, contests,

theatres, simulation, and role play; (d) Verbal: acronym, puns, word games." In this article, I also noticed that regardless of the various types of humor, paying attention to the frequency of using humor should be moderate (p. 4). Incorporating brief jokes or puns is something teachers can do regularly, even with limited time. According to **Pomerantz & Bell (2011)**, the positive effects of using humor can be created from the very moment we enter the classroom each day, even referring to humor as a "safe house" or safe space for learning in the language learning classroom. This reminds me of two scenarios in my daily real-life teaching: our principal always ends a morning announcement with a joke or a pun, then teachers begin teaching for a day. I often say jokes with my students when doing the attendance. "请没来的同学举手" This roughly translates into "Dear absentee, please raise your hand." Students will think about the meaning behind this sentence. How do students who are not coming raise their hands? After the students understand the meaning of these words, they find it very funny and even laugh.

Humor has positive effects for lowering the affective filter and improving the learning environment, as many studies in different language teaching contexts have shown. **Medgyes (2002)** and **Özüdoğru & Robert (2013)** also claim that the process of teaching filled with humor can build a free and easy classroom atmosphere and it can also be taken as an ice-breaker experience in teaching. Other researchers, such as **Bilokcuoglu and Debreli** (2018) support Özüdoğru & Robert's statements about how the words work, adding that playing with word games and with morphemes in an enjoyable way can help to students to acknowledge, internalize, understand, and commit to memory linguistic examples that use humor. Therefore, Bilokcuoglu and Debreli argue that in ESL/EFL classrooms, the use of humor will not only be conducive to building a positive atmosphere and enjoyable environment for students but also create more fruitful learning outcomes for target students who are learning another language.

All of the studies explored demonstrate that the integration of humor into teaching is a powerful teaching strategy. But the most effective ways integrating humor into teaching methodology is another issue worth investigating. **Nienaber, Abrams, and Segrist (2019)** examine types of humor that influence the likelihood of student engagement. The sample of the study involved 157 undergraduate students that were randomly assigned to one of six possible vignette conditions. Each vignette described a hypothetical college professor along with his or her teaching style and humor used in the classroom. Then the participants rated a series of items about the likelihood of class engagement and comfort level with the professor. Participants also needed to do an introversion measure, which was assessed through a 10-item International Personality Item Pool Survey **(Goldberg, et al., 2006)**. The results stated that the students are more likely to engage in the class with a professor that uses affiliative humor compared to those who use no humor, little humor, and aggressive humor. The results also show us that good-natured humor can maximize students' participation in the classroom; on the contrary, hostile, aggressive, or humor that is in bad taste will have a negative impact on the likelihood of student engagement. Therefore, we need to choose the right type of humor and appropriate humor to enhance our own classroom interactions. It must be age-appropriate and culturally appropriate.

Similarly, **Robert J. Sidelingera and Nicholas T. Tatumb (2019)** investigate the different types of humor and guides us on the criteria of how to teach with humor and its appropriateness. There is an "Expectancy violation" theory that is helpful and may be summarized thus: "The theory is concerned with what happens when an expectation is violated, in this case, when instructors engage in inappropriate conversations in the classroom" (p. 120). In this study, the researchers exploited three instruments. The first is **Hullman's (2007)** 14-item list of conversational inappropriateness. Another part of the recent 2019 study assessed the

instructor's communication, and scores indicated the inappropriateness of each instructor's conversation. The second is the Instructional Dissent Scale based on **Goodboy (2011)** that contains 22 items to measure three dimensions of students' expression of dissent: rhetorical, expressive, and vengeful. The third is the 7-item Related Humor subscale, which was used to see the frequency of using touches of humor related to the course content. This 2019 study points out that relevant, appropriate humor use can offset any negative effect caused by instructor's inappropriate use of humor. The scales and typologies provided in the above studies are useful in choosing the types of humor to employ in the L2 classroom. From my point of view, it is necessary to consider that using content-relevant and comfortable humor and providing students with a positive perception are all very important.

Wanzer et al. (2006) gives us more information and strategies of humor for us to use in class. Those appropriate and relevant touches of humor for example include: interesting comments, stories, jokes, humorous visual effects like comics and media clips, and some entertaining classroom activities. It is true that the curriculum, syllabus, teaching content, and materials could contain some relevant touches of humor. This article left me wondering if we need to fabricate some jokes for specifically for teaching purposes or if spontaneous humor is enough? **Farhana and Vijay (2019)** have shown that the use of spontaneous humor can catch students' attention from distraction and let them refocus in class. In the study, all the instructors like to use humor, make their lessons more appealing, interesting, and enjoyable to students. The study reveals that it depends on teachers' own perceived effectiveness of humor and their knowledge of types of humor. Some teachers definitely know when to incorporate humor into some specific teaching situations as demonstrated by the study (p. 24). Through a survey of five award-winning teachers at a New Zealand university, the topics all have one thing in common,

that is, the use of humor as a teaching strategy. Seven types of humor were used by both observed and interviewees through Stimulated Recall Interviews (SRI). Although they used humor consciously or unintentionally during the class, the goal is to make the classroom atmosphere more harmonious and make students concentrate, and many types of humor and functions are not closely related, but this does not prevent teachers from Create different humorous and relaxed learning environments according to different classroom situations. From my perspective, some instructors do not have the awareness to use humor to teach, they are not familiar with how to use humor appropriately, they think they need to invest more time in teaching language content, not humor, or they feel they lack the sense of humor to deliver touches of humor deliberately to their students. They may also think they do not have age-appropriate touches of humor to target students' proficiency. They worry they may not connect with students or do not know if the humor is effective and will be appreciated or not. Even though we are facing a lot of such challenges and uncertainty, we still have some plausible practical skills to use humor provided in the studies outlined above.

Conclusions

Through reading these articles about humor in teaching, I have developed a deeper understanding of humor and the impact it may have on student perceptions or student engagement. In the past, my perception of humor was limited to verbal jokes, but I now realize there are more ways to add touches of humor into my teaching style. In addition, I have found that I can address other student learning styles with visual humor such as comics, physical gestures, and more. Humor can foster relaxation and offer fun insight not only when applied at the start of a class. The positive effects can influence the whole lesson. It is beneficial to both students and teachers.

I believe we should all adopt and infuse humor as an effective and active strategy and pedagogy method into teaching methodology. We should know how to use it, and when. Teachers should also know the appropriateness, boundaries, and practical strategies for humorous teaching with real-life teaching examples. For language learners, humor is also an important part of pragmatics and communicating effectively within a culture. On another level, as the above research has demonstrated, humorous teaching can stimulate and motivate student learning, reduce anxiety and tension, improve attendance, and make the classroom atmosphere more harmonious and interesting, inspiring better learning outcomes for students. At the same time, we must not overuse humor, we need to pay attention to its relevance and suitability, and use it reasonably. After implementing some of what I learned in selecting studies to highlight in this annotated bibliography, I am more capable of integrating humor into teaching and have begun to do so successfully in my own classroom.

LOOKING FORWARD

Teachers are life-long leaners themselves while also being game-changers. I intend to continue teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in the DLI setting, perhaps at other grade levels in the future, in part because I believe that if educators teach the same-aged or same proficiency level students for an extended period of time, the teaching methods, materials and thinking patterns of the teacher could become a little stagnant. For the past eight years, I have taught elementary-aged students in ESL/EFL and CFL and my goal is to expand my foreign language teaching abilities to students in secondary and post-secondary education.

In the future, I intend to continue my graduate studies in the scholarship of teaching and learning. I hope to continue to keep up with the latest pedagogies. I will participate in conferences, workshops, webinars, and other forms of professional development in order to learn new teaching innovations and the latest in educational technology that I can use in my classroom. In particular, I will continue to implement and advocate for increased use of technology in our classes as well as to advocate for a broader, more inclusive approach to teaching Chinese culture. On another level, I will continue advocating for the DLI program and for the teaching of Chinese language and culture in the US and beyond.

A teacher, not just a new teacher, needs to participate in pre-service teacher vocational training and professional development, observe the classroom, keep up on the latest research published in the field, and apply methodical theories into practice. Qualified veteran teachers should continue to be recharged throughout their careers by learning new approaches and techniques to continuously improve their teaching practice, and I will strive to do this. I will keep observing colleagues' classrooms, participating in teaching workshops and professional

conferences, and most of all self-reflecting on my own daily classroom teaching. Only by doing these things can I best help meet the growing learning needs of students. I have come a long way, but it is important to remember that as teachers, we always have a long way to go.

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