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Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs

by

Mengyao Chen

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

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Abstract

With the rapid development of language immersion programs in the U.S., the number of Chinese immersion programs has grown to 343 in 2021. Chinese immersion programs demand more Chinese immersion teachers who are capable of using the Chinese language to conduct both language and content teaching. However, a review of literature suggested that limited teacher education programs were founded that focused specifically on immersion, or Chinese immersion education. Moreover, literature review found that there are limited understandings on the Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions and needs on their teacher education programs. To address this knowledge gap, this qualitative study selectively interviewed a diverse group of Chinese immersion teachers in the U.S. The guided interview explored the teachers' perceptions of their pre-service teacher preparation and in-service training programs. This study focused on identifying the aspects that were beneficial and needed to support these teachers. The findings from this research could benefit both the Chinese immersion programs and teacher education programs by understanding how teacher preparation and training could improve the overall effectiveness of both teachers and immersion programs.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Many people believe that acquiring more than one language is an educational and social goal in many countries throughout the world and history (Kinberg, 2001). The proficiency in foreign languages and the deeper knowledge of other countries and cultures help people participate in this new global economy and confront the 21st-century challenges (Committee for Economic Development, 2006). With the increasing demands to learn foreign languages, the United States of American Department of Education provided grants to promote foreign language proficiencies by developing the corresponding language programs (Jackson & Malone, 2009; Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011).

Different from traditional foreign language learning programs, language immersion programs use the target language as the medium to teach content knowledge, while students learn their majority subject matters through their second, foreign, heritage, or indigenous language (Lyster, 2007). Immersion programs also conducted content-based language instructions and taught the school curriculum in the foreign language, so the students would learn both the subject matter and the target language at the same time (Johnson & Swain, 1997). The major goals for immersion programs were developing students' high levels of language proficiencies and academic performances in both native and target languages (Lindholm & Aclan, 1991). The first foreign language immersion program was founded in 1965 in Quebec, Canada (Genesee, 1985). Based on the experience of the first immersion program and other similar programs in Europe and Asia, foreign language immersion programs became popular in the 1990s in the United States of America (USA) (Johnson & Swain, 1997). The concept was extended to younger students, K-12 or even Pre-school-12 programs. In the 1990s and early 2000s, both the federal

government and the U.S. private sectors began to financially support the development of new programs that used these teaching methods (Reyhner, 2003). In 2021, more than 3600 Dual Language Immersion programs were registered in the U.S (Roberts, 2021).

Beyond traditional language programs (e.g., Spanish, French), the schools in the U.S. began to offer less commonly taught languages (e.g., Chinese), as learning Chinese as a foreign language became a popular choice around the world. Mandarin Chinese is the most widely-spoken first language in the world (Stewart & Livaccari, 2010; Wang & Ruan, 2016). Chinese immersion education provided Chinese language learners an alternative choice to learn Mandarin Chinese (Fortune & Ju, 2017). Chinese immersion programs (CITs) gradually gained their reputation and as of September, 2021 there were 343 programs in the U.S (Weise, 2021).

Following the rapid development of CIPs in the U.S., there has been an increase in demand for qualified Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) (Freeman et al., 2014). There have been constant struggles faced by immersion programs aimed at recruiting qualified teacher candidates due to the uniqueness of immersion education, inadequate immersion preparation programs, and the lack of understanding by the school districts about the teacher's preparedness for immersion education (Freeman-Nepay, 2017; Met & Lorenz, 1997; Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005). The shortage of qualified and certified CITs challenged CIPs as well (Chen, 2019). Therefore, the preparation and training of CITs are been viewed as one of the significant challenges in Chinese Foreign Language (CFL) teaching area (Wang, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

With increasing demand for customized teacher education programs and professional development opportunities for Chinese immersion teachers, it is important to explore what areas

are needed for pre- and in-service Chinese immersion teachers to be better prepared for teaching in K-12 immersion environment. Limited research was found related to Chinese immersion teachers (CITs)' perspectives of their teaching preparation and training programs as indicated in literature. Owing to the recent institutionalization of Chinese Immersion Programs (CIPs) in the U.S., it is essential to understand Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of their current teacher education programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out more information related to Chinese immersion teachers (CITs)' perspectives of their teacher preparation and training programs. This study will gather Chinese immersion teachers educational background and training experiences. This study will also identify key components and needs based on empirical results collected from in-service K-12 Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions towards their teaching education programs, which will aim at improving the level of preparedness of CITs in their teaching assignments.

The research results will give immersion program administrators, especially of Chinese immersion programs, insights for adjusting their professional development and providing corresponding support for immersion teachers. This study will also provide teacher educators in higher education with valuable insights into designing and modifying their current curricula of teacher preparation programs to accommodate the needs of immersion teachers.

Research Questions

This research study will be guided by a set of research questions. Those research questions are listed below:

1. What do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their immersion teaching assignment?
2. What do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs on supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?
3. What do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of a study mean that researchers make specific choices based on the characteristics of the study, which can be controlled by the researcher (Simon & Goes, 2013; Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). Delimitations of this study included:

1. The Chinese immersion teachers that will be included in the study are located in Manhattan, New York, because this location provides the researcher with the largest number of Chinese immersion programs per 10-mile square and comprehensive sample choices among both public and private programs. Hence, respondents from both public and private programs will be selected.
2. The effect of educational and other government policies from different states/cities on the Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions will not be studied in this research.
3. Only the perceptions of the Chinese immersion teachers will be included. Administrators will not be part of the study.

4. The researcher was working as a Chinese immersion teacher when she conducted this study, which helps to identify potential bias. Also, because of this fact the researcher implemented strategies to remain neutral and unbiased during the research process.

Background of the Researcher

The researcher conducting this study served as a Chinese immersion teacher for four years. The researcher attended teacher preparation programs both during her bachelor's degree in China and master's degree in the U.S. As a Chinese immersion teacher, the challenges and needs from her teaching experience initiated the researcher's aspiration to study how to better prepare and support Chinese immersion teachers. The researcher will analyze the findings of this study from a teacher's perspective. By providing this background information of the researcher, the readers will better understand the context in which the researcher is coming from.

Definition of the Terms

In order to clarify the discussion in this study, terms are defined as follows:

1. Immersion education: "is an organized curriculum designed to provide second language instruction to majority language students at no cost to their academic achievement and native language development" (Day & Shapson, 1996b, p. 13).
2. Minority language: a language other than the one spoken by the majority of people in a given regional or national context, for example, Spanish in the U.S., Basque in Spain, English in Japan (CARLA, 2003).
3. Majority language: the language spoken by the majority of people in a given regional or national context, for example, English in the U.S., Spanish in Spain, Japanese in Japan (CARLA, 2003).

4. L1 = First language (CARLA, 2003).
5. L2 = Second language (CARLA, 2003).
6. Second Language: a language that plays an important role in a particular country or region other than one's first language (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).
7. Foreign Language: the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one's native language (Gass, 2013).

Summary

This study will be presented in five chapters. Chapter I consists of an introduction of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, delimitation of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter II contains a review of related literature that introduce the characteristics of language immersion programs and current Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. It further examines how the essential elements in language immersion teacher education correlate with current Chinese immersion teachers' challenges and needs. Chapter III presents the research design and the methodology of the study, including participants, instrumentation, as well as data collections and analysis procedures. Chapter IV provides the findings from the study, and Chapter V delineated the summary, conclusion, and the recommendations for future studies.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This literature review was conducted following the general method described in Roberts (2010) and Whittemore and Knafl (2005). The initial screening stage identified over 100 published studies regarding immersion education. These pieces of literature were classified according to their targeted language settings. During the extraction stage, the background information of the topic was obtained from the studies around the immersion education. Results from the publications on Chinese immersion education were analyzed specifically to study the existing knowledge and determine the research problems of this study. Lastly, results from the studies about the immersion education in other languages were selectively extracted to compare with the Chinese immersion education as supplementary information for this literature review.

Language Immersion Programs

Since the 1970s, immersion education has been proved as a successful tool for early language learning (Genesee, 1978). The first foreign language immersion program was founded in 1965 in Quebec, Canada (Genesee, 1985). Scholars like Genesee (1994); Johnson and Swain (1997) have stated that the initial immersion program aimed to equip English-speaking Canadian children with French proficiency, as French was spoken by the majority of Quebec's population. Later a group of parents promoted this bilingual education, which enabled English-speaking children to receive their entire instruction in French at the beginning of kindergarten and learn their first-language literacy skills starting in Grade 2 (Johnson & Swain, 1997). This model improved the target language proficiencies of the immersion students successfully; thus, immersion programs started to be progressively recognized.

Inspired by Canada's French immersion programs, other countries adopted language immersion programs to better serve the majority speaking population in different cultural contexts (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Language immersion programs emerged in the metropolitan areas in the United States and grew significantly in the past 35 years (Peng, 2016; Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011). American Councils Research Center (ARC)'s report of Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs in the U.S. names over 3600 DLI programs in the forty-four states across the U.S. during the 2021-2022 school year. The top states that provided DLI were distributed in California, Texas, New York, Utah, and North Carolina (Roberts, 2021).

Defining Language Immersion

Lyster (2007) stated that immersion students learned the majority of their subjects through various second, foreign, heritage, or indigenous language mediums. In addition, the students received a certain amount of instruction through the medium of a shared primary language, which normally has the dominating status in the community.

To further understand the definition of immersion education, Genesee (1994) found that immersion education emphasized content-based academic instruction in addition to learning the second language, which made it unique among other foreign language programs. Other research also verified that foreign language immersion programs aimed to teach the target language by integrating the content knowledge and immersing students in the language environment (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Thus, in qualified language immersion programs, at least 50% of the subject-matter instruction must be taught through the target language (Tedick et al., 2011b). By doing this, the goals of immersion programs developing students: 1) high levels of language proficiency and psychosocial competence, 2) normal-to-superior academic performance in both

languages, 3) positive cross-cultural attitudes could be achieved. These goals agreed with many research findings (e.g., Campbell, 1984; Genesee, 1987; Lindholm & Aclan, 1991).

Types of Language Immersion Programs. Tedick et al. (2011b) categorized immersion programs into three types: one-way foreign language immersion, two-way bilingual immersion, and indigenous language immersion.

The one-way (foreign language/full/total) immersion programs enroll the students with zero or minimum immersion language proficiency and aim to achieve students' academically bi/multilingualism and bi/multi-literacy proficiencies (Tedick et al., 2011a). To achieve these goals, one-way immersion programs provide lower grades (K-2) students with 100% of the target language instruction time; students are taught in the target language for any given school day (De Courcy, 2002). In detail, teachers act as monolingual speakers and have the tendency to respond to the students in target language (Campbell, 1984). Fortune (2012), for example, stated that in the Chinese one-way total immersion program, students' native language may not be used as an instructional language until grade 2-5. Therefore, students learn the subject-matters, such as math, science and social studies in the target language (Stewart & Livaccari, 2010).

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs are also known as bilingual immersion and two-way bilingual programs (Christian et al., 1997). In the TWI programs, half of the class is consist of language majority (English dominant) speakers, while the other half comprises of language minority (target language dominant) speakers (Met & Livaccari, 2012; Stewart & Livaccari, 2010). TWI aims to help students achieve high levels of proficiency for both native and target languages, high academic performance, as well as cross-cultural understanding by providing the students with content area and language arts instructions in both languages (Christian, 1996;

Christian et al., 1997). In the TWI programs, the two languages are used equally for instructions and students learn their new language through natural social interactions (de Jong, 2016; Stewart & Livaccari, 2010).

The Effectiveness of Language Immersion Programs

Researchers have identified the effectiveness and limitations of immersion programs and whether or not they achieve the following goals:

Language Proficiency. Research has demonstrated that language majority students in Immersion Program developed native-like comprehension and fluency level as well as increased second language proficiency, and in the meantime increased second language proficiency while maintaining and developing their native language (Choi et al., 2018; Fortune, 2012; Howe, 2012; Met & Livaccari, 2012). Day and Shapson (1996a) found that this was achieved by developing immersion education's curriculum, which was designed to maintain language-majority students' native language academic achievement but using the second language as a medium to conduct instruction. In this case, compared with other forms of foreign language programs, language immersion was identified as the most effective approach for the students to achieve higher language proficiencies and gain more complex-functional second language skills (Fortune & Tedick, 2003; Genesee, 1987, 1994; Met & Lorenz, 1997; Stewart & Livaccari, 2010). Note that here, language skills included listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Swain, 1998). Within these skill areas, immersion students' listening was the most competent skill and achieved near-native proficiency. Their reading comprehension was almost equivalent to that of native speakers (MacFarlane & Wesche, 1995; Pawley, 1985).

Although the above researchers believed immersion students became proficient in the target language, other studies also argued that immersion students did not achieve full proficiency in some language skill areas. As Cohen (1996) and Cummins (2000) indicated previously, immersion students developed near-native listening and reading skills. However, the same studies also pointed out the gaps in their foreign language speaking and writing skills. Specifically, immersion students' speaking was the weakest of the four skills. Although immersion students gained their language fluency and could communicate in the target language effectively, their usage of the target language contained lexical errors, thus resulting in a lack of grammatical accuracy (Day & Shapson, 1989; Kinberg, 2001; Lyster, 1987). Beyond grammatical accuracy, immersion students' target language lexicon and sentence structure were both reduced and less complex (Cohen, 1996; Fortune, 2012; Pawley, 1985). Moreover, immersion students tended to think and use the words/language structures in their native language by using the online translations (Cohen, 1996).

Academic Performance. A substantial amount of research has pointed out the increase of immersion students' academic learning slope and their higher achievement scores compared to the students in regular school programs (Day & Shapson, 1996b; Lindholm-Leary & Howard, 2008; Zhou & Li, 2015b). For example, Lindholm-Leary (2011) stated that Two-way Immersion (TWI) students' academic performance at/above grade level, and comparable/well-superior to their peers in non-TWI programs. By doing so, TWI students met the goal of accomplishing high academic achievement while learning content through two languages (Lindholm-Leary, 2011). Language minority students can also achieve similar or better scholastic achievement than the language majority students (Day & Shapson, 1996b).

However, evidence showed the dependency of students' abilities to transfer the subject content from language to language were dependent on their subject matter language proficiencies (Lindholm & Aclan, 1991). Cohen (1996) provided an example for this situation, some of the immersion students have to ponder in their native language to solve math word problems written in their target language. In this case, students need satisfactory reading skills in their target language to do the online translation of the tasks (Cohen, 1996). The immersion students must develop full academic language proficiencies in both languages to accomplish the academic achievement that was mentioned previously, as the students' academic achievements were also limited by their subject-matter language proficiencies (Lindholm & Aclan, 1991).

Cognitive Development/Psychosocial and Intercultural Competence. As indicated previously, immersion programs aimed to develop students' high levels of psychosocial and intercultural competencies (Lindholm & Aclan, 1991; Met & Livaccari, 2012). Specifically, immersion students developed their social competency and interactional skills in the process of learning the second language (Cekaite, 2017). In the meantime, they also acquired cross-cultural competencies and global perspectives in the immersion setting (Day & Shapson, 1996b; Howe, 2012). The same research believed language immersion programs also produced some cognitive benefits beyond fostering students' psychosocial and intercultural competencies. For example, immersion students acquired better cognitive skills in areas of mental flexibility, divergent thinking, inhibitory control, and problem-solving than those obtained by the monolingual students (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1990; Bialystok, 2001; Lazaruk, 2007; Nicolay & Poncelet, 2013; Stewart & Livaccari, 2010; Zhou & Li, 2015b). Therefore, immersion programs could shape substantial cognitive foundations for immersion students (Howe, 2012).

Challenges of Language Immersion Programs. The challenges faced by language immersion programs included staffing (the shortage of qualified or certified language teachers), curriculum development, and program articulation (Fortune, 2012; Hickey & de Mejía, 2014). Hickey and de Mejía (2014) explains “staff selection and training” as being one of the most challenging issues in the immersion programs. It has been repeatedly stated in previous literature that due to the inadequate immersion teacher preparation programs, finding the teacher candidates who were well prepared for immersion teaching became a difficult task (Met & Lorenz, 1997; Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005). Therefore, according to these studies, immersion schools have a shortage of language, specialist and substitute teachers that meet the qualifications for immersion teaching. Before exploring immersion teachers’ qualifications, research illustrated the pre-requisites for qualified early immersion teachers were elementary education background and native/near-native bilingual proficiency in target language (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Met & Lorenz, 1997). Due to the shortage of immersion teacher candidates who met the academic qualifications and had additional preparations, the immersion programs modified their hiring criteria and gave the priority to hire teachers with strong language skills (Dolson, 1985; Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005; Walker & Tedick, 2000). Admittedly, this compromise caused the struggle of unqualified teachers in immersion teaching even though it temporarily relieves the recruiting crisis.

Met and Lorenz (1997) summarized two sources of the immersion staff: foreign language teachers trained for secondary schools and native speakers educated abroad. The foreign language teachers were equipped with target language proficiencies, skills, and cross-grades teaching/curricula knowledge. In the meantime, they understood the students’ challenges while

learning a new language. However, the foreign language teachers lacked content-related pedagogy preparations to teach subject-matter contents (Liao et al., 2017). The teachers hired abroad were native speakers, who brought authentic culture communications, global perspectives, and various pedagogy practices to the school, as they had experienced different pedagogical trainings abroad (Met & Lorenz, 1997; Romig, 2009). However, Zhou and Li (2015b) claimed that the foreign teachers' distinct pedagogical philosophies and expectations also brought about cultural conflicts in the community. The detailed issues of language immersion teachers will be discussed in the next theme.

The Characteristic and Challenges of Immersion Teaching

Every teacher possesses knowledge of curriculum and state standards; however, immersion teachers are urged to possess unique qualifications that non-immersion teachers are not required to have. Such qualifications include: 1) the pedagogy knowledge to design content-based lessons and to conduct both language and content instructions; 2) the skills to maintain the target language learning environment and to handle cross-cultural communications with parents and other staff members (Freeman-Nepay, 2017; Met & Lorenz, 1998; Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005). Details of the characteristics and challenges of immersion teachers will be reviewed in the following subsections.

Immersion Pedagogy Knowledge. Immersion teachers were identified as content and language teachers who were accountable to balance language and content instructions (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012). Specifically, immersion teachers served as constant target language models by integrating language with content. Thus, they can teach in a second language, and design their content-based lessons to encourage students to use the content to

achieve the second language development progress (Potowski, 2004; Stein & Schools, 1999). Note that language instructions included teaching language knowledge and skills, which pre-requested the bilingual immersion teachers to be equipped with native or native-like fluency in the target language to ensure the natural flow in the classroom (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Dolson, 1985; Johnson & Swain, 1997; Swain, 1998). As the students can naturally acquire the target language while extensive exposure to the content learning, immersion education could emphasize developing students' language and literacy skills systematically during the process of teaching content through the target language (Walker & Tedick, 2000). In this case, immersion teachers needed to design thematic classes and use contextual clues, body language, and manipulatives to achieve the new language acquisition progress (Met & Lorenz, 1998). In addition, they also needed to be equipped with the grammar knowledge to notice students' grammatical errors and provide feedback (Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005). On the other hand, content instruction consisted of teaching academic content such as mathematics and social studies (Swain, 1998). Therefore, immersion teachers needed to be accoutered with the content knowledge or serve as content experts, since they also needed to use the comprehensible input and negotiation of meaning extensively to convey subject matters (Lyster, 1998).

During the process of balancing content and language, immersion teachers encountered different challenges. The first challenge came from the second language acquisition process. According to the teachers in the two-way immersion programs, immersion students confronted linguistic challenges and frustrations when they failed to understand the target language during the acquisition process (Howard & Loeb, 1998). Thus, immersion teachers believed it was essential but challenging to match students' language levels with their cognitive development

levels, along with the alignment of curriculum and materials (Walker & Tedick, 2000). The second challenge, according to Freeman-Nepay (2017), was that immersion teachers were accountable to develop students' literacy skills and proficiency levels in the target language. In the meantime, immersion teachers were also obligated to ensure students' success in standardized tests administered in English within the same period compared to other non-immersion programs (Freeman-Nepay, 2017). To achieve the goals that were mentioned before, immersion teachers struggled with their teaching tasks and demanded more instructional time, planning periods, as well as resources that were well integrated with the content and language. However, it was hard for the immersion teachers to get available support on those struggles (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Freeman-Nepay, 2017; Walker & Tedick, 2000).

Target Language Environment and Cross-cultural Communication Skills. Foreign language immersion teachers supported the notion of building rich target language learning environments in addition to the pedagogy (Day & Shapson, 1996a). As the target language was not accessible to the majority of immersion students beyond the classrooms, immersion teachers should create a target language learning environment and include social tasks/tests to promote the usage of social/academic language by the students (Met & Lorenz, 1998). In this process, the teachers acted in monolingual roles and rarely spoke the students' first language to them in the immersion setting (Dolson, 1985).

Due to the misunderstandings caused by culture gaps, language immersion teachers identified that working with parents and American partners was another challenge beyond teaching (Wiggins et al., 2007; Zhou & Li, 2015b). For instance, the Two-way immersion teachers reported their challenges in collaborating with parents, and at the same time, helping the

parents understand the progress of achieving the second language proficiencies and academic goals (Howard & Loeb, 1998). The Chinese immersion teachers in the Two-way immersion program revealed their disadvantages when communicating with their American partners due to cultural differences (Zhou & Li, 2015b). Immersion teachers also addressed their pressure of external challenges and the feeling of isolation, especially those in the middle or high school immersion programs (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012).

Chinese Immersion Programs in the U.S.

As indicated previously, there were over 3600 Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs in the U.S. during the 2021-2022 school year (Roberts, 2021). The increase of Chinese immersion programs (CIPs) caused an increase in the number of foreign language immersion programs (Peng, 2016). According to the Mandarin Immersion Parents Council, the first total Chinese Immersion Program was built in San Francisco in 1981. The CIPs gradually gained their reputations and grew to a total of 343 schools in July 2021 (Weise, 2021).

With the growing number of CIPs, The Asia Society provided professional support and guidance, such as the introductory guide and resources to get up new CIPs and sustain programs' development (Asia Society, 2012; Everson, 2016). It would be a trend in the future to begin Chinese instructions at early age when students acquire the language at their best, the blossom of CIPs expected more students across the U.S choose to study Chinese at a younger age (Peng, 2016; Rhodes & Branaman, 1999). However, with the continuous development of CIPs, the programs and teachers both encountered different challenges.

Chinese Immersion Programs Issues

According to Met (2012), there were two sets of curricula in the Chinese immersion setting: 1) subject matter (content) curriculum; 2) Chinese language and literacy curriculum. These two sets of curricula were not developed by individual teachers (Ni & Na, 2016). Most of the schools and school districts developed their immersion curriculum based on national standards, state standards, or “common core” content to ensure the consistency of immersion programs across the states and insure immersion students’ comparable academic achievements with other non-immersion students (Met, 2012). The CIPs followed the district and school-level curricula and the existing English thematic topics but conducted content teaching in the Chinese language (Chen et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015b). In this case, the CIPs need to develop (adapt or translate) the subject-area content curricula to Chinese and develop a curriculum for Chinese language and literacy (Met, 2012).

Due to the special characteristics of the Chinese language and the short history of Chinese immersion, CIPs in the U.S. confronted some challenges different from other language immersion programs (Met & Livaccari, 2012). Beyond setting and aligning the curriculum for Chinese immersion, one of the challenges of CIPs was the shortage of engaging and high-quality materials, especially the deficit of teachers’ guides and teaching assistant materials, as well as the appropriate and systematic learning materials designed for content-based learning (Chen et al., 2017; Met & Livaccari, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015b). According to Zhou and Li (2015b), compared to the schools in China that had well-designed curriculum materials provided by the Chinese Ministry of Education, the CIPs lacked materials for Chinese immersion instruction. For example, CIPs needed authentic materials for the native speakers that had been created by the

native speakers, as the content and topics were based on students' readiness, interests, and learning styles (Lin, 2012; Ni & Na, 2016).

Beyond the distinct challenges, Chinese immersion programs (CIPs) shared some common obstacles with other language immersion programs. As mentioned before, a considerable challenge for many language immersion programs was finding the teacher candidates prepared specifically for the immersion settings (Met & Lorenz, 1997; Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005). No university-level immersion teacher preparation program existed before 2010 in the U.S, so CIPs recruited a certain amount of Chinese Foreign Language (CFL) teacher candidates to teach in the immersion setting. Note that the CFL teachers in the U.S. might include: 1) Native English speakers of CFL (Graduates of American university preparation programs for teachers); 2) Heritage teachers (Educated Chinese native speakers who had been residing in the U.S. and had or might have received teaching credentials); 3) Guest teachers (Chinese nationals who visited the school districts on a short-term visa through exchange educational arrangements) (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Peng, 2016). According to Bissell and Chang (2012) the teacher pool of commonly taught languages (French and Spanish) involved native and heritage language speakers, as well as the non-native speakers who were certified to teach. However, there were limited English-dominant teachers for the less commonly taught languages (Chinese and Japanese) due to the high linguistic and language proficiency prerequisites for teaching in the immersion setting (Bissell & Chang, 2012). In this case, CIPs mainly recruited heritage and guest CFL teachers, as CIPs struggled with recruiting the teachers who are proficient in Chinese language and have obtained teaching certificates even though they had less restrictive regulations (Chen et al., 2017).

As these teacher candidates were not prepared specifically for teaching in the immersion setting, they confronted different issues and challenges in their immersion teaching.

Chinese Immersion Teachers Issues

Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) encountered cross-cultural challenges during their Chinese immersion work, especially the teachers who came from the traditional and teacher-centered educational background confronted significant cultural differences and participant expectations (Fortune, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015a). As teachers develop their teaching knowledge, since being classroom students themselves, teachers' own educational experiences have essential impacts on forming their identities, teaching philosophies, and pedagogy developments (Flores & Day, 2006; Hall Haley & Ferro, 2011). In the meantime, Richards (1998) showed that teachers' perspectives towards teaching also have huge influences on the decision-making and practice during their teaching. However, according to Cody (2009), most of the immersion teachers did not attend immersion schools or have practicum experience in an immersion setting. In this case, behavior management, curriculum planning, and cross-cultural communication challenged CITs the most (Chen, 2019; Zhou & Austin, 2017). The detailed challenges and needs of those CITs will be explored in the following subsections.

Issues in Curriculum and Instruction. Curriculum planning and content teaching challenged CITs in general. In Chinese immersion programs, CITs needed to develop students' language and literacy proficiencies, and their abilities to use the Chinese language as a medium to access the academic content (Bissell & Chang, 2012). The following two challenges happened in the process of theme-based curriculum planning and content teaching. First, according to Chen et al. (2017), CITs struggled in integrating the theme content into Chinese language teaching.

Since the curriculum of the CIPs followed the existing English thematic topics, teaching the subject content in the Chinese language was difficult for children to understand (Chen et al., 2017). Secondly, there was a mismatch between CITs' backgrounds and their teaching duties in the U.S. Due to the inadequate instructional knowledge of math, social studies, and science, the CITs who didn't receive training on the skills to teach these subjects struggled with the subject area instructions (Liao et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015b).

Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) who were native Chinese speakers and educated in Chinese-speaking countries lacked the foreign language pedagogy. Their traditional teacher-centered philosophies didn't match the popular notion of the student-centered classroom in the USA (Chen et al., 2017). For example, a certain number of CITs emphasized rote and mechanical memorizations instead of conducting student-centered learning (Romig, 2009; Zhou & Li, 2016). However, the schools in the U.S. emphasized student-centered activities, in which students learned social skills and communicative languages through real-life tasks (Fortune, 2012; Hall Haley & Ferro, 2011). In this case, the CITs encountered cross-cultural challenges due to the mismatch between the students-centered learning approach and their experience and expectations in the traditional Chinese teacher-centered instructional approach (Chen, 2019; Zhao, 2007). As a Chinese immersion teacher, the author of this study had noticed that many CITs still conduct teacher-centered instructions, as they believed that teachers could transfer knowledge to the students and students would not learn much in the student-centered classroom. To address this concern, Zhang (2016) clarified that real student-centered classrooms created meaningful practice opportunities and tasks, which will help the students transfer their declarative knowledge to autonomous knowledge in the language acquisition process.

Although Chinese immersion programs (CIPs) provided professional learning communities and/or professional development opportunities for the CITs, they still believed the CIPs provided insufficient training for teaching the Chinese language (Chen et al., 2017). Therefore, Zhou and Li (2015a) suggested that CITs needed an integrated, subject-matter-driven language program that specially prepared the immersion teachers to simultaneously address the content, language, and literacy developments of their students.

Behavior Management Issues. Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) tended to experience difficulties in managing classroom disciplines and guiding the student-centered environment as they were not familiar with the culture of the United States and had high participant expectations (e.g., respectful) than the teachers who were not from Confucian cultures countries (Chen et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2016). In general, Chinese language teachers valued the strength of the traditional teacher-centered relationships between teachers and students, which believed that teachers have absolute authority and that respecting teachers was a classroom norm (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Kang & Chang, 2016; Xu, 2012). Thus, classroom/misbehavior management was a major concern/challenge for Chinese language teachers in student-centered classrooms (Chen, 2019; Liao et al., 2017; Liu, 2012). As CITs had the same Chinese cultural expectations (e.g., respecting the teacher) for students, they were more likely to use the same strategies that worked well with Chinese students' classroom behaviors, such as being vocally strict in Chinese terms or using nonverbal interventions (e.g., giving a glance) (Chen, 2019; Romig, 2009; Zhou, 2013; Zhou & Li, 2015a). However, Romig (2009) argued that these strategies were ineffective in changing students' actions as 1) CITs and students have different cultural understandings; 2) Students did not understand the language in immersion settings. The author also indicated

these two situations might happen simultaneously. In this case, the behavior management strategies that Chinese teachers used cannot be transferred and work effectively on American students, as the latter demanded distinct and unsubtle management approaches, such as the positive discipline methods (Chen, 2019; Jin & Cortazzi, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2016).

It was essential to encourage CITs to understand the cultural differences in developing classroom management strategies (Bissell & Chang, 2012). Specifically, American culture inspired students to choose their learning styles without regulating how they should behave and learn, whereas Chinese culture has rigorous requirements for conducting appropriate learnings (Chen, 2019; Zhao, 2007). Therefore, to help the CITs gradually adapt to the western approaches to discipline, CITs had to change the classroom management approaches that were used in the Chinese culture to an approach that integrates the local culture for implementing disciplinary measures (Romig, 2009; Zhou & Li, 2016).

Cross-Cultural Communication. Many Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) reported their obstacles in communicating with parents and American colleagues (Liao et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015b). Chen (2019) illustrated that CITs consumed a certain amount of time to communicate with the American parents and help the parents understand teachers' curriculum perspectives as CITs and American parents had different expectations on learning. For example, American parents valued the self-promotion, creativity, and critical thinking of the students, so they gave students more freedom (Hue & Li, 2008; Young, 1996). On the contrary, CITs promoted students' academic achievements, so they tended to challenge students (Pan et al., 1994). Ren's (2017) study also found that due to the shortage of teacher training on preparing the

teachers for the culture shock and cross-cultural working, the parents of Chinese immersion programs had shown their concerns on parent-teachers cross-cultural communication.

According to Zhou and Li (2015b), CITs also reported that misconceptions and complications occurred during their communication with the American colleagues due to cultural differences. Note that cultural differences existed between the indirect expressions in the Chinese culture and active expressions in the American culture (Bissell & Chang, 2012). Therefore, teachers' competencies in adapting culture shock and achieving acculturation were influenced by the school's cultural knowledge, which was being modified and adjusted to suit the mainstream classrooms in the U.S. (Romig, 2009). Thus, Bissell and Chang (2012) found that it was essential to help both English and Chinese faculties avoid misunderstandings by engaging them in recognizing each other's culture.

Everson (2016) reported that American education required different preparation and development for immersion teachers than the traditional Chinese language teacher preparation approaches to sustain immersion programs' development. The preparation/training programs were crucial to foster the cross-cultural competence of CITs (Chen, 2019; Zhou & Li, 2015b). Specifically, according to Bissell and Chang (2012), these programs should include curriculum and instruction, classroom management, social-emotional development, and communication and technology to meet the needs of immersion teaching.

Language Immersion Teacher Education

After exploring immersion teachers' characteristics and challenges, researchers further revealed the preparation and professional development needs of immersion teachers; these were expected to be addressed in the current immersion teacher preparation programs. As a result,

Canada conducted a national survey among immersion teachers. The results indicated that whereas 31% of the 2000 respondents received immersion teaching preparation after their pre-service, 67% of them did not receive pre-service preparation specialized for teaching immersion (Cody, 2009; Day & Shapson, 1996a; Erben, 2004). The high percentages of immersion teachers that did not receive pre-service training advised the researcher to revisit the existing immersion teacher preparation and professional development opportunities in the United States. According to Cammarata and Tedick (2012), the University of Hawaii-Hilo established a Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program, which was the only immersion-specific pre-service program in the United States (Wilson & Kawai'ae'a, 2007). Moreover, there were also programs in some areas (e.g., California) that provided bilingual certificate to bilingual, elementary-licensed teachers. However, these programs were not designed to prepare teachers specifically for immersion teaching (CARLA, 2019). Shortly before 2010, the University of Minnesota started to offer a Dual Language and Immersion Certificate Program that targeted one-way, two-way, and indigenous immersion teachers (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; CARLA, 2019). After exploring the existing programs, Erben (2004) claimed that immersion teacher education should consist of (1) the initial preparation programs that provide pre-service teachers professional education, and (2) the professional development programs where in-service teachers can gain competencies in additional areas. The following subsections will explore more on these two areas.

Pre-Service Language Immersion Teacher Preparation Programs

The growing amount of immersion programs and the demand for “highly qualified” immersion teachers led to the increased needs for pre-service immersion teaching programs;

thus, some states required universities to provide this type of preparation for future immersion teachers (Cody, 2009; Freeman et al., 2014; Salomone, 1992). However, even though universities started to develop different immersion preparation programs, the inadequacy of these programs still represented a challenge for the field of immersion education (Fortune, 2012; Fortune & Tedick, 2008). Note that, according to Cammarata and Tedick (2012), the elementary or secondary subject-matter education programs failed to prepare immersion teachers with critical/meaningful integration of language and content instructions in immersion education. For example, some teachers who were proficient in the target language with elementary teaching licenses started their immersion work with limited immersion pedagogy knowledge, thus making them unqualified (Cody, 2009; Lenker & Rhodes, 2007).

Immersion teacher education programs should provide coherent and distinct instructions to prepare immersion teachers, and should not be identified as the extension of foreign language/general teacher education programs (e.g., adding some isolated and mandatory courses) (Day & Shapson, 1993, 1996a; Erben, 2004). For instance, the pre-service immersion teacher training could offer (1) the background and history knowledge of immersion schoolings, (2) the philosophy and concept of immersion teaching, and (3) the pedagogy and techniques of teaching immersion classes (Collinson, 1989; Erben, 2004; Koshiyama, 1995). Beyond this basic knowledge about immersion education, researchers proposed several key components for immersion teacher education based on the established immersion education programs in Canada and the prototype immersion teacher training model in the U.S. (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Day & Shapson, 1996b; Erben, 2001; Erben, 2004; Koshiyama, 1995; Lapkin et al., 1990;

Majhanovich & Fish, 1988). To summarize, university immersion teacher preparation programs could help immersion teachers develop their knowledge in the following three dimensions.

Understanding the Curriculum and Instruction in the Immersion Setting. Erben (2004) asserted that curriculum and pedagogy studies were essential in the immersion teacher preparation programs. Curriculum studies included various related areas, such as Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and L1 and L2 Language Arts, etc. As mentioned by Johnson and Swain (1997), one of the core features of immersion education was that the immersion curriculum paralleled with the local L1 curriculum. In this case, immersion education programs should prepare immersion teachers with the knowledge of curriculum design, specifically, the knowledge of using foreign language instructions in different subject-matters to present and conduct learning activities within the core curriculum (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Majhanovich & Fish, 1988). In the meantime, according to Hickey and de Mejía (2014), the knowledge of adapting curriculum to the immersion setting was also necessary to ensure the teachers' planning of integrating language learning with appropriate activities and interactions in the immersion setting. Beyond curriculum studies, the strong foundations of immersion teachers in pedagogical approaches and second language acquisition were also crucial to give them insights on how the students' first-language development affected their learning and acquisition of a second language. Therefore, teachers would be able to evaluate the effectiveness of their second language instructions (Hickey & de Mejía, 2014; Majhanovich & Fish, 1988; Slapac & Dorner, 2013).

Understanding and Accommodating the Immersion School Environment. Bernhardt and Schrier (1992) reported that it was essential to develop immersion teachers' understanding of

instructional classroom management techniques and communication skills that were unique to the immersion setting. Effective teachers should be aware of students' age-relevant issues and support each student's development (Bissell & Chang, 2012). Specifically, immersion teachers demanded knowledge and empathy in child development to better understand how children learn in every phase of their lives (Hickey & de Mejía, 2014; Majhanovich & Fish, 1988; Slapac & Dorner, 2013).

The pre-service immersion teachers should be equipped with the knowledge of classroom management, as it would prepare immersion teachers to face the challenges posed by the U.S. students (Badley, 2009; Freeman et al., 2014; Zhou & Li, 2015b). In the classroom management progress, students might not fully comprehend the instructional language. Cody (2009) illustrated that since kindergarten or first-grade students have limited target language proficiencies to construct meanings, immersion teachers reported challenges of using the target language to explain daily routines to both groups. Hence, immersion teachers believed that they needed to acquire the classroom management strategies or activities that were appropriate for immersion students (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992). In addition, some of the immersion teachers had diverse cultural backgrounds as well as expectations and classroom management strategies for the classroom procedures; as a result, appropriate classroom management skills, compatible with both home and target culture, were needed (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Bissell & Chang, 2012; Evertson & Weinstein, 2013; Met & Lorenz, 1997). As noted above, pre-service teachers needed the studies of classroom management, but these studies were inadequate and still developing to be effective in teacher preparation programs for several states (Freeman et al., 2014).

Immersion teachers reported their challenges to help parents and communities understand the uniqueness of immersion programs as well as the cross-culture, linguistic and academic goals in the immersion setting (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Majhanovich & Fish, 1988; Howard & Loeb, 1998; Walker & Tedick, 2000). The same researchers believed that immersion teacher preparation programs could develop immersion teachers' cross-cultural communication skills, which would be very beneficial for teachers to become experts in articulating immersion programs' goals, classroom activities, and children's progress to the parents and communities. Beyond conferring with parents and communities, immersion teachers also collaborated with colleagues and reported to their school supervisors. In this case, the effective communication skills of immersion teachers could avoid misunderstandings and build positive relationships with parents, communities, colleagues, and supervisors (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Majhanovich & Fish, 1988).

Field Practicum Experience. According to Erben (2004) the practicum experience was also one of the core components in many pre-service immersion teacher educational programs. Immersion teachers believed that a full semester's mandatory field experience in the immersion environment, especially the observation of instructional and classroom management techniques that were unique to the immersion milieu, would prepare the teachers with the skills to make the transition from pre-service teachers to in-service teachers (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992; Salomone, 1992). For instance, immersion schools could connect student-teachers with the working-teachers and provide more periods of apprenticeship for them, so the student-teachers were able to observe and reflect on effective classroom management (Chesley & Jordan, 2012; Howard & Loeb, 1998). Wiggins et al. (2007) claimed that the comforts of teacher candidates with teaching

in multicultural classrooms and with interacting with parents was greatly increased, as practicum provided the teacher candidates with the related field experience beyond teachings, such as attending faculty meetings and parents-teacher conferences.

In-Service Language Immersion Teacher Training and Development Programs

Due to the various requirements for immersion teachers and the lack of effective academic pre-service programs, immersion teachers highly demanded in-service professional development as a form of immersion teacher education (Cody, 2009; De Courcy, 1997; Hickey & de Mejía, 2014; Met & Lorenz, 1997). As immersion teachers received most of their training after they started teaching in the immersion programs, the effective in-service training and mentoring also provided immersion teachers with ongoing support (Hickey, 1997, 2007; Hickey & de Mejía, 2014; Met & Lorenz, 1998).

As it was mentioned previously, there was a survey that explored the professional development needs of immersion teachers, which revealed that 57% of the respondents had considerable demands on the training of teaching L2 language arts. In the meantime, the training of immersion pedagogy was also identified as the requirement for professional development (Cody, 2009; Day & Shapson, 1996a; Erben, 2004). In this case, Howard and Loeb (1998) reported that immersion programs could provide more curriculum assistance for these new teachers who taught in the minority. For example, the immersion teachers needed observations, discussions, demonstrations, and coaches for the content-based instructions (Crandall & Tucker, 1990; Koshiyama, 1995). Fortune (2012) noted that the native and non-native immersion teachers demanded continuous immersion language supports beyond curriculum and pedagogy training.

Hickey and de Mejía (2014) reported that immersion programs could also involve experienced and effective practitioners to share their expertise and provide high-quality and systematic ongoing training to the immersion teachers. For example, to build “well-prepared teaching professionals”, the qualified in-service teachers could provide contracted coaching services for the pre-service teachers on both classroom instructions and communication to parents (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Chesley & Jordan, 2012). Cammarata and Tedick (2012) claimed that immersion programs could also support teachers by involving the expert curriculum staff, such as the curriculum coordinators and instructional coaches, to develop curricular frameworks and mentorship programs. Therefore, it could be concluded that both the immersion teachers and the immersion programs could benefit from improved practice on communication, discussion, and evaluation among peer coaching and team meetings, which agreed with the previous literature (Met & Lorenz, 1998).

In summary, the shortage of immersion teacher preparation and development programs for qualified and effective teachers in immersion methodology would be a significant challenge for language immersion education in the future (Hickey & de Mejía, 2014).

Summary

Chapter II explored the current studies on immersion education, especially those conducted about Chinese immersion education. Chinese immersion programs encountered difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers who were trained and certified specifically for immersion teaching. Based on the information presented so far, it can be concluded that cross-cultural issues and challenges confronted by the case of the Chinese immersion teachers are the following: curriculum and instruction, classroom management, and communication. To address

these challenges, empirical evidence was used to review the key elements in the pre-service and in-service immersion teachers' preparation programs, according to current immersion teachers' challenges and needs. To investigate Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of their teaching preparation and training programs, the researcher will interview the selected Chinese immersion teachers in Manhattan. Chapter III will present this study's research design, participants, the instrument for data collection and analysis in detail.

Chapter III: Methodology

With the rapid advancement of Chinese Immersion Programs (CIPs), the preparation and training for qualified and effective Chinese immersion teachers (CITs) represent a significant challenge for language immersion education. Most of the CITs come from various teacher preparation and training programs and started their career with inadequate teacher preparation and training that was specifically designed for immersion teaching assignments as the corresponding immersion teacher preparation and training programs are still developing. Therefore, CIT's perceptions are essential to obtain a better picture of the preparedness of the current Chinese immersion teachers. However, limited research was found related to the current CITs' perspectives of their teacher preparation and training. The purpose of this study is to understand and explain CITs' perspectives and reflect on their teacher education programs. The data collected may be used by the administrators of CIPs in the United States to adjust their professional developments and to provide corresponding support to help CITs overcome cross-cultural challenges. The data will also assist in higher educational institutes designing or modifying teacher preparation programs' current curricula, especially within the immersion setting.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their immersion teaching assignment?

2. What do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs on supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?
3. What do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

Participants

The selected participants for the survey will be in-service Chinese immersion teachers who are currently working in Manhattan's Chinese immersion programs during the 2020-2021 school year. The purposive sampling technique will be employed in selecting Chinese immersion teachers who will serve as the respondents in the study according to their similarities. This technique, as described by Tongco (2007), is effective to identify the individuals who are knowledgeable and willing to act as a guide within a certain cultural domain after the researcher determined the desired information.

The participant's selection is made according to the criterion strategy in purposeful sampling which will identify and select all individuals that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Palinkas et al., 2015). According to Schoch (2020), the multiple cases study is effective to use a purposeful sampling method to select samples. The purposeful sampling helps to explore in-depth a phenomenon and information-rich cases (Patton, 2014). The goal for using purposeful sampling in this study is to find individuals, who are Chinese immersion teachers, to provide insights into their teacher preparation programs. In this case, the predetermined criteria for the participants were as follows: (1) the selected teachers were teaching the Chinese language or using the Chinese language as a tool to teach subject matters (e.g., Mathematics, Science,

Social Studies, etc.); (2) the selected teachers were teaching in different grade levels because this study took into account different perspectives from the teachers' various grade levels; (3) the selected teachers attended different pre-service teacher preparation programs, thus various background characteristics among these participants could reflect the wider Chinese immersion teacher population.

As this study will explore Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives, the predetermined criteria for the participants would be (1) Chinese immersion teachers who are currently teaching in Chinese immersion programs and using the Chinese language as a tool to teach at least one subject (e.g., Chinese language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, etc.); (2) The Chinese immersion teachers who are currently working in different Chinese immersion programs. In this case, the common and unique preparation and training among these teachers could be explored. As this study will only focus on participants' teacher preparation and training programs, their age, gender, ethnicity, and psychological condition will not be considered to have an impact on the research results.

Using this purposive sampling technique, six Chinese immersion teachers will be pooled from a total of a hundred Chinese immersion teachers in Manhattan, New York City, New York State. Manhattan district will be chosen as it will provide the researcher with more sample selection options and varieties. For example, the area size of Manhattan is 22.82 mi², however, Manhattan has six Chinese Immersion Programs in 2019. In this case, Manhattan has 2.62 Chinese immersion programs per 10-mile square, which is the densest distribution among all the other districts in the U.S. The six schools include both public and private Chinese immersion

programs, which is another unique feature of Manhattan. Because of these above-mentioned advantages, the study location will be chosen in Manhattan.

This study will only involve six Chinese immersion teachers as the sample could be as narrow as selecting the particular person or a small set of people to provide a detailed perspective of a particular experience and context (Byrne, 2004). Although the sample will be narrow, the various background characteristics among these participants could represent the wider Chinese immersion teacher population. As each individual came from different teacher preparation programs, the interviewees do not compare with each other.

The Instrument for Data Collection and Analysis

This study will use a qualitative design method to obtain data from selected participants. This qualitative design approach will be conducted through the use of qualitative interviews. The qualitative interview would be useful to access participants' attitudes and values which will enable the study to explore the overlooked voices and experiences that are oftentimes neglected in the research design process (Byrne, 2004). This interview protocol will be designed as a semi-structured type which will aim at providing opportunities for each participant to narrate their experiences while yielding complete stories not related to the research focus (Galletta, 2013).

This semi-structured study will comprise a set of guiding questions that will be formulated and ordered according to the purpose of the research. In the meantime, according to the data reduction frameworks of Sandelowski (1995), this study can utilize a structured interview guide to segment data, thus the topics and questions in the guide will be the initial data organizing framework. In this case, this study will use a couple of essential questions in the semi-structured interview to define the areas to be explored (Gill et al., 2008).

The interview guide will consist of three sections. Section one will collect Chinese immersion teachers' professional and cultural background information, such as participants' level of education, professional qualifications, as well as demographic and language information. Section two will explore participants' pre-service teacher preparation programs by gathering their experience and opinions. The desired information includes what kind of preparation did the current Chinese immersion teachers have received and the knowledge they have learned that can be transferred and work effectively in immersion teaching. Section three will focus on Chinese immersion teachers' in-service professional development programs. The participants will identify the most beneficial topics or aspects in their training program that helped them in their immersion teaching.

This semi-structured interview format will be delivered as an open-ended question format and the study will be flexible on the wording of particular interview questions. In this case, the interviews will be more personalized, and the participants will have more opportunities to respond elaborately. The researcher also has more opportunities to ask follow-up questions based on participant responses. The participants will be free to respond to these open-ended questions as they like. This will enable the researcher and participants to co-produce the data throughout the interaction (Mason 1996). The obtained data are usually in form of notes or recordings.

Data Collection Procedures

This study will collect data beginning in September 2020. First, the first two participants will be contacted in September 2020 via email. The researcher will send an email with the attached project description to each participant. Once the teachers are contacted, the researcher

will begin scheduling personal interviews. Each interviewee will choose the interview site that they feel comfortable with.

During the interview, the researcher will ask the questions provided in the interview guide. In the meantime, the researcher will audio record the interviews to collect data. After each interview, the researcher will ask the current participant to identify potential participants that meet the criteria for the study. The researcher will keep recruiting participants until the desired number of participants is secured.

Subsequently, the data will be transcribed into computer files and coded into different categories and themes. The researcher will answer each research question based on the above-mentioned data analysis. All of the findings on patterns or themes will be presented in Chapter IV of this study.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in this study will be analyzed qualitatively, which is a circular process of describing phenomena, classifying them, and seeing how the concepts interconnect (Dey, 2003). Specifically, this study will utilize qualitative thematic analysis to decode textual data and themes. This data analysis method described by Vaismoradi et al. (2016) is an effective way of focusing on the explicit description of the communication content instead of the implicit meanings.

This study's data analysis will start with data preparation. The obtained interview data will be in form of recordings, so data preparation will put data into a form that will permit analysis. The recorded data will be typed as transcriptions into computer files. Then, this study will follow the four phases of theme development that have been identified by Vaismoradi et al.

(2016), which includes initialization, construction, rectification, and finalization. According to Vaismoradi et al. (2016), in the initialization phase, the researcher will understand the raw data of each transcript by reading intensively, coding the explicit meanings, reflecting on the features of the interviews. Then, the researcher will group the codes according to their similarity and compare the codes together to delineate themes about the research questions in the construction states. After that, the developed themes will be verified in the rectification phases to ensure the maturity and completion of the theme development. Lastly, a written narration will be developed to state the various themes and answer the research questions in the finalization phase.

Summary

This study follows a qualitative methodology using a semi-structured interview as a tool to investigate the perceptions about teacher preparation and training programs of selected Chinese immersion teachers from six Chinese immersion programs in Manhattan. The obtained data will be analyzed by using the qualitative thematic analysis method. The interview and data collection will be scheduled for September 2020. The data analysis will start at the end of 2020 year. The findings and results of the data analysis will be presented in Chapter IV in the spring of 2021.

Chapter IV will identify the experiences and perceptions of the selected Chinese immersion teachers, through which the researcher will generate contexts and themes to offer a description of the study findings.

Chapter IV: Results

Language immersion programs provided language learners with another effective way to learn foreign languages. Among the foreign language immersion programs, the Chinese immersion program gained its reputation and grew to a total of 343 schools as of September 2021 (Weise, 2021). An increase in the number of Chinese immersion programs led to a concomitant increase in the demand for more Chinese immersion teachers, who were capable of using the Chinese language to conduct both language and content teaching. The review of literature in Chapter II indicated that there were limited teacher preparation programs that were designed for language immersion teaching. As a result, Chinese immersion teachers encountered different challenges in their teaching assignments, which included curriculum and instructions, behavior management, and cross-cultural communication.

Statement of the Problem

Although previous literature have reported the challenges faced by Chinese immersion teachers, limited research was found describing the Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives of their current pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs, as well as their expectations for immersion teacher education programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to obtain and examine the Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of the pre-service preparation and in-service training (including professional development programs) they received. The findings from this research could benefit the Chinese language immersion programs and teacher preparation programs by understanding how teacher

preparation and training could better support the immersion teaching assignments of Chinese immersion teachers.

To fill the knowledge gap identified above, the study centered on three core research questions. The study aimed to determine Chinese immersion teachers' level of preparedness, as well as access both the beneficial topics and some of the critically needed aspects in immersion teacher education programs. As described in Chapter I, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignment?
2. What do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs in supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?
3. What do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

Participants

The research study was conducted using six Chinese immersion teachers who were teaching in Manhattan's Chinese immersion programs at the time of the interview. The researcher used the purposive sampling strategy to determine the participants. The predetermined criteria for the participants were as follows:

1. Because this study was focused on Chinese immersion teachers, the selected teachers were teaching (at the time of the interview) in Chinese immersion programs, teaching

- the Chinese language, or using the Chinese language as a tool to teach subject matters (e.g., Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, etc.).
2. The selected Chinese immersion teachers were teaching (at the time of the interview) in different Chinese immersion programs in Manhattan, New York. Manhattan had the densest distribution of Chinese immersion programs, which included various kinds of immersion programs, such as both private and public schools. Therefore, a diverse group of participants could be selected, while the geographical effects of the finding could be minimized.
 3. The selected Chinese immersion teachers included teachers who were teaching in different grade levels because this study took into account perspectives from the teachers' various grade levels.
 4. The selected Chinese immersion teachers attended different pre-service teacher preparation programs, thus various background characteristics among these participants could reflect the wider Chinese immersion teacher population. For example, the participants attended pre-service preparation programs in different countries (China and the U.S.), and with different areas of focus (language education, early childhood education, etc.).

Research Design

Based on the purpose of the research, and the associated questions, this research focused on study participants' perceptions of their teacher education programs. Therefore, this study used a qualitative interview methodology so that the participants' perspectives could be obtained

based on their reflected values and attitudes while describing their teacher preparation and training experience (Byrne, 2004).

To fully capture their perceptions, a semi-structured interview protocol design was used to allow the participants to narrate their teacher preparation and training experience relatively freely compared with the fully-structured interview (Galletta, 2013). The semi-structured interview guide was based on a set of guiding questions to help organize the responses into different topics and areas of interest.

As listed in Appendix A, the interview questions were grouped into three sections. The three sections were ordered so that the interview moved from general to specific questions (Gill et al., 2008). The interviews were also framed to start with questions that related to the background and experiences of the participants, such as years of experience and educational backgrounds, and proceeded to open-ended questions related to their perceptions of the teacher education programs (Britten, 2006). The first section included information related to participants' professional and educational backgrounds, such as teaching duties, years of experience, etc. The second section explored participants' preparedness for immersion teaching by gathering their experience and opinions of their pre-service teacher preparation programs. The third section focused on participants' perspectives of their in-service professional development programs.

The participants were contacted via email. A convenient time slot was scheduled for each participant, which ranged from 1 hour to 1.5 hours in the form of an uninterrupted online session. Due to the persistent Covid-19 outbreak between 2020 to 2021, and its related safety protocols on limiting in-person contact, the interviews were hosted on Zoom. The researcher also used Zoom for audio recording to gather the interview data. The recorded data were transcribed into

text files and categorized into different themes to answer each research question. The findings of each research question were presented below.

Findings

This section introduces the findings obtained from the interviews with the participants. As all the interviews were conducted in English and English was not the participants' first language, the direct quotes from the participants might contain grammatical errors. Considering this issue, the researcher made the statements more understandable by selectively modifying the quotes but not changing the meaning as needed. For the same reason, some results were presented via paraphrasing the answers instead of direct quotes.

Based on the interview results, the researcher first obtained detailed information on the description and backgrounds of the participants, which included information such as years of service, the type of pre-service preparation received, etc. The researcher then organized and selectively extracted the interview responses to answer the research questions developed in Chapter I. The responses that contributed to answering each research question were categorized into different themes, which were introduced to present the findings for each research question.

Findings for the first set of research questions regarding the participants' descriptions and backgrounds were summarized below.

Participants' Descriptions and Backgrounds

The sample group for this study consisted of six Chinese immersion teachers (CIT) teaching in Manhattan, who were referred to as CIT A to F in this study. In accordance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB), confidentiality was maintained by selectively summarizing the participants' descriptions and background information rather than presenting them in full.

Specifically, the types of schools the participants taught in were not included as they would reveal the participants' identities. The participants' positional and educational backgrounds are presented below.

Participants' positional backgrounds represented the teaching duties and teaching experiences. Teaching experience includes that gained in either immersion or non-immersion settings. Among the six Chinese immersion teachers, three of them were from public schools, while three of them were from private schools. Also, participants' educational backgrounds denoted the type of teacher preparation training they received, which include the degrees they received, the corresponding issuing countries, and whether they held the U.S. teaching certificates. In summary, all the participants were Chinese native speakers and held valid U.S. teaching certificates, and only two of the teachers received bachelor's degrees that were not related to language or teaching.

CIT A is a female Chinese immersion teacher who taught 5th-grade Chinese language art, mathematics, and social studies. She had six years of experience teaching in the immersion setting and less than one year of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT A held a bachelor's degree in Chinese Language and Literacy in China and a master's degree in Teaching and Curriculum in the U.S.

CIT B is a female Chinese immersion teacher who taught 3rd-grade Chinese language art, mathematics, and social studies. She had seven years of experience teaching in the immersion setting and two years of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT B held a bachelor's degree in English Literature in China and a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language in the U.S.

CIT C is a male Chinese immersion teacher who taught 6th-grade Chinese language art. He had 4 years of experience teaching in the immersion setting and 8 years of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT C held a bachelor's degree in English in China and a master's degree in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language in the U.S.

CIT D is a female Chinese immersion teacher who taught 4th-grade Chinese language art, mathematics, social studies, science, and English language art. She had 4 years of experience teaching in the immersion setting and 1 year of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT D held a bachelor's degree in China that was not related to language or teaching, and a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language and Childhood Education in the U.S.

CIT E is a female Chinese immersion teacher who taught 1st-grade Chinese language art, mathematics, social studies, science, and English language art. She had 1 year of experience teaching in the immersion setting and 2 years of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT E held a bachelor's degree in China in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, and a master's degree in Bilingual Bicultural Education in the U.S.

CIT F is a female Chinese immersion teacher who taught preschool Chinese language art, mathematics, social studies, and science. She had 3.5 years of experience teaching in the immersion setting and 4 years of experience in non-immersion settings. CIT F held a bachelor's degree in China that was not related to language or teaching, and a master's degree in Family Education and Early Childhood Education in the U.S.

Emerged Themes

This section describes the results from the interviews that contributed to answering the research questions identified in this study. The themes are varied by research question. Because

of the difference between pre-service preparation and in-service training programs, the nature of what each question investigated was different.

Below are the research questions with the themes that emerged. Themes in research question one: foundation studies, curriculum and instruction, cultural competence, and field experience. Themes in research question two: foundation studies, curriculum and instruction, cultural competence, and collaboration with colleagues and administrators. Themes in research question three: foundation studies, curriculum development, teaching methodology, cultural competence, and collaboration among Chinese immersion teachers.

The first theme, entitled foundation studies, included the information about the participants' general knowledge of education theory, and their reported understanding of educational psychology and philosophy. The second theme that emerged was related to curriculum and instruction, which represented participants' practical knowledge of the teaching content, methodology, and evaluation. The third theme, entitled cultural competence, involves participants' cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cross-cultural communication skills. Lastly, in the teacher preparation programs, the fourth theme that emerged was related to participants' field experiences, which refers to the opportunities that allow the pre-service teacher candidates to observe and participate in the ongoing teaching in educational settings. While in the teacher training programs, the fourth area represented collaborating with colleagues and administrators.

The findings from the interview results were categorized based on the above themes, which were presented in the following sections to answer each research question.

Research Question One Finding

Research question one in this study focused on studying teachers' perceptions of their pre-service teacher preparation programs.

Research questions one: what do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignment?

This research question allowed the researcher to explore the perceptions of Chinese immersion teachers' level of preparedness counting toward their immersion teaching assignments. First, the interview questions asked the participants to provide a rating of their level of preparedness for immersion teaching assignments on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 represented that the participants felt fully prepared. Table 1 provides a rating rubric of the participants' level of preparedness.

Table 1

Participants' Ratings for their Preparedness for Immersion Teaching Assignments

Participants	Under-prepared (0-2)	Somewhat Prepared (3-5)	Well Prepared (6-8)	Fully Prepared (9-10)
A		×		
B		×		
C			×	
D	×			
E			×	
F		×		

A majority of the participants rated their level of preparedness for immersion teaching assignments as “somewhat” prepared. None of the participants rated the level of preparedness in the range of 9-10, which means that he/she was fully prepared for the teaching assignments.

Following the rating, the researcher asked the participants to identify beneficial areas of study in their teacher preparation programs that contributed to the success of their teaching. The beneficial areas could be categorized into four emerged themes described in the previous section, which were explained below.

Theme One: Foundation Studies. Foundation studies involved the basic theories and general knowledge of education theory. Within this theme, the participants reported their understanding of educational psychology and philosophy. Two major areas emerged in this theme: the knowledge of educational psychology and special education. For example, CIT E believed the educational psychology knowledge was useful as it is essential to know the psychological stage of the students and plan the teaching accordingly. In particular, as described by CIT F, “When you know they are at a certain age, maybe they need more repetition, they need the visual. Or you can just teach in an abstract way, so that is very different.” Additionally, CIT F and D shared that the special education course was helpful. CIT D further explained, “I also had some special education-related courses, those courses gave me an idea about what are those programs for. They didn’t give me many instructions on how to handle the problems and how to instruct those populations, but at least I got a sense that they existed, and they were there.”

Theme Two: Curriculum and Instruction. This theme represented participants’ practical knowledge of the teaching content, methodology, and evaluation. The participants

identified beneficial aspects in their pre-service related to curriculum and instruction, such as designing curriculum, teaching languages, and using technology.

For example, in terms of designing curriculum, CIT A reported that the knowledge of project-based learning, hands-on activities, backward design, and the rationale for designing the unit was helpful. CIT F believed that they had adequate preparation for writing detailed lesson plans and generating organized lessons. CIT B also benefited from the topics that related to “how to plan the lesson and how the lesson carried on with the students.” Meanwhile, CIT C had adequate preparation for designing engaging lessons to make lessons fun and attractive. Furthermore, CIT E described that curriculum design related to the different subjects (e.g., English, social studies, science, math, Chinese) was beneficial. Lastly, CIT F added that the curriculum design for bilingual education was also useful for becoming an immersion teacher after graduation.

About teaching languages, the participants mentioned the aspects of teaching Chinese and English languages were helpful. For teaching Chinese, CIT B mentioned that they received adequate preparation for utilizing gestures and speaking the target language in their instructions. CIT E shared that the knowledge of Chinese classical literature and the methodology of teaching Chinese as a second language was helpful. For teaching English, CIT F reported that both English language linguistics and general language linguistics were helpful. CIT E added that English childhood literacy such as teaching children to read and write was helpful as well.

In terms of using technology, CIT D stated that “the technology course, actually provides you a lot of resources and platforms to support you in terms of technology in the classroom

setting.” CIT D explained, “I explored and tried iMovie, webcams, and these types of things. I am still using that in my teaching, that is what I am still carrying on with.”

Theme Three: Cultural Competence. The theme of cultural competence included participants’ knowledge and understanding of cultural differences, cultural knowledge, and cross-cultural teaching skills. Within this theme, the areas that the participants reported beneficial were adapting to the U.S. culture and promoting cross-cultural communications. Under adapting to the U.S. culture, here are some of the comments. CIT A stated that the teacher preparation program helped the teachers who came to the U.S without knowledge of the local culture to “learn [about] the local community, and work with families and future students.” Hence, aided them in adapting to American culture (e.g., the boundaries in the classroom). For promoting cross-cultural communications, CIT B learned about “how to talk to parents [and] how to work with a colleague” within the U.S school contexts.

Theme Four: Field Experiences. The field experience refers to the opportunities that allow the pre-service teacher candidates to observe and participate in the ongoing teaching in educational settings. Two major aspects emerged from this theme: field experiences inside the teacher preparation programs and in K-12 settings.

In terms of the field experience inside the teacher preparation program, CIT B observed the instructors’ demonstrations as a student. Afterward, they adapted what they noticed to further teach a group of students. Similarly, CIT C expressed the importance of teaching practices with the help of experienced “teacher” classmates. He stated that they were attending teacher preparation courses with a certain number of in-service teachers. Thus, the in-service teachers, such as classmates, provide ample help to the teachers without any teaching experience. For

example, the in-service teachers served as students when the inexperienced teachers conducted their teaching demonstrations and provided valuable feedback to them. This experience enabled inexperienced teachers to have a better fundamental understanding of students' reactions and behaviors in a real classroom.

For the field experience in K-12 settings, CIT C explained that visiting and observing a real classroom was beneficial for the international students. As they do not have educational and teaching experience in the U.S, they did not receive the opportunities to try out the learned strategies in a real classroom. CIT C stated, "Because we were learning everything the same. It is cool to see she [the classmate] apply these strategies in the classroom." CIT D further explained that the classroom observations could help the pre-service teachers learn class management techniques and get familiarized with the school's structure and procedures, such as the daily routine, the fire drills, and the shelter in. CIT D commented stating, "when you are physically in a classroom setting, you will look completely different from what you learned from a certain course." In addition, CIT A and F learned the technique of communicating with parents and families from their field experiences.

Summary of Research Question One Findings. Research one focused on the level of preparedness of the selected Chinese immersion teachers from their pre-service teacher preparation programs. Overall, the majority of the participants believed that they were somewhat prepared for their teaching assignments.

To answer research question one, the aspects that helped increase the level of preparedness during their in-service preparation programs centered around four themes: foundation studies, curriculum and instruction, cultural competence, and field experiences.

Within foundational studies, the beneficial aspects included preparation in educational psychology and special education. For curriculum and instruction, the preparation of designing curriculum, teaching languages, and using technology was helpful. For cultural competence, the participants benefited from preparation related to adapting to the U.S. culture and promoting cross-cultural communications. Lastly, the field experience both in the pre-service programs and K-12 settings helped the teachers in terms of familiarizing the schools' operational routines.

Note that none of the participants felt fully prepared from their pre-service teacher preparation program, meaning that there was room for improvement, which is further explored in research question three.

Research Question Two Findings

Research question two aimed at exploring the selected Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives regarding the level and kinds of support that they received from their in-service teacher training programs. Also, the researcher examined the effectiveness of these training by asking for participants' feedback on the in-service teacher training that they received.

Research question two: what do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs on supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?"

Similar to research question one, the researcher asked the participants to provide the overall ratings for their level of support from their in-service teacher training programs on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 represented that the participants felt fully supported. Table 2 provides a rating rubric of the level of support that participants received.

Table 2

Participants' Ratings for the Level of Support they have Received from the In-service Teacher Training Programs

Participants	Limited Support (0-2)	Somewhat Supported (3-5)	Well Supported (6-8)	Fully Supported (9-10)
A			×	
B				×
C				×
D		×		
E			×	
F			×	

Most of the participants rated their level of support from their in-service teacher training and professional development programs as “well supported”. None of the participants rated the level of support in the range of 0-2, which means that he/she received limited support for their teaching assignments.

Following the rating, the researcher examined participants' perspectives regarding their in-service teacher training programs from two aspects. First, the participants were asked to list the teacher training opportunities that they have attended. Second, the participants provided feedback on their teacher training programs. The response to these questions could be categorized into four themes that included training in foundation studies, curriculum and instruction, and cultural competence, as well as the collaboration with colleagues and administrators. Each theme included different teacher training/professional development activities, which are explained below.

Theme One: Foundation Studies. As described in the previous section, foundation studies involved the basic theories and general knowledge of education theory. Within this theme, the participants reported their understanding of educational psychology and philosophy, such as the knowledge of social-emotional learning (SEL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

For example, in terms of social-emotional learning, here are some of the comments. CIT F received school-provided social-emotional training with a focus on young kids, she expressed, “Social-emotional and movement training are very helpful. Because they give you very detailed examples and activities that you can do in the classroom.” CIT D further noted, “Social-emotional learning helps a lot, especially as a new teacher.” Also, CIT C noted that his school provided its teachers with training on the topic of trauma: “During the pandemic, maybe the students they became much stressful, so we need to be ready when they came in and know how to help them.”

As for diversity, equity, and inclusion, CIT A and F received training on the important concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in teaching from school, which worked well. CIT F reported that diversity, equity, and inclusion training would be more effective if they could recognize Asian ethnicity. As the Asian community was underrepresented in the DEI training, this defeated the purpose of having training that centered on diversity and inclusion of everyone.

Theme Two: Curriculum and Instruction. As mentioned previously, this theme represented participants’ knowledge of the teaching content, methods, and evaluation. Two major areas emerged in this theme: teaching languages and content, and using instructional strategies.

Regarding teaching languages and content, the participants mentioned the aspects of teaching literacy, Chinese language, and subject matter were helpful. For example, in terms of training in teaching literacy, CIT E believed the literacy training in the reading and writing curriculum was effective. Teachers also had a lot of team planning opportunities with a literacy coach. CIT D indicated that the literacy coach joined their grade-level meetings to provide them with more information about the pacing and change of curriculum. CIT A reported the workshops on the topic of reading and writing strategies were helpful. As for teaching the Chinese language, CIT A stated that they had Chinese teacher meetings with a focus on Chinese literacy and oral production. CIT D added that they also had a counselor to help the teachers with immersion teaching in Mandarin: "...He helped us build and develop our curriculum, refine the proficiency level in the target language for your kids. He helps a lot." CIT F stated, "The Mandarin-related workshops are very helpful. Because it is truly run by the teachers who worked in the immersion environment, those are very helpful." For teaching subject matter, according to CIT E, "the [math] coach who came to our school knows our curriculum very well, so he gives us insight in terms of how to design a very engaging curriculum." CIT C and A were provided some collaborative planning opportunities on the subject matter. CIT F attended some school-provided science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workshops.

For using instructional strategies, the participants identified beneficial aspects such as managing behavior and using educational technology. For example, under managing behavior, CIT B reported that inviting a psychologist guest-speaker and a peer coach for teaching the skill of classroom management was very helpful. CIT E also mentioned some school-provided workshops which focused on how to get to know and build relationships with the students, and

how to manage a classroom. However, the ineffective part was that the training was not always concrete enough to guide the everyday teaching. CIT C referenced, “sometimes the workshop is very general, like how to know your students; how to do your classroom management; how to build a relationship with you students- that type of workshop is not that concrete. It is hard to apply what they taught in my class.” For using educational technology, CIT B, C, and F took part in technology training and learned how to incorporate technology with their teaching. For example, CIT F explained, “we also have technology training like 3D printer, how can you combine the Lego education to your daily classroom.” On the other hand, the technological training on how to use various school platforms was not as efficient. CIT D mentioned that they have a lot of training on how to use different school platforms, but some training just provided a guide that they were asked to read through it. In this case, CIT D believed the training could be more efficient by designing it differently.

Theme Three: Cultural Competence. Cultural competence involves participants’ cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cross-cultural teaching and communication skills. Within this theme, the pieces of training that the participants reported beneficial were promoting cross-cultural communications and community engagement. CIT B had a peer coach, so they learned how to interact with parents and how collaborate with coworkers, as well as how to communicate with students in their target language. CIT A also received effective training on how to promote community engagement, as she learned about effective teaching and community engagement in terms of these concepts and how to incorporate them in the classroom.

Theme Four: Collaboration with Colleagues and Administrators. This theme represented the support that the participants’ received from their colleagues and administrators.

For this theme, the beneficial areas included peer mentoring, teacher collaboration, and administrative support.

For example, under peer mentoring, the novice teachers were matched with peer coaches who have similar roles together and would provide classroom observation opportunities and feedback for their teaching. According to CIT E, peer coaching was a norm for the first-year teachers in NYC and she believed that the mentor, who was also their colleague, helped them a lot in designing the curriculum. CIT B also concurred that the peer coaching supported them in immersion teaching as the mentor teacher was the first person for the new teachers to seek help if they had any questions. However, CIT C felt stressed and uncomfortable having a coach who shadows them all day and provides a lot of instructions.

For teacher collaboration, the goal of teacher collaboration is for teachers to work together in order to increase student achievement. For example, CIT C reported that he learned good strategies and ideas from the colleague-led workshops and classroom visits. They also share and support each other in the collaborative working process. Additionally, he also benefited from sharing a classroom with another teacher and being able to observe the colleague's teaching. Nevertheless, CIT A reported that they were "not being able to communicate with other immersion schools, that including visit them and see what they are doing, [as well as] what is the norm of immersion across the nation."

As for administrative support, the teachers receive guidance and evaluations from their supervisors. For example, CIT C reported the training hosted by the principal worked well and the feedback provided by school administrators after each classroom observation supported them in their teaching. According to CIT C, the school assistant principal would provide detail-

oriented comments, which explained their suggestions and comments in a very comprehensive way. However, CIT B believed the micro-managing from supervisors was not helpful, as they don't know a lot about immersion teaching.

Summary of Research Question Two Findings. Research question two aimed to study the effectiveness of in-service teacher preparation programs. Similar to research question one, the responses to research question two could also be summarized into the four themes of foundation studies, curriculum and instruction, cultural competence, and collaboration with colleagues and administrators.

For foundation studies, the participants reflected that the in-service training on the notion of social-emotional learning and diversity, equity, and inclusion worked well. Within curriculum and instruction, the teachers benefited from in-service training including teaching languages and content and using instructional strategies. For cultural competence, the teachers believed they benefit from the training that promotes cross-cultural communication and community engagement. Lastly, the teachers believed the collaboration among teachers and with administrators was helpful.

Research Question Three Findings

Based on the findings and results from research questions one and two, which focused on the perceptions of the pre-service preparation and in-service training programs, respectively, the third and very last research question focused on the potential future needs for these programs.

Research question three: what do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

First, the researcher asked the participants to report their needs for the pre-service teacher preparation programs. Then the participants were asked to report their needs for the in-service teacher training programs as well. The responses to these questions also are categorized into five themes: foundation studies, curriculum development, teaching methodology, cultural competence, and collaboration among Chinese immersion teachers. Each theme is explained below.

Theme One: Foundation Studies. This theme represented participants' knowledge of the basic theories of education theory, which included their understanding of educational psychology and philosophy. Two major areas emerged in this theme: the need for preparation and training on social-emotional learning (SEL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

In terms of social-emotional learning, participants reflected more preparation and training on developing teachers' social-emotional competence and the strategies for teaching social-emotional skills would be very helpful and necessary. For developing teachers' social-emotional competence, CIT D reported "I don't think the social-emotional components were getting ready or that sort of prep was emphasized enough as lesson planning," she went on to state, "when you are mentally ready when you have love and care, and you have this empathy to get ready to go. That would also filter out some people who are not ready to be teachers." CIT B also explained: "If you are a calm teacher, the students learn better; if you are on the edge, you don't know how to control your emotions, that is not good. I would always recommend the teacher entering this field learn more about social-emotional training. For the students and yourself, as our situation is unpredictable, how would you predict and react to that?" As for the strategies for teaching social-emotional skills, participants asserted that it would be great if they can get the training before

becoming a teacher. CIT E and F reported that they felt underprepared to conduct social-emotional learning, so they learned about this topic gradually by themselves. Furthermore, CIT F reported that more mindfulness training would be helpful, as they were eager to learn how to combine mindfulness with language learning.

As for the preparation and training on diversity, equity, and inclusion, the participants reported two major areas needed: the awareness and knowledge of promoting DEI, and the practical strategies and resources for teaching DEI. For the awareness and knowledge of promoting DEI, CIT A reported that the Chinese immersion teachers need to improve their awareness of their rights in the Asian community. As the teachers who are currently working in the American culture tend to be quiet and shy, thus, their voices have been omitted even if they have brilliant thoughts. In the meantime, the in-service teacher training programs could further emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion among teachers to build inclusive communities in school settings before teachers teach students to do so. As for the practical strategies and resources for teaching DEI, the participants need more preparation and training on how to address this topic in Chinese immersion classrooms. CIT A explained that teachers felt challenged to teach diversity, equity, and inclusion, as the shortage of resources made the content too hard for students to understand in the Chinese language.

Theme Two: Curriculum Development. The theme of curriculum development included participants' understanding of the course blueprint and knowledge of developing course content and assessment. Within this theme, three major areas emerged: the understanding of curriculum content and state academic standards, as well as the development of the Chinese language curriculum.

For understanding curriculum content, participants need to receive more preparation on what is to be taught in the U.S. school system. As an example, CIT D reported that the Chinese immersion teachers who received their K-12 education in a different educational system, i.e., other than the United States, are not familiar with the teaching content for the different subject matter at the elementary level. As explained by CIT D, “If I went through the education here, at least I got a sense that around the third grade or the fourth grade I started to learn multiplication and division and then [in] the four or the fifth [grade] you started to learn about fractions. But with[sic] the fact that I wasn’t educated here, I have no clue.” In this case, when compared with other fellow teachers who have received their education in the U.S, it took a certain amount of time for CIT D to familiarize themselves with the curriculum content. Both CIT D and F indicated that they were not familiar with designing whole-year blueprints for the curriculum.

As for understanding the state academic standards, participants reported that more training that helps the teachers understand state standards better would be helpful. For example, understanding the state's requirements could help teachers align the subject areas (e.g., English, social studies, and math) with each other, as explained by CIT C. CIT D also highlighted that the state standards are the golden rule to design curriculum, as the teaching curriculum was developed based on these standards. In this case, she believed that the preparations, in which teachers could study the state standards across different grade levels and subject areas, would help them better understand the expectations of each grade level and subject.

For understanding Chinese language curriculum development, participants need more preparation and training related to setting and aligning the curriculum for Chinese immersion. For example, CIT C explained that Chinese immersion teachers need the preparation on how to

create a Chinese language curriculum. CIT E also elaborated that different Chinese immersion programs used different Chinese language curricula and there was no detailed guidance for teachers to follow. In this case, CIT E believed that it would be beneficial if teachers could receive more coherent training in terms of the Chinese language curriculum development and what types of curricula were there for teachers to select.

Theme Three: Teaching Methodology. This theme represented participants' knowledge of pedagogical strategies for teaching in immersion settings. Three major areas emerged in this theme: the methods of teaching the Chinese language, subject content, and managing behaviors.

In terms of Chinese language teaching methodology, participants reported their needs for preparation and training in Chinese language pedagogy and language acquisition. For example, CIT D was lacking the confidence to teach the Chinese language, as their teacher preparation program was not focused on teaching the Chinese language. So, she believed that more preparation in terms of teaching the Chinese language would be helpful. CIT F also expressed that more training on Mandarin teaching activities in different grade levels is needed, especially for the students at the younger ages. She explained, "I attend a lot of workshops that they are doing with elementary school kids, middle school kids, but they don't have a lot of workshops for preschool kids." In addition, CIT B indicated that they need more knowledge related to Chinese language acquisition in immersion settings. CIT E also spoke about more training on how to teach young students and learn more about how the younger students acquire the Chinese language.

Under the methods for presenting the subject matter, participants demand the preparation and training in teaching subject content. As the Chinese immersion teachers were using the

Chinese language to teach different subject matters in the immersion setting, they need relevant preparation and training on these subjects. For example, as explained by CIT A and B, the current training on teaching subject matters was not specifically designed for immersion teachers, thus they are not practical for immersion contexts. As teaching subject matter in an immersion context is quite different from teaching them in general education programs, CIT B describes that “there are more challenges and barriers”. In this case, the Chinese immersion teachers, who don’t have a specific subject teaching background, would greatly benefit from the training that invites subject experts to provide information on how to teach in Chinese immersion contexts.

As for managing behaviors, the participants identified their needs to improve classroom management skills. For example, as explained by CIT D, a lot of teachers struggled in managing their classes, thus, their teaching was not effective even if they adapted what they had learned and designed excellent lessons. However, some of the teacher candidates were not given a lot of opportunities to practice in real classrooms during their preparation programs, so they were not experienced enough to manage the classroom. In this case, CIT D believed that teachers need to invest more time to learn the essentials to build a relationship with the students and be mentally ready instead of rushing through teaching. She noted that the training on classroom management strategies such as some specific case studies and scenarios would help (e.g., different cases, different populations). CIT B also reported the training on classroom management could feature in meeting students’ needs better, improving students’ enjoyable interactions, and teaching more interactively.

Theme Four: Cultural Competence. As indicated before, the theme of cultural competence includes participants’ cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cross-cultural

teaching and communication skills. Within this theme, the areas that the participants reported critically needed were cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, and culturally relevant activities. For example, in understanding cultural knowledge, CIT A reported that the teachers need more training or professional development opportunities so that they can learn and have a deeper understanding of the North American culture, which could contribute back to their teaching. For cross-cultural communications skills, the participants proposed that such preparation would enhance the collaboration of the entire learning community. As explained by CIT B, “Being a teacher, especially you are not native in this country, how would you understand and cooperate with colleagues, and work with parents and students in general?” CIT F also reported the challenge of articulating Chinese learning goals and progress; thus, they demand the training to address this issue. As for culturally relevant activities, the participants hope to have more opportunities to conduct relevant activities in Chinese culture. As CIT A mentioned that the students who were learning the Chinese language were given limited opportunities to connect with the students who have Chinese cultural backgrounds, such activities can provide students from different cultures to learn about Chinese culture.

Theme Five: Collaboration Among Chinese Immersion Teachers. In this theme, the participants reported their need for collaborating with more Chinese immersion teachers. As the current collaboration between Chinese immersion teachers was mainly inside each immersion program, they demand more opportunities to work with the teachers in other Chinese immersion programs. For example, CIT A reported that schools could provide more opportunities for CITs to visit other immersion programs. In this case, they will attain more information about other programs and teachers. Especially, as described by CIT B, the collaboration could focus on

exchanging ideas, sharing resources and materials, as well as the opportunities to observe each other's classes and provide feedback.

Summary of Research Question Three Findings. Research question three focused on the critical needs of Chinese immersion teachers for their teacher education programs. Responses to research question three were categorized into five themes, foundation studies, curriculum development, teaching methodology, cultural competence, and collaboration among Chinese immersion teachers.

In the first theme, foundation studies, the participants reported their preparation and training needs on social-emotional learning (SEL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Within the second theme, curriculum development, the participants demanded more training on the understanding of curriculum content and state academic standards, as well as the development of the Chinese language curriculum. Under the third theme, teaching methodology, the participants critically needed the training areas such as the methods of teaching the Chinese language, subject content, and managing behaviors. For the fourth theme, cultural competence, the areas that the participants reported critically needed were cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, and culturally relevant activities. In terms of the fifth theme, collaboration among Chinese immersion teachers, the participants reported their need for collaborating with more Chinese immersion teachers.

Summary

Chapter IV reported the findings based on the three research questions of this study. The selected Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of their pre-service teacher preparation and in-

service training programs were presented. This chapter also explored the selected Chinese immersion teachers' needs for the above-mentioned teacher education programs.

As mentioned previously, the first research question of this research aimed at exploring the perceptions of Chinese immersion teachers' level of preparedness counting toward their immersion teaching assignments, focusing on the pre-service preparation programs. The findings provided evidence that a certain number of areas, such as the preparation of educational psychology, special education, designing curriculum, teaching languages, using technology, adapting to the U.S. culture, and promoting cross-cultural communications contributed to their current teaching assignments. The participants also noted that field experience both in the pre-service programs and K-12 settings increased their level of preparedness.

The second research question explored the support that Chinese immersion teachers received during their in-service training programs. The participants identified several existing teacher training activities that were helpful, such as the training on the notion of social-emotional learning, diversity, equity, and inclusion, teaching languages and content, using instructional strategies, and promoting cross-cultural communication and community engagement. In addition, the teachers believed the collaboration among teachers and with administrators was helpful.

Research question three focused on the critical needs of Chinese immersion teachers for their teacher education programs. The most critically needed aspects in both programs were the knowledge of social-emotional learning, diversity, equity, and inclusion, understanding of curriculum content and state academic standards, the development of the Chinese language curriculum, the methods of teaching Chinese language, subject content, and managing behaviors, the cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, and culturally relevant activities.

Furthermore, the participants also reported their need for collaborating with more Chinese immersion teachers.

Chapter V will present the discussion of the study that supports or contradicts the findings based on literature and the researcher's teaching experience. Based on these discussions, the researcher will also provide recommendations for future research studies.

Chapter V: Conclusions

In the United States, the demand for learning Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) kept increasing in the K-12 system in the past decades (Kong & Shang, 2020). Among these language programs, Chinese immersion education provided Chinese language learners an alternative choice to learn Mandarin Chinese (Fortune & Ju, 2017). The U.S. Chinese immersion programs gradually gained their reputation and grew rapidly in the past 40 years. Although there were a number of research focusing on evaluation and enhancing the effectiveness of language immersion education in general (Fortune, 2012), those targeting Chinese immersion education were limited. Existing studies showed that recruiting qualified teacher candidates had been a significant challenge for Chinese immersion programs, mainly because there were limited teacher preparation programs for immersion teachers (Chen, 2019; Chen et al., 2017). As most of the Chinese immersion teachers were not trained by immersion teacher preparation programs, they faced various challenges for Chinese immersion teachers in areas such as curriculum planning and content teaching, classroom management, and cross-cultural communication (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Chen, 2019; Chen et al., 2017; Liao et al., 2017; Ren, 2017; Romig, 2009; Zhou & Li, 2015b)

Purpose of Study

Limited research was found describing the Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives of their current pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs, as well as their expectations for immersion teacher education programs. Prompted by the need to address this knowledge gap, it was essential to understand Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of

their current teacher preparation and training programs. The purpose of this study was to obtain and examine the Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of the pre-service preparation and in-service training (including professional development programs) they received. The results could provide fundamental understandings of the preparation and development of current Chinese immersion teachers in the U.S, such as the helpful content that supported them with their immersion teaching, and potential critically needed aspects. The findings from this research could benefit the Chinese language immersion programs and teacher preparation programs by understanding how teacher preparation and training could better support the immersion teaching assignments of Chinese immersion teachers. In this way, the teacher preparation programs for Chinese immersion teachers could be developed to better suit the teachers' needs, and ultimately improve the quality of Chinese immersion programs.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignment?
2. What do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs in supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?
3. What do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

Research Design

By purposefully interviewing a diverse group of representative Chinese immersion teachers, this qualitative study examined their teacher education needs that could be better addressed to support their immersion teaching jobs. The participants came from different programs (public and private), grade levels (Prek-9), teaching duties, and teacher preparation programs. The interview questions were developed using a qualitative, semi-structured interview protocol, which started with general questions (i.e., educational background and years of experience), followed by open-ended questions on their reflections and expectations of the teacher education programs. The participants in this study attended different teacher education programs in the U.S. The participants were asked to report the content of the study in their teacher preparation and training programs that contributed to their immersion teaching assignments and the critically needed aspects for Chinese immersion teachers.

Conclusions and Discussion

The researcher reflected upon the research questions to identify the key aspects of the teachers' pre-service preparation and in-service training programs that contributed to participants' teaching, as well as their needs for the teacher education programs. By correlating the results with published literature and theories, the researcher elaborated the discussions and implications based on the following three research questions.

Analysis Related to Research Question One

Research question one aimed to explore the selected Chinese immersion teachers' preparedness for their immersion teaching jobs and the beneficial areas of study that they felt adequately prepared them to be Chinese immersion teachers.

Research question one: what do select Chinese immersion teachers consider to be their level of preparedness and the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation program, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignment?

The participants were asked to provide overall ratings for their level of preparedness for immersion teaching assignments and identify beneficial areas of study in their teacher preparation programs that contributed to their immersion teaching jobs.

According to the study findings, it could be implied that obtaining teacher preparation and prior teaching experience in the U.S. contributed to their overall level of preparedness. To elaborate, comparing the participants who had the same degree level and major, the Chinese immersion teachers who had more teaching experience in U.S. school settings were more well-prepared for immersion teaching. The results also showed that the participants who only taught Chinese language art felt more prepared than those who were using the Chinese language to teach multiple subjects. Comparing participants who had similar teaching duties, but different educational background, those who were better prepared are the teachers who received Chinese teaching preparation. In terms of the beneficial topics or aspects in their pre-service teacher preparation programs, that help Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignment, were discussed as follows.

First, the participants reported the preparation related to educational psychology and special education were beneficial. For example, the knowledge of the psychological stage of the students and the fundamental understanding of special education were essential for Chinese immersion teachers. These findings supported the previous research which believed the immersion teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge in child development in order to understand students' age-relevant issues and how students learn in different development stages (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Hickey & de Mejía, 2014). With regard to special education, Zhou and Li (2015a) indicated the Chinese language teachers received limited training on the topic of special education, and had a shortage of experience working with special needs students before they worked in the U.S. Since the findings of this study indicated that the Chinese immersion teachers received relevant preparation on this topic, this implies that these teachers' knowledge of special education has been developing in the past seven years or so. This matches the experience of the researcher. While studying in the U.S., the researcher learned the concept of special education in her master's courses, which was in agreement with what the participants reported. Before that, the researcher had limited knowledge and experience about special education. In this case, based on the researcher's own experience, the knowledge of special education was beneficial and crucial for the teachers who don't have relevant experiences.

Second, the participants reported that the aspects such as designing curriculum, teaching languages, and using technology were beneficial in their pre-service teacher preparation programs. The findings indicated that most of the participants received adequate preparation for the above-mentioned aspects even though they graduated from various teacher preparation

programs. The participants also reported that they were able to utilize the learned knowledge in their immersion teaching. For example, the participants equipped with the knowledge of curriculum design. Bernhardt and Schrier (1992) supported this assertion and stated that teachers' extensive knowledge about curriculum design was efficiently developed through coursework in the teacher preparation programs. Also, the participants were equipped with pedagogy knowledge such as utilizing gestures and attractive activities to facilitate their teaching. This finding correlates with Met and Lorenz (1998), who indicated that immersion teachers needed to use contextual clues, body language, and manipulatives to achieve the new language acquisition progress. And the teacher preparation courses should provide the preservice teachers with the knowledge of how to construct learning activities using the foreign language (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992).

Third, the areas that the participants reported beneficial were adapting to the U.S. culture and promoting cross-cultural communications. For example, the teacher preparation programs provided participants opportunities to learn about the local community and American culture. Such knowledge can help Chinese immersion teachers balance the differences in communication and cultural understanding (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015b). The participants also learned the communication skills within the U.S. school contexts. The literature confirmed that the teacher preparation courses should develop immersion teachers' communication competency that can support them in communicating with parents and colleagues (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992).

Forth, the participants benefited from the teaching observations and practices both inside their teacher preparation courses and in K-12 settings. For example, the teaching observations and practices inside the teacher preparation programs provided the novice teachers opportunities to observe and practice teaching under the help of course instructors and in-service teacher peers. Thus, they gained valuable insights into teaching practices in the U.S context. Furthermore, the field experience in the K-12 setting enabled the novice teachers, who were not educated in the K-12 system in the U.S, to familiarize themselves with the U.S. school's operations and routines (e.g., daily routines, fire drills, etc.). These findings were consistent with the literature which commented that the field experience in the immersion programs help the preservice teachers transit to in-service immersion instruction (Bernhardt & Schrier, 1992). In addition, despite the fact that none of the participants graduated from immersion teacher preparation programs, some of them did have practicum experience in the immersion setting in the U.S. However, the literature from the previous decade reported that most of the immersion teachers did not have practicum experience in immersion settings (Cody, 2009). This implies that the number of Chinese immersion teachers who have field experience in the immersion programs is growing. The researcher's own field experience also matches this finding, as the researcher had practicum experience in an immersion setting. Also, the researcher agrees with the comments that the practicum experience in immersion settings would be very beneficial for the immersion teacher candidates.

Analysis Related to Research Question Two

Research question two explored the selected Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives on the level of support that they had received from their in-service teacher training and development programs. This research inquiry also examined the feedback of their in-service teacher training programs.

Research question two: what do select Chinese immersion teachers report as the effectiveness of their in-service teacher training and development programs in supporting them in immersion teaching assignments?

Overall, only half of the teachers rated the level of support they received from the in-service teacher training as "well supported." The detailed feedback is stated below.

First, the study findings showed that the training on the topics of social-emotional learning (SEL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) supported participants' immersion teaching. The participants reported the SEL training mainly focused on enhancing their knowledge of SEL, such help students understand their emotions. This agrees with Schonert-Reichl (2017), who indicated that teachers need the knowledge and skills of SEL to create a responsive classroom community. In addition, the participants get to know the notion of DEI from the in-service training and asserted it was helpful. For example, they learned the concepts and meanings of DEL. This finding is consistent with the literature which believed cultural diversity training provided teachers with knowledge and skills to go beyond stereotypes (Sharma, 2005).

Secondly, the in-service training related to teaching languages and content, and using instructional strategies, were also helpful. For example, the participants reported they received effective training on teaching literacy, Chinese language, and subject matter. The participants mentioned the training provided by content experts, such as coaches or counselors, helped teachers with curriculum planning and content teaching. The literature also claimed that the immersion programs could involve curriculum coordinators and instructional coaches to develop curricular frameworks and mentorship programs (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012). In addition, the findings also dictated that in-service training for managing behavior and using educational technology were supportive. The previous literature indicated that Chinese immersion teachers in the U.S experienced difficulties in managing the classroom, and their major concern was managing student behavior (Chen, 2019; Chen et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2016). As a former Chinese immersion teacher, the researcher also experienced challenges in managing behaviors. In this case, the relevant support and training are very valuable for the Chinese immersion teachers.

Thirdly, from the in-service training, the participants learned how to effectively communicate with students, parents, and coworkers. Previously, many Chinese immersion teachers reported their obstacles in communicating with parents and helping them understand the learning goals (Chen, 2019; Zhou & Li, 2015b). At the meantime, the parents of Chinese immersion programs also showed their concerns on parent-teacher cross-cultural communication issues (Ren, 2017). In this case, the training that focused on promoting cross-

cultural communications helped Chinese immersion teachers to communicate with the people from different cultural backgrounds more confidently (Bissell & Chang, 2012).

Forth, the participants highlighted that the peer mentoring, teacher collaboration, and administrative support in the Chinese immersion programs were effective. For example, the novice teachers received feedback and help from their peer coaches. As the literature also stated, the qualified in-service teachers could provide coaching services for the pre-service teachers on both classroom instructions and communication to parents (Bissell & Chang, 2012; Chesley & Jordan, 2012). In addition, the participants reported the collaboration among the teachers in the Chinese immersion programs supported each others' teaching. They also received guidance from the administrators, which supported these teachers in different ways. This also matches the researcher's experience in teaching Chinese immersion in the U.S., where the researcher received a lot of support from experienced teacher peers and supervisors.

Analysis Related to Research Question Three

Research question three aimed to explore the selected Chinese immersion teachers' needs for their teacher education programs.

Research question three: What do Chinese immersion teachers report as their need from both pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training programs?

The detailed conclusion and discussions are presented in the following subsections.

First, what the participants found to be critically needed, is the preparation and training on social-emotional learning (SEL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), as these topics were not emphasized enough in their teacher education programs. According to Waajid et al.

(2013), the SEL training was usually not included in the teacher education programs. Thus, the SEL knowledge can help teachers, especially Chinese immersion teachers, to self-examine whether or not they were mentally prepared to enter this career. Also, the participants needed in-service training of SEL to consistently support them in recognizing and controlling their emotions to work calmly in an unpredictable environment. In addition, the participants demanded SEL knowledge to help them better understand students' social and emotional development and needs. Waajid et al. (2013) also reported the SEL course could support pre-service teachers in recognizing students' social-emotional competence and accommodating teaching approaches based on students' needs. As for the preparation and training on DEI, the participants reported two major areas needed: the awareness and knowledge of promoting DEI, and the practical strategies and resources for teaching DEI. For the awareness and knowledge of promoting DEI, the participants reported the Asian community was underrepresented in the DEI training. As all the participants are Asian ethnic, they believed it was crucial to raising the Chinese immersion teachers' awareness of making their voices heard in the community. More training on the knowledge of DEI also would help the Chinese immersion teachers better understand the concept that centered on diversity and inclusion of everyone as well. As described by Forlin (2010), teachers may not be able to develop inclusive school communities without the knowledge base of inclusion.

Secondly, the participants reported their preparation and training needs on understanding curriculum content and state academic standards, as well as the development of the Chinese language curriculum. For understanding curriculum content, participants needed to receive more

preparation on what is to be taught in the U.S. school system. The reason could be that the Chinese immersion teachers, who were not educated in the K-12 educational system in the U.S., tended to be not familiar with the teaching content across the grade levels and subject areas. As for understanding the state academic standards, participants reported that more training that helps the teachers understand state standards better would be helpful. As most of the Chinese immersion programs aligned and adapted their subject area curriculum based on national standards to maintain the consistency of immersion programs with non-immersion schools (Met, 2012), it became crucial for the Chinese immersion teachers to become familiarized with the scope and sequence of curriculum across different grade levels in each subject. They also needed to understand and familiarize themselves with the subject matter contained in the U.S. K-12 system to design the curriculum in the whole-year blueprints. For understanding Chinese language curriculum development, participants needed more preparation and training related to setting and aligning the curriculum for Chinese immersion. As some of the Chinese immersion programs followed the existing English thematic topics, the Chinese immersion teachers, struggled in integrating the theme content into Chinese language teaching (Chen et al., 2017). In this case, the Chinese immersion teachers may need more training and preparation on the knowledge and skills of using Chinese language to demonstrate the thematic curriculum to students.

Thirdly, the preparation and training on the methods of teaching the Chinese language, subject content, and managing behaviors are needed for Chinese immersion teachers. In terms of Chinese language teaching methodology, participants reported their needs for preparation and

training in Chinese language pedagogy and language acquisition. Although relatively more prepared compared with subject instruction, the participants still demand the knowledge of how the students acquire the Chinese language in an immersion setting. This finding is similar to Bernhardt and Schrier (1992), who asserted that the teacher development coursework should prepare the pre-service immersion teachers knowledge of first language acquisition and target language communication skills. In this study, the target language refers to Chinese. Under the methods for presenting the subject matter, participants demand the preparation and training in teaching subject content. According to the literature, the Chinese immersion teachers who did not receive training on the skills to teach these subjects, struggled with the subject area instructions due to inadequate instructional knowledge of math, social studies, and science (Liao et al., 2017; Zhou & Li, 2015b). In this case, Chinese immersion teachers demanded the subject-matter teaching training that was specifically designed for the teachers who are using the Chinese language to teach these subject contents. As for managing behaviors, the participants identified their needs to improve classroom management skills. The researcher also believed that it would be critical to add more classroom management preparation to the current teacher preparation programs, the novice teachers, especially those who had limited experience in classroom management would benefit from receiving the relevant preparations on the topic of classroom management strategies. Meanwhile, the in-service classroom management training could better support teachers in meeting students' needs, improving students' enjoyable interactions, and teaching more interactively. In addition, this also matches the researcher's experience in teaching

Chinese immersion in the U.S. The researcher believes the shortage of culture knowledge could lead to the classroom management issues.

Forth, the areas that the participants reported critically needed were cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, and culturally relevant activities. In understanding cultural knowledge, the participants demanded more learning opportunities to better understand American history and culture. The cultural knowledge will raise Chinese immersion teachers' awareness of students' cultural backgrounds, as most of the students have different backgrounds with the teachers in the language immersion setting. The participants also needed the preparation of cross-cultural communication skills that would enhance the collaboration of the entire learning community, such as efficient communication among teachers, parents, and students. As for culturally relevant activities, the participants hope to have more opportunities to conduct relevant activities in Chinese culture. There were very few community activities related to Chinese culture other than the ones the immersion schools hosted for their students. Therefore, the teachers need more support in advocating culturally relevant activities. The above-mentioned aspects contributed to the development of Chinese immersion teachers' cultural competence. As indicated by Taylor (2010), the teacher education programs should help teachers to achieve cultural competence, which will elevate their awareness of culturally responsive teaching to ensure students' success.

Fifth, the participants reported their need for collaborating with more Chinese immersion teachers. As the current collaboration between Chinese immersion teachers was mainly inside each program, they demand more opportunities to work with the teachers in other schools

offering these programs. This was mainly because external collaboration could facilitate exchanging ideas and materials with other immersion teachers, exploring new teaching ideas from external curriculum designs, and improving the teaching practice based on external feedback. As described in the literature, the Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. were short on authentic materials, which could be used for content-based teaching and learning (Chen et al., 2017; Met & Livaccari, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015b). The participants in this study reported the same issue and requested more collaboration among Chinese immersion teachers in different programs across the U.S. to share well-designed curriculum materials.

Summary

In summary, this study found a certain amount of beneficial and needed aspects related to the preparation and training of Chinese immersion teachers. These were similar to the benefits and needs that researcher experienced as a Chinese immersion teacher herself. During the teacher preparation in the U.S., the researcher also benefited from the preparation that related to special education, designing curriculum, teaching languages, using technology, and the teaching observations and practices both inside the preparation courses and in K-12 settings. When teaching in Chinese immersion programs, the training on the topics of SEL, teaching languages and content, and using instructional strategies, as well as the peer mentoring, teacher collaboration, and administrative support effectively contributed to the researcher's learning. In addition, the participants reported their preparation and training needs on the topics of SEL, DEI, understanding curriculum content and state academic standards, the methods of teaching the Chinese language, subject content, and managing behaviors, as well as cultural knowledge,

cross-cultural communication skills. These topics are also what the researcher needed for growth as an immersion teacher. Understanding American culture and the cultural aspects of American schools can be difficult, which could lead to classroom management issues. Thus, the researcher believes the key of the preparation and training of Chinese immersion teachers is to develop their cultural competence. In this case, the researcher argues that these elements are important and need to be considered in future Chinese immersion teacher preparation and training programs.

Limitation

The following were limitations in this research:

1. The participants were not asked to conduct the online interview in a private environment. Thus, one of the participants was interviewed in a classroom with colleagues around. This could affect some of the feedbacks of in-service teacher training, as the answers might not completely represent the participant's thoughts. To elaborate, the interview environment might affect the participant, as he/she could have some concerns when discussing the negative aspects about the school's in-service teacher training programs.
2. As all the interviews were conducted in English and English was not the participants' first language, the direct quotes from the participants might contain grammatical errors. Considering this issue, the researcher made the statements more understandable by selectively modifying the quotes but not changing the meaning as needed. For the same reason, some results were presented via paraphrasing the answers instead of direct quotes.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this qualitative study, future research could investigate the following:

1. A follow-up quantitative study could investigate Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions of their education programs on a larger scale of participants across the U.S.
2. Additional research could study the Chinese immersion teachers, who were prepared and trained fully in the U.S., about their perceptions of the teacher education programs.
3. Some comparative studies could be done to investigate the level of Chinese immersion teachers' satisfaction of their preparation and training from different states in the U.S.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the discussions above, the following recommendations are made to guide higher educational institutions, Chinese immersion programs, and professional learning communities in nurturing more effective and qualified Chinese immersion teachers:

Recommendations for higher educational institutions:

1. Develop more immersion teacher preparation or certification programs to fulfill the increasing demand for qualified language immersion teachers.
2. Enrich the current teacher preparation or certification programs by adding more courses that focus on the curriculum and instruction in an immersion setting.

3. Provide the elective courses in the teacher preparation programs to introduce the K-12 school system for the candidates who have not received their K-12 education in the U.S.
4. Include and/or require more practicum experience in immersion programs on top of practicum experience in regular K-12 programs.

Recommendations for Chinese immersion programs:

1. Provide more specialized training for Chinese immersion teachers who use the Chinese language to teach multiple subjects.
2. Offer well-designed, and published standards, curriculum, and materials to support Chinese immersion teachers.

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Appendix A: Email to Participants

Dear Mr./Ms. X:

I am a doctoral student in Educational Administration and Leadership Program at the St. Cloud State University conducting a study about Chinese immersion teacher education programs in the New York City. You are invited to participate in a research study about Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently a Chinese immersion teacher in NYC. If you choose to participate, you will be compensated by \$40 cash at the end of the study.

The purpose of this study is to find out more information related to Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives of their teacher preparation and training programs. This study will also provide relevant information related to Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions towards their teaching education programs, which will aim at improving the level of preparedness of Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignments.

The result of these findings could be incorporated into the curriculum of Chinese immersion teacher education programs to further improve the quality of immersion education. The research findings could also provide relevant information that can be shared with the administrators of Chinese immersion programs to better understand teachers' challenges. This could help Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. adjust their professional developments and provide corresponding support to help Chinese immersion teachers overcome cross-cultural challenges. The results of this research could also be used at higher educational institutes to design or modify teacher preparation programs' current curricula, especially within the immersion setting.

If you agree to be part of this research study, you will be asked to complete an individual interview regarding your perceptions of your teacher preparation and training programs. The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study anytime. Note that you will not be compensated if withdraw from the study early. Data collected will remain confidential. Your name will not be disclosed nor will identified direct quotes be used. You will not be identified by your name in any published materials.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please reply this email. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact the researcher or her advisor.

Dr. John Eller,
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN
jfeller@stcloudstate.edu
320-308-4241

Sincerely,
Mengyao Chen
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN
mchen1@go.stcloudstate.edu
(612)231-5853

Appendix B: Consent Form

Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs Consent to Participate

Procedures

You are invited to participate in a research study about Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently a Chinese immersion teacher in NYC. If you agree to be part of this research study, you will be asked to complete an individual interview regarding your perceptions of your teacher preparation and training programs. The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out more information related to Chinese immersion teachers' perspectives of their teacher preparation and training programs. This study will also provide relevant information related to Chinese immersion teachers' perceptions towards their teaching education programs, which will aim at improving the level of preparedness of Chinese immersion teachers in their teaching assignments.

Benefits of the Research

The result of these findings could be incorporated into the curriculum of Chinese immersion teacher education programs to further improve the quality of immersion education. The research findings could also provide relevant information that can be shared with the administrators of Chinese immersion programs to better understand teachers' challenges. This could help Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. adjust their professional developments and provide corresponding support to help Chinese immersion teachers overcome cross-cultural challenges. The results of this research could also be used at higher educational institutes to design or modify teacher preparation programs' current curricula, especially within the immersion setting.

Risks and Discomforts

There is no foresee risks or discomforts associated with this study.

Confidentiality

Data collected will remain confidential. Your name will not be disclosed nor will identified direct quotes be used. During the interview you may refuse to answer any questions. You will not be identified by your name in any published materials. All data will be stored in password-protected computer. The data will be destroyed within 3 years of the study's completion.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Cloud State University, or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Research Results and Contact Information

Results of the study can be requested from the researcher or published results at the St. Cloud State University Repository at <http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/>. If you have questions about this research study, you may contact Mengyao Chen anytime at mchen1@go.stcloudstate.edu; (612)231-5853 or Dr. John Eller at jfeller@stcloudstate.edu; (320)308-4272.

Acceptance to Participate

If you choose to participate, you will be compensated by \$40 cash at the end of the study. The participant will not be compensated if withdraw from the study early.

Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age, you have read the information provided above, and you have consent to participate.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Interview Guide

The interview for the immersion teachers will consist three parts: (1) Background information of Chinese immersion teachers; (2) Pre-service teacher preparation programs; (3) In-service teacher professional development programs.

Part I will explore the profiles of the participants; the teachers will be asked the following questions about their personal backgrounds:

1. What is your native language?
2. What are your current teaching duties? (subjects and grade levels)
3. How many years have you been teaching in immersion settings?
4. Do you have a teaching certificate? What kind of teaching certificate do you have?
5. Describe what teaching experience (settings, subjects and years) you have before you began teaching at an immersion school?

Part II will investigate teachers' perspectives towards their pre-service teacher preparation programs:

1. What post-secondary degree(s) have you completed before you became an immersion teacher? What was your major and in which country did you get your degree(s)?
2. On a scale of 1-20, how would do you rate your level of preparedness for immersion teaching assignments?
3. Did you receive any pre-service teacher preparation in the above-mentioned programs? If yes, which parts of your pre-service teacher preparation programs were helpful prepare you to be an effective immersion teacher?
4. Did you received any practicum experiences before teaching in the immersion setting? How long was the practicum? What kind of practicum experiences do you have?
5. Could you suggest at least three areas in which more preparation would be helpful and critically needed before you teach in actual immersion classrooms?

Part III will identify the in-service teacher development programs and their effectiveness by inquiring on:

1. On a scale of 1-20, how would do you rate the level of support you have received from the in-service training for immersion teaching assignments?
2. Which in-service teacher training/professional development activities and areas were the most helpful and supported you well for immersion teaching? Which part needs improvement?
3. Are there any specific areas in which you feel more training would be helpful? What are the activities/kinds of training you desire to receive in the above-mentioned areas?
4. Are there any suggestions you might have to add to the current immersion teacher training programs?

Appendix D: St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board Letter



Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Name: Mengyao Chen
Email: mchen1@go.stcloudstate.edu

IRB PROTOCOL DETERMINATION: Exempt Review

Project Title Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs

Advisor John Eller

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

- Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-4932 or email ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

IRB Chair:

Dr. Benjamin Witts
 Associate Professor- Applied Behavior Analysis
 Department of Community Psychology, Counseling, and Family Therapy

IRB Institutional Official:

Dr. Claudia Tomany
 Associate Provost for Research
 Dean of Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB#: 1978 - 2558	Type: Exempt Review	Today's Date: 8/27/2020
1st Year Approval Date: 7/3/2020	2nd Year Approval Date:	3rd Year Approval Date:
1st Year Expiration Date:	2nd Year Expiration Date:	3rd Year Expiration Date:



Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Continuing Review / Final Report

Principal Investigator: **Mengyao Chen**

Co-Investigator

Project Title: **Chinese Immersion Teachers' Perceptions of Their Teacher Education Programs**

St. Cloud State University requires all research activities involving human subject – whether or not they are supported by Federal funds – to comply with the Federal Policy of the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46). According to this policy, ongoing research activities involving human subjects must be reviewed by the IRB, at a minimum of at least once per year. In some cases, such as when research poses a significant risk, the IRB may require more frequent reviews.

This form must be submitted before your study expiration date. (as indicated on your approval letter)

Proposed changes to the protocol of study documents may NOT be implemented until after the IRB has approved the

1. Please indicate the status of your project:

(Choose only one of the following)

Continuing Review:

Subject recruitment/enrollement continues; current consent/assent required, please attach.

Data collection continues with enrolled subjects; no additional subjects will be recruited.

Final Report

Project has been completed.

Data collection has been completed but data analysis continues.

The project has not and will not be conducted: Please explain:

2. How many participants have participated in your study? _____

3. Have any unexpected reactions, complications or problems occurred during this study?

No

If YES, please explain:

4. Have any subjects withdrawn from the study - either voluntarily or at the researcher's request?

No

If YES, please explain:

5. Have any subjects complained about the study?

No

If YES, please explain:

6. Has any new information been identified that may affect the willingness of current or future subjects to participate in this study?

No

If YES, please explain and indicate how it was or will be conveyed to subjects:

7. Have any changes been made to your study (including changes to informed consent documents, debriefing statements,

Principal Investigator's Signature

Date

SCSU IRB# 1978 - 2558