A Digest of
Chinese Teacher Training Centre
Research, Resources and Publications
2009-2015
The research reports and resources listed in this publication are available for download or Internet access from
http://education.unimelb.edu.au/cttc/research/publications

The CTTC acknowledges with gratitude the financial support received from the institutions named below in the preparation of the resources listed.

**Professional Development DVDS**

**Narrative Units:**
*Sounds of the Immortals and The Meaning Engineers* – the China in the World Centre, Australian National University, ACT, Australia (2013-2014)


Photos pages 4, 11 and 15 courtesy of Andrew Scrimgeour
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The Chinese Teacher Training Centre (CTTC) was established in 2009 as a national resource by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in partnership with China’s National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (Hanban) in the wake of the Federal Government’s announcement of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) and recommendations for such a centre in the 2008 report The Current State of Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools. Following a tendering process, the CTTC was established at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education as home base of a consortium that included the China Institute at ANU.

The CTTC’s brief was to take the leading role in initiating and supporting the systemic, pedagogical and attitudinal changes crucial to success for all learners of Chinese in Australian schools. The CTTC work comprised advocating the learning of Chinese; introducing and developing practice in Chinese classroom language and culture pedagogy; initiating more intensive and extensive student use of the language and intercultural engagement through innovative employment of ICT and specially created immersion environments; and researching teaching practices and learner development.

To achieve these goals the CTTC exercised strong advocacy with appropriate bodies for Chinese curriculum reform and development, and initiated teacher education and research programs that

- examined and documented current pedagogy and programs for Chinese language teaching
- provided professional development in Chinese language and culture pedagogy
- created innovative resources to open up new paths of teaching and learning
- introduced ways for students to spend more out-of-class time on Chinese
- researched classroom management and language use by Chinese teachers
- researched the learning design and conduct of school sojourns to China.

This publication showcases CTTC work in the years 2009-2015. It is intended as an introduction for school systems decision makers, School Leaders, and teachers to the information and resources now available to them, and a means of providing them with a succinct overview of the findings and recommendations of each project.

Jane Orton, PhD
Director, CTTC
30 June 2015
Introduction

In the course of data gathering for the report Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools (Orton, 2008/2010), the term ‘Chinese program’ was used constantly by education providers, principals and teachers. All spoke as if it were clear what this meant. Yet what it actually meant in substance was such varied provision of Chinese language study as to make comparison across schools and sectors very difficult.

The aim of The Profiles Project was to provide some new, basic information about what constitutes ‘having a Chinese program’; what those involved believe about their program and the practice of Chinese teaching and learning; and what they draw on to inform their practice.

The study comprised the documenting of Chinese programs in a representative spread of school types in Victoria, through interviews with school leaders, languages curriculum coordinators, and teachers, as well as observation of teaching in each school. Of the 11 programs examined, three were in stand-alone primary schools (Foundation to Year 6); four in stand-alone secondary schools (Years 7-12), and four in multi-campus schools (Foundation to Year 12). Six were government schools, four were Independent schools and one was a Catholic school. Eight were located in greater Melbourne and three on the fringe of regional centres. They covered all socio-economic brackets.

Results

The study confirmed that the term ‘a Chinese as a Second Language program’ covers quite varied forms of provision in time allocation, type of instruction and teaching practices, all set within very different environments. However, there were also common aspects of programs, the most evident of which were the following:

- The Chinese program was strongly valued by school leaders and was often carrying their highest aspirations for the school and the students
- The teachers were dedicated, and keen to see their students progress, but in many instances were very isolated; several experienced considerable tension in their work, feeling frustrated at not being able to implement teaching in accordance with their beliefs
- Not a great deal of common understanding of the task of teaching and learning Chinese among those involved in providing for it
- Chinese teachers did not refer to contemporary pedagogical principles when discussing their practice. Most took an essentially traditional approach of ‘talk and explain’ combined with an eclectic choice of supplementary activities
- Some teachers made use of digital technology, though its employment was uneven and limited, and often for teaching convenience rather than to maximize learning opportunities
- Lessons observed were uniformly conducted in English and comprised a steady working through of textbook exercises and worksheets
- In the primary schools, the Chinese curriculum was fairly ad hoc, and there seemed to be little method in common across the schools
- In the secondary area, there was a relentless drive to push in the characters that will be needed by Year 12, although barely 5% will go that far. Many of the teachers had opposing and often fuzzy views on the use of Pinyin romanisation, confusing it with being a substitute for learning to write characters rather than a necessary tool for foreign learners to use to record new vocabulary as it is sounded, and for noting the pronunciation of characters
- Student behaviour in Chinese classes was a problem in the eyes of school leaders and Chinese teachers.

The teaching of Chinese in many ways still has much of a pioneer quality to it, with teachers and administrators daily facing considerable
challenges to their knowledge and ingenuity. Many in school leadership positions offer their support with little knowledge of what is needed from a good language teacher beyond enthusiasm.

**Recommendations**

1. The most fundamental need is for a shared understanding among Chinese teachers and their school leaders of the learning task confronting students tackling Chinese as a Second Language.

2. With respect to the task, the full meaning of two central demands made on learners of Chinese as a Second Language needs to be appreciated in current programs:
   - There is a much higher burden on memory demanded by Chinese than occurs in learning another language: vocabulary and characters must be individually remembered for every syllable acquired, and there are virtually no cognates to help;
   - Learners need to develop some quite new ways of working with their body and their mind than have been developed in acquiring their oracy and literacy proficiency in English. These challenges are present from the start and continue.

3. Allocation of time in terms of volume and frequency is of critical importance in learning Chinese. At primary level, three 20-minute sessions per week will achieve a far better yield than a single hour-long class.

4. Activities in the classroom must provide real meaning by being connected to the actual doing of something in the language in the here and now, something which also attracts the learners to want to join in.

5. Given the work involved to master characters and the crowded school timetable, there is a critical need to make engaging activities using Chinese available to students beyond the classroom at all times.

6. For Australian secondary students to remember characters and vocabulary they must engage in using the language often, in ways which require attention to meaning and careful observation, in activities they want to take part in. Memorising language should only be for reciting a poem fluently, or acting out a role play.

7. The teacher’s task will be to engage students and educate them: developing their curiosity, capacity for independent and collaborative work, and higher order thinking.

**Conclusion**

Improved provision of Chinese as a Second Language programs requires a concerted effort to develop a core set of shared goals and practices. That will only occur if the task is recognised by all involved to be a joint activity, one in which the problems are not seen as belonging to one group or the other, but understood to be shared problems; just as, to be effective, solutions will also need to be developed as a shared stance.
GOOD LEARNERS OF CHINESE – SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Introduction

This research report presents profiles of the study habits, attitude and beliefs of fourteen Victorian classroom learners of Chinese whom their teachers consider to be ‘good’ language learners: students at various stages of their secondary schooling who have made particularly good headway in Chinese, especially in their acquisition of the oral language.

The aim of the research was to provide information on a range of good learners of Chinese in our schools, showing what they think and feel about their study, and what they do to learn the language so well.

The students represented a spread of individual interests, history and learning styles. They also showed some strong commonalties across the group.

Results

1. The one common good learning characteristic of all these students, which appeared across the range of gender, age and school type, was that they benefited from support and a positive attitude to their study from their family: their families are keen for them to learn Chinese and they encourage them in their language learning tasks, despite the fact that none of the parents was able to assist with the study, and only two students had a sibling who had studied Chinese. Parental support included applying pressure to do well, offering rewards for success and offering to ‘hear’ work learned such as vocabulary and dialogues.

2. A further learning characteristic, which ran a close second to the first, was that the students described themselves as engaged by their studies, with respect to Chinese and more generally. Two-thirds referred to themselves as ‘a high achiever’ and were doing very well in English, while half were taking advanced Maths and two-thirds were also quite highly developed musicians. They enjoyed the challenge of Chinese.

3. The same high proportion of the students was readily able to articulate specific learning strategies they employed, the principal two of which were that they are diligent in doing all the work set and they make additional efforts themselves. Half believed they were naturally good at language learning. Their learning techniques consisted primarily of reading/speaking aloud and/or using auditory aids, and just over half have a revision / review strategy to consolidate work.

4. The 12/14 still studying Chinese at school at the time of the interviews intended to continue the following year, and this despite a number having found studying Chinese to be quite a negative experience. One of the two who would not continue had already completed VCE and, due to considerable disappointment in the grade he received, had decided not to continue with Chinese at university. The other drop-out was one of the youngest male students who, after a very positive first year of study in Year 7, found himself overwhelmed by the large number of home speakers in his new Year 8 class. Despite his best efforts, he was ranked very low in the class and he could see no point continuing.

5. All the students had clear views on how their Chinese course could be improved. Their major proposition was that the listening and speaking component be increased considerably. All complained that the bulk of their study was only reading and writing. As a result, even when they had the opportunity to speak Chinese, in China or locally, they found themselves very poor at getting anything out, a situation they experienced as both embarrassing and disappointing.

6. The students’ success in Chinese had developed despite the fact that fewer than a quarter had had the opportunity to learn Chinese over any period in Primary, and nearly two thirds had started in Secondary without any option to choose another language. Those in both groups, however, said they felt Chinese was intriguing and they liked the sound of it, the characters and the culture; and they had a desire to socialise, travel and work with the language.
7. 93% of all interviewees identified both personal learning strategies and employing extra effort.

Recommendations

The results provided the following information for teachers on how they might help students learn better, and on how they might teach better.

Learning

As with earlier research, the results of this study suggest there is much that is teachable about being a successful learner of Chinese, most of which falls into the category of learning to learn. To this end, teachers should:

- Talk to students about their learning and make talking about their problems a discussable topic
- Help them to monitor their learning, understand their own needs, and design strategies that work for them on points where they are weak
- Teach specific practical strategies for learning tones and characters
- Ensure that lessons include metalinguistic awareness so that the intrinsic interest in language can develop and sustain the study
- Teach students to find challenges interesting rather than simply daunting
- Assist background speakers and classroom learners to work more cooperatively
- Ensure students are aware of community resources they can access independently to increase their experience of the language in natural settings
- Educate parents about the importance of their interest in their child’s perseverance and success; suggest practical ways for them to help their children with Chinese.

Teaching

The following are the major points on these matters raised by virtually all of the students:

- Along with acknowledgement of encouraging, supportive teachers, lessons are described as dull, repetitive and frequently dysfunctional
- Especially in the crucial Middle Years (7-9), even these passionate, diligent learners claim to have made only modest progress in proficiency
- Right up to the end of secondary school, these good students are lamenting their lack of grasp of tones and their poor ability to understand and speak, which inhibits most of them from taking advantage of opportunities to practise and improve their Chinese by participating in community activities
- While in their classes there is considerable imbalance in emphasis on development in literacy at the expense of the spoken, their lower oral skills are also the result of being given very little chance to ever hear flows of natural Chinese and thus develop an inner impression of how they should sound.
- Their stronger ability in reading and writing has been gained at excessive cost in comparison to work done for other subjects, and remains tenuous, in need of constant maintenance to prevent erosion.
QUALITY, SUSTAINABLE CHINESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS
‘IF YOU’RE GOING TO DO IT, YOU’VE GOT TO DO IT PROPERLY’

Quality/ 高质量 [gāo zhìliàng]
adj. general excellence of standard

Sustainable/ 可持续性发展的 [kěchíxùxìng fāzhǎn de]
adj. able to be maintained at a certain level

Results
Quality, sustainable programs are accorded strength and consistency through support at three points (the Tripod):

The Champion
The champion is the person with the vision, the commitment, and the authority to share, activate, drive and monitor a new initiative. They promote the idea, shape and participate in the initial exploration, judge what is possible while still being prepared to take risks, search out and employ suitable staff, engage consultants and other outside assistance. In this study the role of the champion has been taken everywhere by the Principal.

The Facilitator
The facilitator is the person, commonly the Deputy Principal or the Head of Languages, in small schools the Principal, who takes the dominant role in translating the vision into practice. They do things like building teaching and support teams, ensuring the timetabling supports the program, making sure there are funds for required resources, that suitable rooms and access to ICTs infrastructure are available, providing or agreeing to opportunities for professional learning, encouraging co-planning, making sure that language staff are aware of and involved in mainstream school activities, talking with parents and negotiating staff concerns. This crucial role is often overlooked in discussions of this type, but was noted consistently in this study.

The Teachers
Several Principals spoke of the way they had chased and found the right person to provide their Chinese program. It is clearly the heart of the process. Many of the teachers of Chinese in these programs are comparatively inexperienced and have been asked to take on quite new ways of working. In most of the schools none of the teachers have had formal initial training for their current role, but they were distinguished among other things by their willingness and capacity to learn.

The Fundamental Building Blocks
• Begin the program early, and ensure the program has continuity
• Provide teaching sessions which are intense and frequent, through innovative approaches
• Enrich the program with supplementary activities
• Always consider the program as developmental
The essentials of a quality, sustainable program that have emerged from the study are a constantly functioning combination of the following.

- A clear, deep recognition by the Principal of the educational importance of language learning and regard for Chinese as a language abundantly able to effect this development
- Relentless championing of the program by the Principal in all spheres of engagement inside and outside the school: promoting it to all stakeholders; moving it into the mainstream school profile; protecting it, and even privileging it where deemed necessary, with respect to money, time and staffing
- Hardworking, flexible, intelligent teachers, willing and interested in working regularly beyond their comfort zone, undergoing formal and informal re-training, and reconsidering deeply held, often hitherto unexamined assumptions
- An enthusiastic, energetic and able person at senior level (such as a Deputy Principal or a Head of Languages) who can work between the other two levels: appreciating the demand on the teachers and able to engage with them over the nitty-gritty of their day-to-day matters, including supporting them in team building with other staff; and also capable of working with the Principal to get parents and staff on side with the program and with its special aspects, such as a China sojourn, special school events, and changes to what have hitherto been routines and norms.

In five of the seven programs studied, the above features were augmented by a researched understanding and conviction in the Principal that the demands of language learning, and of Chinese in particular, mean that an early and more intensive provision of time on task in engaging activities is essential to achieve the desired level of success.

‘Quality’ and ‘Sustainable’ are not outcomes, but comprehensive strategies
Introduction
This study was undertaken to investigate the outcomes of a short-term sojourn in China for 20 secondary students of Chinese from 11 Victorian government schools. The aims were to gauge gains in
- Language proficiency
- Cultural knowledge of China
- Intercultural competence.

Results
Learning Language, Cultural Knowledge, Intercultural Competence
- All improved in language proficiency to some degree, with the weaker ones at the start making the greatest progress
- The most frequently commented on aspect of Chinese culture was the urban environment. Students had not expected China to be as developed and westernised as they had found it to be, for example, in its architecture
- Students who already had a deeper awareness of culture evident in their pre-sojourn interviews tended to have engaged at a deeper level with their experiences in China and to have more profound observations to make
- The most common terms students used to describe the Chinese they encountered were positive. Of highest frequency was hard-working
- The most common attributes of Chinese people noted were resilience, determination and diligence, while respect for the elderly was also mentioned.

In sum, the study provided strong evidence for the value of the program for providing
- first-hand experience of Chinese culture
- an authentic purpose for language learning
- motivation for continuing to learn Chinese.

Sojourn Design
Language classes dedicated to the specific students were beneficial in
- improving Chinese language skills and confidence in speaking Chinese
- assisting students to carry out day-to-day activities in the world outside the classroom.

Weaknesses in the program stemmed from
- division into classes of the very disparately proficient students at only two levels
- limited opportunities to connect with Chinese people, including failure to provide each students on arrival with a local ‘buddy’.

Recommendations
Planning and design
- The China sojourn program supported through the Hanban should be continued, but with DEECD providing greater input into the design and implementation of the program
- A buddy system which includes a brief home stay should be incorporated
- 10-12 days is too short to reap maximum benefit from the expense in organisational effort and money required to run the program. 18 or more days would be likely to reap much greater rewards, and a minimum of 14 days should be stipulated
- Clear shared goals need to be established for the desired outcomes of the sojourn program, in terms of language training, cultural learning and intercultural experience and the weighting to be given to these
- Learning from the program should be formally assessed and information used to reform program design
- Pre-sojourn training in how to learn from a sojourn – not simply briefings on travel practicalities and law – could maximise the gains from even a short visit.
Maximising learning
• The Chinese side should provide more tailored work in language development – for example, targeting a couple of weaknesses evident in a pre-sojourn diagnostic test, and linking work on these with the vocabulary needed for program participation, such as visiting the Zoo
• Students should be paired up with a buddy in the first week of the program, or even beforehand via Skype. This would maximise the chance of developing a relationship that might last
• Direction needs to be given for use of the time allocated in evenings for private study
• Formal reflection activities are shown to enhance learning and these should be introduced in the form of personal blogs or journals and some group reflection on the experiences of each day and plans for the following one.
LEARNING FROM SHORT TERM SOJOURNS IN CHINA, GETTING THE MOST YOU CAN FROM YOUR SCHOOL’S CHINA TRIP

Introduction

A well-designed in-country sojourn provides an excellent means for a school to realise its commitment to preparing students for their future in a global society. It should be considered as a direct contribution to the general educational goals of the school. The key learning outcomes that might be expected from the sojourn are:

• Personal growth
• Language proficiency
• Cultural knowledge and understanding
• Intercultural competence

Results

These reports set out the benefits of in-country sojourns in China for Australian school students and the challenges that a sojourn poses for planners and sojourn leaders. Recommendations for ways to proceed with an in-country sojourn were made with reference to the literature and to the experiences of Australian educators.

The benefits that students can gain from an in-country sojourn are:

• Improved language skills through real-world language learning
• Development towards an ethnorelative worldview
• Development of personal and social skills in preparation for a global future.

The challenges for planning and implementation are:

• Creating partnerships with in-country institutions that are achievable, sustainable and beneficial for all parties
• Developing programs that support and enrich students’ language and culture learning.

A learner-centred approach to the in-country sojourn is recommended. Features include:

• Experiences that incorporate observation, interaction and reflection
• Opportunities for interaction with local people in varied contexts that emphasize purposeful communication
• Language and culture learning based on analysis of learner needs

Opportunities for learners to develop friendships with peers based on shared interests.

A procedure to assess the impact of the sojourn on the participating students should be in place and used. A basic framework you could use might be:

• We went to China in order to [X, Y, Z & c.]
• To what extent did this happen?
• What unexpected things happened?
• What factors influenced these outcomes? How, and why?
• What should we do differently next time?

Successful partnerships

As intercultural relationships, Australia-China sojourn partnerships are vulnerable to the same misunderstandings and tensions as individual relationships. Studies note the need for:

• a strong sense of mission
• a genuine desire on the part of the entire school leadership on both sides to establish and develop a successful and sustained relationship with the partner school on a scale/ of a nature that both can manage
• enough staff, possibly drawn from a range of faculties, to participate in various roles as host as well as visitor, so as to provide a sturdy and stable base
• a number of people to share the workload.

Sustaining partnerships cannot be made the burden of just one staff member, or the relationship will always be at risk of collapse. A healthy partnership involves the school leadership team, staff members from departments other than Chinese, and parents.

Developing a good intercultural relationship requires ‘especially favourable conditions’¹ These are:

• equal status contact
• shared superordinate goals
• intimate rather than superficial or formal contact
• candid treatment of difficulties by both parties.
The basics of establishing a partnership

At the time of negotiation, it is essential to:

- make the sojourners’ needs clear and to be firm about what is wanted while remaining flexible as to how these needs can be met
- ask what the hosts are seeking for their part
- monitor one’s own assumptions and check the assumptions being made on the other side
- raise worries politely but clearly, and make difficulties discussable
- allow sufficient time and number of contact occasions for second thoughts and unexpected concerns to emerge
- schedule post-sojourn reflection and renegotiation,
- seek ways of involving staff from music or sport to spread school commitment to the program and encourage students to see language learning as part of their whole selves, rather than a discrete specialization.

The use of a suitably-qualified intermediary can be useful, provided sufficient time and care is taken to brief and debrief the person, and that they can be seen by all involved as benign and relatively independent.

Introduction

‘Blended learning’ is defined as a systematic and strategic combination of teaching and learning methods from face-to-face (FTF), mobile and online possibilities in order to enhance active learning. The aim of the study was to:

1. present practices and perspectives of Victorian Chinese teachers towards adopting blended provision;
2. profile three representative Chinese blended learning programs;
3. propose future directions and training for the development of blended learning.

Results

1. 186 per cent of the blended program providers are first language speakers of Chinese, with Mainlanders making up two-thirds of total respondents. There are twice as many relatively inexperienced teachers (1-10 years) using blended learning than their more experienced colleagues (10 years and above).
2. Almost half of the initial 117 Survey respondents do not use technology regularly or systematically; those who do, tend to use it on a daily or weekly basis. Most use a small number of digital tools, but use them with thoroughness and consistency, but others embrace a much wider variety of digital tools, some using them only partially and some making comprehensive use of them. The students in the middle years (4-7) have more opportunities to learn Chinese using technology than those who are younger or older.
3. Three types of blended learning models emerged from the study:
   1) The whole program is online and delivered through distance teaching and learning supported FTF by a non-Chinese teacher in the actual classroom.
   2) The program integrates a considerable amount of technology, perhaps even more digital than FTF activities, achieved through systematic and frequent use of one or a few major digital tools.
   3) The program is mainly FTF and is supplemented by the use of technology. The teacher is on site for all lessons and gives FTF instruction to students during activities, including digital tasks.
4. Within the current educational context, the majority of blended learning program providers use – and prefer to use – FTF teaching as the main approach supplemented with the use of technology.
5. The program providers’ knowledge, skills and application strategies towards blended provision are limited. Although having very mixed beliefs, most program providers agree that the two fundamental features of good blended learning are:
   1) the integrity of the blend achieved with the FTF and technological methods complementing one another’s strengths and weaknesses; and
   2) the seamless transition between learning activities using either mode.
6. Technology is seen to bring numerous benefits, such as increasing learner motivation, providing variety to learning activities and promoting personalized learning experience. At the same time, it is a source of overwhelming teacher frustration due to constant technical difficulties. An FTF approach is viewed as a channel to promote real-world conversational experience and provide instant and wide-ranging feedback on students’ language learning.
7. The implementation of blended learning is influenced by the following critical factors:
   1) technological infrastructure provision;
   2) compatibility of technological equipment among users;
   3) level of teacher interest, confidence and competency with technology;
   4) technological assistance and learning support available to teachers;
   5) support from leadership and other teaching staff involved in the program.

Recommendations

On the principle that teaching and learning should be specifically tailored to the context of the individual school and program (DEECD, 2012; Holkner et al, 2008), there can be no standard model of blended learning. The factors which need
to be considered by a school seeking to develop its own effective mode of blended learning are set out here:

1. Schools and teachers who consider setting up or revising a blended learning Chinese program, should assess the school’s and/or regional infrastructure to determine: the variety of technical equipment available (e.g. IWB, document camera); and the ratio of digital devices to student numbers, and evaluate the breadth and quality of network access for both teacher and students. It is also important to check for software consistency and compatibility across schools if one set of devices is to be used communally in the region.

2. Prior to setting up the blended learning program, possible sources of financial provision, and prospects of funding being continued should be considered in the school’s long-term budget.

3. Schools and teachers should decide before implementation the relation between technology and FTF contact time in their blended learning program based on their resources, budget, learners’ needs and characteristics. They should develop their metacognitive understanding of the role played by technology and FTF methods, appreciating that both components are vital in blended learning, and need to be balanced and complementary. Not least, the teacher needs to gain confidence and competency in teaching with technology and be able to assist students to effectively use technology as a learning tool.

4. An efficient and resourceful team of IT personnel needs to participate in development of the program and be available to provide ongoing support. These people should also be involved early on in the preliminary infrastructure assessment phases of the planning to advise on the full potential of the available infrastructure and its possible limitations.

5. The school should allocate protected time to the teacher for development of new blended learning materials and activities. The time should be used by the teachers to explore and experiment with resources, familiarise students with the technology, and plan jointly.

6. Basic, advanced and ad hoc professional training should be tailored for blended program providers who are at different developmental stages of knowledge and expertise in implementing blended provision. Training should also be developed for teachers who will teach students who will attend lessons solely online.

If multiple aspects of the program cannot be attended to concurrently, schools and program providers are advised to target one area and build a strong base for it first. The critical areas to begin with are: solid technological equipment supply and network access; durable teacher interest and expertise in using technology to teach; strong cooperation with cluster schools to ensure compatible equipment and solid support.
Introduction

At the request of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), in 2012 the CTTC examined the use of digital resources in Chinese language classrooms. The study set out to answer the following questions:

1. What are the digital resources (software and online resources) that Chinese teachers use in their classrooms and the ways in which the potential of ICT for developing students’ language is exploited?
2. What reasons lead Chinese teachers to the decision of using which digital resources, in what conditions and to what level in using them?
3. What significant beliefs do Chinese teachers hold in regards to the functions and roles of ICT in different aspects of the curriculum?
4. How could ICT use in Chinese language education be enhanced in the future?

Results

1. Participants in this study were predominantly female, most born and educated in China. These are attributes typical of Chinese teachers as a whole. With 36% of the participants under 40 and only 26% over 50, the group’s mean age was calculated to be 40 years. This is younger than the average age of the full cohort, which the Chinese Language Teachers Association of Victoria (CLTAV) estimates to be over 50.

2. Participants’ preferred means of learning ICT was by independent exploration. However, this choice was the result of rarely finding formal professional development designed to meet their immediate needs, or the constraints on their attending sessions due to other commitments or distance. If quality targeted sessions were more available at more suitable times, they would be keen to learn from experts and share with peers.

3. PowerPoint and online language learning sites were the most popular among teachers. Newer technologies such as Interactive whiteboard (IWB), iPad, iPhone, Web 2.0 and audio/video recording were used by comparatively fewer teachers but often with higher frequency of use. Teachers’ favored ICT activities usually involve the use of PowerPoint and an IWB.

4. Less than half of the teachers were overall satisfied with the ICT support they receive from their schools, while only a few were exceptionally pleased about it. Teachers believed that the level of support they were provided largely determined how much and how far they can go using technology in their teaching.

5. Although nowadays ICT was integrated by most teachers in their teaching, the proportion of use, the selection of tools and the activities designed based on selected technology greatly varied from one teacher to another. Teachers made these decisions based on the ease of operating the tools, the immediate ICT provision they received and their judgments of what was appropriate to the needs of teaching and learning, which at many times was defined by the prescribed curriculum.

6. The majority of teachers felt comfortable when learners used ICT under their direction. A certain degree of autonomy was given to students, especially in their deciding what format and technology to use in completing assignments.

7. The current use of ICT was often reported as problematic. The three biggest sources of problems lay in infrastructure matters outside a teacher’s control, the teacher’s low confidence or low technical competence in using ICT, and students’ inappropriate use of the opportunities and autonomy given to them to use ICT.

8. Perceived as a ‘tool,’ ICT was generally believed to increase learner motivation and creativity, to extend learning outside the classroom, and somewhat to improve interaction and collaboration. However, using ICT was felt by some to create excessive work for teachers due to preparation time and frequent technical problems.
In summary, the use of digital resources in the teaching of Chinese in Victoria was shown to be widespread but very varied as to the breadth and frequency of employment. Many teachers directed students to commercial resources such as on-line dictionaries and made use of digital resources such as CDs that accompany the class textbooks, as well as the learning objects on the former Learning Federation website. With respect to future development, however, by far the greatest interest was in mobile devices and an IWB, and the greatest gap in what was available to them was Chinese-specific content and teaching-learning paths for employing these. With the exception of a handful of experienced ICT enthusiasts, Chinese teachers generally did not feel they had the technical or pedagogical expertise to design effective teaching activities with these programs themselves. Moreover, all were very pressed for time as it was, and for even the enthusiasts it was hard to carry out sustained development of class resources and hence even their projects tended to dwindle.

**Recommendations**

To improve and develop greater use and better application of digital resources in the teaching of Chinese, the following action is recommended:

1. Production of a guide to existing resources, catalogued according to level and topic.
2. Provision of a comprehensive store of learning activities, including exercises, interactive tasks, songs, and games; and production of new material to broaden variety as well as to fill gaps in what is already available.
3. Design of a sustained and coordinated program of development of specifically Chinese language activities and learning paths using mobile devices and an IWB.
4. Establishment of an easily accessed network for sharing high quality methods of using resources.
5. Design of professional development that is focused on the teaching of Chinese, provided at a variety of times, including asynchronously online, for teachers who often work Saturdays and have school or home duties on weekday afternoons.
6. Provision of strong school support in the form of high quality equipment, maintained in good working order, with technical help readily available, as well as collegial exchange across learning areas on the use of ICT.
7. Encouragement of schools and the community at large to enter into dialogue with teachers and students over the purpose and value of digital resources in education and language learning.
THE CHINESE LANGUAGE OF THE CLASSROOM

Introduction

Despite having a negative impact on student progress, most Chinese language classes in Australian schools are conducted in English. This happens because teachers who are second language users (L2 teachers), themselves, generally lack the language needed for running lessons, while first language user teachers (L1 teachers) find their unrestrained language is more than learners can cope with. To improve their students’ proficiency both sets of teachers need to learn to use frequently an accurate and natural, but reduced, corpus of classroom Chinese, which gets gradually developed. This research project was undertaken as a start to building that basic corpus.

Data

The sources for a corpus of natural classroom language were recordings of the language used naturally in L1 teachers’ lessons in subjects across the curriculum in three sinophone locations: Beijing day schools, a Hong Kong Mandarin-English bilingual school, and a Chinese Community School in Melbourne. A total of 18 lessons, ten primary and eight secondary, were recorded. Content included Mathematics, Discovery, Politics and (L1) Chinese. Analyses of these data isolated the language most commonly used in instructing, sequencing lesson stages, organizing activities, managing the learning process, and regulating classroom behaviour. The results show that, regardless of the subject matter and the setting of the class, there was a shared set of teacher classroom talk that was finite and recurrent.

Results

By reducing synonymous expressions to one high frequency term, and identifying key vocabulary and grammatical structures, a first corpus of natural, accurate, but pared down language was built. Tests of the corpus with L2 teachers revealed a very small volume of language new to them, and a learning challenge residing largely in mastery of spontaneous, fluent expression of connected complex clauses. The language could...
INTERCULTURAL CHALLENGES FOR L1 TEACHERS OF CHINESE IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

Introduction

The aim of the project was to identify the most common intercultural challenges experienced by mother tongue Chinese speaking (L1) teachers of Chinese in Australian schools. Data from a survey of L1 teachers of Chinese, interviews with individual survey respondents, and a focus group interview with L2 teachers, were analysed to show what the L1 teachers found most challenging was to engage with L2 students. They also revealed a divergence along L1-L2 lines over culturally shaped beliefs and values in matters such as teacher authority, fairness, the teacher-student relationship, and the role each party should play in the education process.

Results

Findings of the project suggest clear discrepancies between L1 and L2 teachers in beliefs about the nature of a desirable teacher-student relationship, and differences in the underlying rules they operate with when managing this relationship. The key discrepancies uncovered concerned:

- how to establish teacher authority
- how relate to students inside and outside the classroom
- being (un)aware of the significance of fairness in dealing with students
- the extent to which the teacher needs to engage personally with students.
- Differences among members within the L1 group were also apparent, which split according to their exposure to Western education.

The results of the project increase our knowledge of the fundamental issues that lead to inadequate action at the moment of conflict.

Recommendations

Differences in socioculturally shaped values, beliefs, and action strategies cause intercultural difficulties for L1 teachers and their students. The mismatches in role expectations raise questions over whose goals, values and practices should be adhered to in Chinese classes in Australia: those of the language being learned or those of the society where the learning takes place. This is a matter that needs to be addressed in Chinese language teacher education programs through ongoing intercultural dialogue. Recognition of the existing issues constitutes the first step of cooperatively seeking answers to these essential questions.
Professional Development Resources
21ST CENTURY TEACHERS OF CHINESE

Introduction

21st Century Teachers of Chinese comprises videos of 16 x 30-minute lessons, taught to eight groups of Year 9 students in Victoria. They show innovative lessons in each of the key topics in teaching Chinese: developing spoken language, literacy development, culture and language teaching, and using digital technologies. These four topics are further divided into two aspects each, and the set of DVDs presents two consecutive lessons on each aspect taught to the one group of students.

21st Century Teachers of Chinese is a project funded by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations through its NALSSP Strategic Partnerships program. The lessons shown were taught in 2011 by four teachers from the Chinese Teacher Training Centre at the University of Melbourne in a classroom at Independent Schools Victoria. The students are from schools in the government, catholic and independent sectors.

Educational Value

The first benefit of this set of DVDs is that it presents a series of lessons which can be used as a clear, common point of reference and study by a group of teachers in training, pre-service or in-service: everyone can be talking about the same lesson, and know they are. The set of DVDs can also be used by individual teachers seeking ideas. The videos provide a great deal of information about how to structure a lesson, how to work with students on particular aspects of Chinese and how to gather evaluative information about the lesson during the class and at the end.

Viewing Guide

The unrehearsed classes were videoed non-stop. The practices of the four teachers present a range of personal styles, methods, techniques and resources, but are united in their approach to students as intelligent, curious and capable, and to Chinese language as intriguing, systematic and learnable.

Modern teacher education research has shown that in addition to the big choices made during lesson preparation, it is often the simple techniques of where the teacher stands, how the teacher’s utterances are structured in language and modulated in voice, and how the teacher deals with student responses, that make the difference between successful teachers and great classes, and those that fail. The videos offer for scrutiny, consideration, adoption and adaptation both a complete overview of a lesson and that kind of close sequential information.

Notes accompanying each video suggest the specific points of practice, technique, attitude and values evident in the particular lesson that you might watch for and consider. Collectively, they involve the teacher’s relationship to

- the language – how it is being used and presented
- the students – and the kind of student-student relationships being fostered
- the structure of the period and the flow of activities
- management of the group, the time and the space.
DEVELOPING ORAL SKILLS: 
TAUGHT BY JANE ORTON

Oral Skills: Using Chinese Part 1

In this lesson, students link their perception of situation and task to gradually more fluent uttering of the sounds, vocabulary and structures. Cognitively, learning is supported by perceptual information and hand movement, while socially the language is used in meaningful, game-like activities. Teacher and student play separate but complementary roles, with the learners working on the language and the teacher working on the learners. The teacher provides only what the students cannot invent. Ascertaining the students' capabilities and teaching them her conventions, she is engaged but silent at first, and says very little throughout, despite it being an oral skills lesson.

Oral Skills: Using Chinese Part 2

By waiting at the start, the teacher puts pressure on the learners to re-establish the level they had reached in Part 1 two weeks earlier. Working together they are able to recall the vocabulary and smoothly incorporate the ba construction, and are then ready to proceed to new challenges. The teacher establishes models of structures. Students have to realize they cannot just repeat her words, they must speak the truth from where they stand. Having grasped the importance of physical orientation, they expand into using the verb complement _PRICE and PRICE. Each step scaffolds development in structure and fluency.
Oral Skills: Sounding Chinese Part 1

The work in this lesson is on establishing in the mind’s ear – in the body – the fundamental rhythm and phrasing of Chinese. The teacher’s conventions are demonstrated in the Warm Up, an exercise intended also to allow students to get used to being so exposed while speaking Chinese: standing fully visible in a very small group, very close to their teachers. The rhyme is regular in rhythm and repetitive in form, and student smiles as the number increases show they are engaged with meaning as well as with sound. Techniques used include hands and even whole body movements mirroring voice.

Oral Skills: Sounding Chinese Part 2

The rhyme from the first class is revised by the students and used as a Warm Up to the rhythm and fluency of an actual dialogue. Roles are acted out and then passed over to the students. Their confidence lets the teacher extend the physical retraining a new language requires through the macro exercise of stepping on stressed syllables. Having only three students means the demand on each is considerably greater than if the class were bigger, but working together they gradually master the dialogue. The Chinese background teacher provides a new and authentic voice. Students have spoken Chinese solidly all lesson.
LITERACY SKILLS:
TAUGHT BY ANDREW SCRIMGEOUR

Developing Literacy: Reading Part 1

Students are introduced to the concept of how written languages convey sounds and meanings and how we learn to read for meaning in texts.

Watching the video, consider
• how the concept of reading is theorised for young L2 Learners
• how learners’ prior knowledge of English reading is drawn upon and developed as the basis for learning to read in Chinese
• once the initial concept is established, how learners are encouraged to contribute to the lesson – how we know the ideas are making sense to them
• how learner understanding is used as a means of drawing a conclusion to the lesson.

Developing Literacy: Reading Part 2

Students explore how Chinese characters convey sounds and meanings and how online resources may facilitate better understanding of the internal functional components in characters.

Watching the video, consider
• how visual displays are used to support student understanding of key ideas
• how processes for exploring and explaining character forms and functions are established
• how students engage with the task of negotiating and determining generalisations about character groups
• how the Character Catalogue is used to reinforce understanding of concepts and processes of character analysis
• how students are encouraged to reflect on and express the value of their learning.

Developing Literacy: Writing Part 1

Students are introduced to the concept of how languages convey sounds and meanings using different forms of writing, and what these writing systems have in common.

Watching the video, consider
• how learners’ prior knowledge is drawn on to engage them with Chinese writing
• how the meta-knowledge and a metalanguage for talking about writing are developed
• how the Smart Board is used to represent and elaborate ideas.
• Note also the teacher’s way of conversing with students, where he stands and faces the class, and how the learners’ understanding of the concept of writing is established and explored from both a Chinese and English perspective.

Developing Literacy: Writing Part 2

Watching the video, consider
• how learners’ prior experiences with the concepts are reactivated and reflections explored
• how the purpose of the lesson is conveyed and the process for applying new knowledge established
• how characters are represented and key ideas about the relationships between components established
• how learners are provided opportunities to convey their findings and reflect on the value of this experience.
• Note also how learners’ understanding of the concept of components is developed and explored through the task; and how learner understanding is used as a means of drawing a conclusion to the lesson.
Using ICT: iPads and Fengshui Part 1

In this lesson students are introduced to new vocabulary relevant to the topic of ‘Chuang (Bed) Fengshui’. Students are encouraged to speak a lot and to use gestures to help them recall the new words. Only once the new terms have been introduced orally is their written form given. Students then work in groups, each group using a different piece of technology in activities designed to reinforce the new vocabulary in a variety of ways, mostly focusing on the audio, as the overall goal of the topic is to increase oral and aural skills.

Using ICT: iPads and Fengshui Part 2

The content emphasis in this lesson is students using old and new language to order single words into meaningful sentences presenting the rules of Chuang Fengshui. The interactive whiteboard is the central focus of the whole class lesson and is used to provide audio input. Students work together to reorder audio bites and the teacher sits among them as she and they form an audience for those at the board. Students become increasingly willing to contribute their spoken language. Each student is able to use the language presented in these lessons to talk about the chuang fengshui of their own room.

Using ICT: Text Messaging Part 1

Building on students’ prior knowledge of numbers from 1-10, the teacher begins by giving examples of common text message phrases in Chinese and showing how numbers are used to represent phrases in Chinese text messaging. Students then match number phrases with the pinyin of actual phrases, focusing on the sounds of Chinese words. They find information using iPod touches, chosen because of their mobile phone likeness. This activity encourages students to make the connection between numbers and words, and gives the teacher a chance to interact with individuals. Note how the teacher handles comments from students and builds on them.

Using ICT: Text Messaging Part 2

Building on the phrases learned in the first lesson, students use iPod touches to send messages using Chinese text messaging language. In addition to being a common form of modern communication, this is an activity of interest to teenagers, and taking part also reminds students that Chinese teenagers are much like themselves. Notice the role the two native speakers play in the lesson and how their knowledge of this popular form of communication is used to assist their classmates. By the end of the two lessons students are able to build their own longer phrases to use when text messaging.
Chinese Gardens: Part 1

This lesson introduces students to key concepts in Chinese culture as reflected in classical Chinese gardens. The teacher begins by connecting with students’ own experience of gardens. This discussion is developed through the introduction of the Yin Yang symbol. How does the teacher elicit from students their understanding of this symbol? How does she deal with students’ responses? In the main activity, in groups students view a ‘virtual tour’ of a Chinese garden. How many stages are there in this activity? What is the role of students in each stage? The lesson closes with a class discussion about students’ new understanding of Chinese gardens.

Chinese Gardens Part 2

The teacher extends the concept of Yin Yang by introducing the notion of ‘symbolism’ in Chinese gardens. How does the teacher draw out students’ ideas about symbolism? The main activity involves students working in groups to design and describe their own Chinese garden. They must select from the features of a Chinese garden already discussed. What is the purpose of this activity? What skills are involved in each stage? When and how were these practised? The closing class discussion focuses on students’ new understanding of Chinese gardens and their response to the aesthetic appeal of a Chinese garden.

Chinese Poetry Part 1

This lesson introduces students to key features of classical Chinese poetry. How does the teacher engage students intellectually in the introductory class discussion? What skills are involved in the first listening of Li Bai’s poem, Jing Ye Shi? In the main activity, in groups students reconstruct one line of the poem and translate this into English. How do students approach this problem-solving activity? The whole class then reconstructs the poem line by line. How does the teacher treat contributions from individual students? The lesson closes with a class discussion about students’ new understanding of Chinese poetry.

Chinese Poetry Part 2

How does this lesson begin? How does the teacher use Chinese and English in analysing the meaning of the poem? The teacher extends the discussion of the poem by focussing on the feelings evoked. What sorts of questions are students asked to elicit this understanding? How are students’ responses handled? In the main activity, in their groups, students re-write Line 2 of the poem in English to evoke a different feeling. How are students involved in evaluating each other’s efforts? One groups’ contribution is translated into Chinese and inserted into the poem. How does the lesson close?
Teaching Resources
A Narrative Unit comprises a series of linked activities around a theme, bound together coherently by a storyline and character development. Student engagement with the story provides the need to be involved and to keep going, while satisfaction derives from students’ growing control over language and their sense of coming to better understand their world. While taught using some English, as with CLIL programs, in the Narrative Unit the language mediates activities which students find initially desirable, and over time, increasingly educational and satisfying. Narrative Units introduce a much more coherent, integrated and intellectually sophisticated Chinese learning program into the middle years. The approach to online design draws heavily on game theory and narrative theory.

The Units thus model for teachers of Chinese, language and activities that are linked and purposeful not just disparate items of language, and show ways to talk to students about their learning as well as about the language.

**The Dragon Collective Trilogy**

The Dragon Collective Trilogy is an innovative series of foundation units to teach Chinese language using transmedia and alternate reality game techniques. These techniques offer new approaches to teaching and provide a high level of engagement and interest for students who are participating in the telling and shaping of a story.

The Dragon Trilogy and related additional narrative units provide the foundation skills and knowledge of spoken and written Chinese and the culture which shape meaning in the language, and the key learning to learn strategies needed for developing mastery.

Working through the units of The Dragon Collective Trilogy initiates students into the foundations of communicating in and understanding Chinese language and culture, and provides the skills and knowledge needed to support their learning. Innovative content delivery makes the learning immersive, engaging and fun.

1. **The Sounds of the Immortals**

   **The Story**

   In this adventure story, students are inducted into the Dragon Collective as trainee agents. The Sounds of The Immortals provides them with the chance to gain the first of The Three Items of Understanding: The Sounds of the Chinese Language. In order to be awarded this item they must first gain The Four Powers of Sound. These are:
   1. Capturing The Flow – listening to streams of language
   2. Tapping the Secret Layer of Rhythm
   3. Grasping The Tone Technique

   At the end of their work on each ‘Power of Sound’ the trainee agents read a letter from two of The Eight Immortals, who award them with their talismans. Trainee agents need to collect these talismans and are later asked to trade them for the first ‘Item of Understanding’ award. The Eight Immortals also lend their names at various stages to provide examples of how the sounds of the Chinese language work.

   The goal of the whole experience is for the trainee agents to listen for aspects of spoken language other than lexical meaning. As a second language learner, they will always come across flows of spoken Chinese that they will not understand all of. This can be a daunting experience. The Sounds of The Immortals aims to make them aware that there are many aspects they can listen for which will help them to improve their listening and understanding, as well as their speaking. Acquiring metalinguistic awareness of spoken Chinese and using it to tackle the challenges will banish the fear of learning a new language and the feeling that it is all too hard.
Learning Outcomes
- ability to distinguish Putonghua (Modern Standard Chinese) from other languages as well as dialects of Chinese
- understanding and awareness of the importance of rhythm in spoken Chinese
- understanding of and ability to distinguish the four tones in Putonghua
- understanding of the vowel and consonant sounds that make up Putonghua
- ability to read Pinyin with correct pronunciation due to knowledge of the sounds of the language.

2. The Black Line Mystery

The Story
Out of the blue, students receive a letter. Inside the envelope is a single piece of paper. On the paper is the most complicated Chinese character of all and a website address. When students visit the web address, they unlock a video from Agent 42 and begin a learning adventure to help save the world from THE DOOM OF NOT KNOWING by finding a way to understand the most complicated of all Chinese characters. Agent 42 guides students through different missions where they meet unusual people who help them, like Charles the Hat Wearing Dog. But, they are also confronted by the evil Agent X, who tries to convince them that they don’t need to unlock the mysteries of the Chinese character. Ultimately, by demonstrating their improved understanding of Chinese characters the students are able to defeat Agent X and the DOOM. They unlock the mystery of the black lines and develop an understanding not just of what the most complicated Chinese character means, but also how to read and understand all the Chinese characters they will meet in the future.

Learning Outcomes
- entry knowledge of Chinese culture through its manifestations in Australia
- knowledge and skills to use the language of directions
- ability to apply knowledge of Chinese characters to actual locations and real-life tasks.

Additional Units

4. Pinyin (Chinese Romanised Writing System)

In this adventure, students find themselves following in the footsteps of those who created the Hanyu Pinyin system by using the alphabet of European languages to write down spoken Putonghua. They are confronted with the same set of challenges the scholars faced as they sought to borrow, adapt and modify the letters of the alphabet to meet the sounds of Chinese. Aided by their knowledge of English spelling, strategic information, and thinking prompts from the Eight Immortals, learners are led to conquer the Pinyin system and pass these latest tests in the life long quest for understanding.

Students collect talismans along the way in their attempt to secure the crucial items needed for unlocking the door to understanding vowels and consonants, diphthongs and triphthongs, tone marks and word formation. They are distracted from their task by the evil Agent X, who makes trouble by confusing them if they are not watchful.

Learning Outcomes
- recognition of the elements of the Pinyin system of spelling Chinese speech
- the ability to read Pinyin accurately.
5. The Meaning Engineers

The Meaning Engineers is a narrative unit presenting the basics of Chinese Grammar, and framing for how to learn it, to school age learners. The Unit presents explanations and explorations of key elements of Chinese grammar that are problematic for English speaker learners, such as knowing the right measure word; verb complements and particles; modal particles; de-segments; expressing time and aspect; saying Yes; and managing without articles.

The Story

In this adventure story two Australian secondary student learners of Chinese find themselves in a mysterious space and learn that the Great Wall has gone missing. To their surprise they are instructed to get it back. Following a series of clues that emerge as they go along, they find themselves racing all over China in search of famous natural and human made monuments. In each place they encounter obstacles and challenges to their understanding which they must work through. They also obtain the assistance of some very mysterious beings. Gradually they are able to rescue pieces of the Great Wall that have gone missing.

Learning Outcomes

• knowledge of the basic components of a Chinese sentence
• knowledge of the communicative function of the most common forms and structures
• capacity to use the major components of Chinese correctly in order to achieve their desired meaning.

6. Join Our Game (Australian Rules Football)

The Story

A Chinese student newly-arrived in Year 10 at an Australia school proves to be a great soccer player in the schoolyard. Several of the school’s Australian Rules football team are keen to recruit him for the winter season. Their first task is to introduce him to the game and how it is played. Fortunately a couple of them are learning Chinese so they approach the newcomer and by using speech, diagrams and labels, they introduce him to this very new form of football. As the boy from China becomes interested, they use videos to teach themselves the language to explain the different plays: drop punt, chest mark, handball and hit out, etc. and they learn to handle information they find online that explains the rules in Chinese. Finally they teach their new friend the names of the Australian teams and are intrigued to find the connotations that the mascots such as ‘hawks’, ‘swans’, ‘magpies’, and so on carry in Chinese eyes.

Learning Outcomes

• ability to describe the basics of Australian Rules Football in Chinese
• capacity to tackle a communicative task in Chinese using diverse communication strategies to support known language.
• awareness of the cultural connotations of much everyday language
• knowledge of the cultural connotations in Chinese of animals and colours.

Apprentice Chef

The Story

When Year 9-G were deciding what they would do as a Form to contribute to their school’s International Week celebrations Suzie Taylor, a student of Chinese, said she’d really like to have a try cooking something Chinese. Her classmate, Yiming Liu, likes cooking and rather likes Suzie Taylor, so he volunteered to teach her to make some dishes. She was delighted to accept. Yiming then went home and begged his neighbour, who really is a good cook, to help him. She agreed and the two students embark on an apprenticeship in learning and sharing that includes being introduced to Nainai’s kitchen, dealing with the language of ingredients and lessons in cutting and chopping, slicing and dicing. There is a visit to a Chinese grocer and instruction in styles of cooking and the use of various kitchen utensils.

Learning Outcomes

• understanding the presence of culture in relationship to family and food
• knowledge of similarities across cultures (Asian/European)
• knowledge of the language of the kitchen: food, utensils, cooking processes
• ability to read certain texts related to food
• ability to make a simple Chinese meal.
Introduction

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a “dual-focused educational approach” that is a fusion of both language learning and subject learning (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010, pp. 41-45). Achieving the desired dual-focused education requires “development of a special approach to teaching in that the non-language subject is not taught in a foreign language but with and through a foreign language (Eurydice, 2006, p. 8).

Developing a 17-lesson ICT Unit for CLIL Chinese is a task faced with several challenges. First, there has been very little produced or researched in this area, which means work in CLIL Chinese has to be done from scratch. Compared to European languages and even Japanese, Chinese is also further from English in terms of sounds, grammar, and vocabulary, and this means every new term is an unfamiliar word (except iPad!). Using characters means adding a whole extra layer of matter to be learned, and so reading and writing are not easily the means of consolidating new language met orally.

Whether taught by first or second language speaking teachers, for the sake of the students the language to be used in the unit needs to be both natural yet restricted. The first stage in composing such a language corpus for the unit was to gather speech used naturally in performing the content teaching and learning. The resulting language corpus was then divided into two texts, one comprising the iPad processes and one comprising the language of classroom management and interaction, such as, for example, liànggè rén yīzū, xuéshēng yī xiān shuō, xuéshēng èr tīng, zuò dōngzuò. Ránhòu jiāohuàn, [Two students form a pair, Student 1 speaks, Student 2 listens and mimes the actions. Then swap roles].

The lessons developed have the potential to be the base of an eventual whole ICT course, but it could also be taught just as an independent part in a Chinese language course.

Teaching in Chinese

The lessons were designed to be taught using Chinese only. To do this successfully, the following techniques are necessary:

a. Link meaning to observable actions, objects, features.
b. Allow students to investigate in action = try it themselves.
c. To consolidate meaning perhaps only guessed at initially, apply new terms
1. as they are introduced: e.g. ‘Close the application’ > ‘Close the door’,
2. ‘Close the window’, ‘Turn on the iPad > ‘Turn on the light’, ‘Turn on the computer’, etc.
3. Use gesture and physical movement to assist comprehension and retention.
4. Hand speaking over to students frequently, watch and listen.
5. Provide feedback using voice, facial expressions, hands/indicate another S they might follow.
6. Provide only targeted repetition of your own earlier action and speech.
CTTC PUBLICATIONS
AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM
http://education.unimelb.edu.au/cttc/research/publications

Research Reports CTTC Projects 2009-2014

The Current State of Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools (3rd Ed. 2010), Jane Orton, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Learning from Short-term Sojourns in China (2011), Jane Orton and Deryn Mansell, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Getting the most you can from your school’s China trip (2011), Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Digital Resources and Their Use in Chinese Language Classrooms and Beyond (2012), Yuanlin Zhao, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Profiles of Chinese Language Programs in Victorian Schools (2012), Jane Orton, Julie Tee, Julia Gong, Jess McCulloch, Yuanlin Zhao and David McRae, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Good learners of Chinese - profiles of secondary school students (2012), Claudia Prescott and Jane Orton, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, The University of Melbourne

Classroom Chinese Language (2013), Xia Cui and Jane Orton, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, University of Melbourne

Professional Development

21st Century Teachers of Chinese (2010) 16 x 30-minute DVDs, 4 on each topic:
Teaching Culture
Developing Oral Skills
Developing Literacy
Teaching Chinese with ICT

Teaching Resources

17 CLIL Units for teaching the use of iPad Chinese language learning resources (2014), Chinese Teacher Training Centre, University of Melbourne

Six Narrative Units for Teaching Chinese (2011-2015)

The Dragon Collective Trilogy: The Sounds of the Immortals and the Pinyin Journey; The Blackline Mystery; The Hunt for the Ancient Compass
The Meaning Engineers
Join Our Game
Apprentice Chef

Blended Learning in Victoria’s Chinese Language Programs (2013), Yuanlin Zhao, Chinese Teacher Training Centre, University of Melbourne
CTTC Staff and Associate Scholarly Publications 2009-2015


