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Chinese Immersion Cultural Teaching and the Use of Authentic Materials

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Chinese Immersion Cultural Teaching and
the Use of Authentic Materials

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Teaching.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	4
Introduction	4
Overview	4
My Teaching Philosophy	5
My Teaching Experience	7
Conclusion	8
CHAPTER TWO	11
Literature Review	11
Overview	11
Culturally Responsive Teaching(CRT)	11
Definition of Culturally Responsive Teaching	11
Research and Background of CRT	12
Development and Effects of CRT	13
Application of CRT	16
Teaching Use of Authentic Materials	18
Definition of Authentic Materials	18
Benefits	20
Challenges	22
Application	23
Teaching in Chinese Immersion Schools	25
Definition	25
The Development of Chinese Immersion Education	26
Advantages and Challenges for Chinese Immersion School	27
Strategies of Immersion Teaching Methodology	29
Language Acquisition in an Immersion Environment	30
Definition of Language Acquisition	30
Development of Language Acquisition	31
Application	33
CHAPTER THREE	40
Project Description	40
Introduction	40
Curriculum Overview	40
Project Description	41
Setting and Participants	43
Timeline	44
Assessment	44

Summary	45
CHAPTER FOUR	46
Reflection/Conclusion	46
Introduction	46
Reflection	48
Conclusion	51
Chinese culture is an important factor affecting immersion students' Chinese language acquisition	51
Improving the language acquisition level of Chinese learners requires cultural teaching to run through the entire language teaching	52
Some principles and techniques	53
Summary	55
References	57

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Overview

As an international student who came to the United States after graduating with an undergraduate degree, I always felt that I did not integrate well. I was born and raised in China, and the educational system there was completely different from America's educational system. I earned an undergraduate degree majoring in Biological Sciences in China. After that, I chose to come to the United States to continue my studies. Here I am desperately absorbing educational knowledge that is very different from what I had before. These different cultures and environments have created two charming and attractive methods of educating students. The United States classrooms are full of discussions of ideas and creativity. It was only in hindsight that I realized that I loved and was proud of the Chinese culture I grew up in and it was where I wanted to work. It strengthened my determination to teach Chinese in this environment but in the United States.

Now, I am working toward a K-6 elementary license with a Master of Arts in teaching. I have been working with students in an immersion elementary school for several years. Through my experience, I have increasingly recognized a dearth of research on the incorporation of authentic materials within Chinese immersion classrooms in the existing immersion programs in the United States. As a candidate pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching, I am committed to addressing this gap through comprehensive research and practical contributions. In my work, I realized that cultural teaching is mainly accomplished by participating in study abroad programs or immersion

foreign language teaching programs in the target language country, or by studying the literary works from the target language country. Many scholars have completed research on how to enhance cultural teaching in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. However, for various reasons, many students are unable to study in the country of their target language. Even when primary learners have the opportunity to engage in immersion teaching programs, their limited proficiency levels often hinder effective communication with the local population, making it challenging to fully utilize the surrounding environment. It is important to acknowledge that culture cannot be solely acquired through the study of literature. Culture cannot be learned by studying literature. For these learners, learning the target language culture is a big challenge. Designing a feasible cultural teaching model has also become an urgent task for scholars and teachers. Therefore, out of my personal interest and the needs of the field, my guiding question is: How should teachers use authentic materials for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools?

My Teaching Philosophy

I have been mulling over whether one should prioritize their interest in or where their strengths lie when choosing a career, should the two be mutually exclusive or work together. Considering maximizing contribution to social productivity, I vote for the former. I am fortunate to be free from such a dilemma, as my shared hobby, professional training, and experience align perfectly with my passion and calling. Interestingly, the more you know, the more you can be sure you're in the realm you want to live in.

After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I determined my current professional level did not meet the standard I set for myself, so I aspired to explore

further education and become a teacher. As a biological science student, I was trained as a licensed teacher in China for four years. During this period, I gained a broad and basic knowledge of education pedagogy. I believe that I have laid a solid foundation in the basic concepts and frameworks of language learning, teaching, classroom management, and behavior problem-solving.

I arrived in the United States in October 2017 and started my first Master of Science degree. While in school, I participated in a project that exposed me to effective teaching. I believe measuring and evaluating effective teaching involves determining if it is helpful to the progress and development of students. Effective teaching is not only a teaching aspiration but also a sign to guide and evaluate teachers. Interaction is another manifestation of effectiveness. It is undeniable that enlightening classroom interaction can guide students to think, while it is also important to let students have fun during the learning process.

K-6 Elementary education focuses on specific teaching objectives and requires careful planning for the entire teaching process. As a teacher, it is essential to prioritize spending ample time with students and gaining valuable experience in the classroom. Teachers not only design the curriculum but also serve as implementers and leaders. They bring their unique theoretical expertise, professional knowledge, and teaching skills to create effective teaching plans that consider their individual circumstances, strengths, weaknesses, and desired outcomes. Furthermore, the Chinese curriculum has evolved beyond mere textbooks and instructional materials. It now encompasses a shared experience between teachers and students, where both contribute to its creation and implementation.

My Teaching Experience

Since 2019, I have been actively engaged in Chinese immersion teaching. At the school where I currently teach, we prioritize 100% communication in the Chinese language. However, the extent of English exposure for students varies depending on their grade level. In the initial two years of K-1, students experience complete immersion in the Chinese environment, with no English classes during this period. From grades 2-4, the Chinese-to-English ratio shifts to 20%:80%, supplemented by an additional daily English class. As a result, in a school with 80% Chinese immersion, students spend 80% of their school day studying and communicating in Chinese. Alongside core subjects like mathematics and science, they also have specialized Chinese classes. These classes primarily focus on reading and writing, while listening and speaking skills are acquired during other subjects. As students progress to grades 5-8, the Chinese-to-English ratios may become more evenly balanced. In my current role teaching 4th grade, I instruct students in English for one class, while Chinese remains the language of instruction for Chinese, math, science, and social studies. Throughout this process, students consistently demonstrate enthusiasm and energy for their learning.

As I reflect on my teaching journey, I recognize areas where improvement is needed. At our school, we utilize internally developed materials that adhere to Minnesota Standards. However, to ensure alignment with American society and foster a sense of identity among students, teachers often modify and adapt these materials. This raises the important question of whether the knowledge acquired by students in the classroom would be applicable in real-life situations in China. To address this concern, I decided to teach a unit on weather forecasting using US weather forecasts in Chinese, considering

the students' language abilities. Despite employing various multimedia teaching methods, I observed limited retention of this knowledge during subsequent teaching progress. This experience has further solidified my determination to integrate authentic materials into my teaching practice.

As previously stated, I have developed a keen interest in the effective acquisition of Chinese culture by young Chinese learners in the United States through the utilization of authentic materials. These materials encompass real-life sentences that are derived directly from the language itself, as opposed to materials that have been modified solely for instructional purposes. The promotion and endorsement of "authentic materials" align with the growing prominence of task-based and communicative teaching methods within the realm of Chinese instruction. By incorporating authentic materials into the curriculum, educators can facilitate a more immersive and engaging learning experience, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture among junior learners in the United States.

Conclusion

I am seeking an answer to the question, how should teachers use authentic materials for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools? In chapter one, I reviewed my teaching philosophy and the mental process of my work in recent years. I was born and raised in China and came to the United States as an international student. Chinese immersion school students and I both have the experience of learning a second language. When I myself first came to the United States, even though I had studied English in China for 12 years, I still felt powerless. Chinese immersion teaching has experienced significant growth in the United States, yielding remarkable results(Wen, 2015).

However, it is important to acknowledge that the isolated nature of Chinese as a unique language with ideograms poses certain challenges in terms of learning outcomes.

Ideogram is a picture or symbol used in a system of writing to represent a thing or an idea but not a particular word or phrase for it. Specifically, there are lingering issues related to comprehending cultural nuances embedded within vocabulary and grammar, as well as grasping the underlying cultural significance through knowledge acquisition. Through reflection on my own learning experience and work experience, if second language learning has traditionally been superficial and lacking depth, then adopting more effective and meaningful learning approaches can significantly enhance the learning outcomes while minimizing the required effort. For me and my students, second language acquisition must be culturally relevant and learned through authentic materials. Cultural teaching is an indispensable element in language teaching, but it has not received enough attention in foreign language teaching practice. It will be explained in greater detail in chapter 2 about Cultural Teaching. In the teacher preparation course, I developed my educational philosophy and applied it to my Chinese immersion student teaching. I have found that teaching culture through authentic materials in the classroom not only brings students closer to the second language but also arouses their interest. Students can actually feel that what they have learned is actually useful, which will be a great motivation for students.

In Chapter Two, I will start each topic with definitions of terms like "authentic material," "cultural teaching," "Chinese immersion," and "language acquisition." Then, I will browse the literature on student situations, teacher situations, curriculum setting, teaching methods, teaching environment, teaching material, and teaching evaluation, as

background information for the case, conduct case analysis, and study-specific teaching principles, strategies, and pedagogy. Since there is very little dedicated research on teaching Chinese as a second language, my literature review will be extended to include some dissertations and article studies in Chinese.

In Chapter 3, I will describe the method I used to structure the curriculum and how it fits into my research based on my guiding questions. In Chapter 4, I will summarize my capstone process and point out limitations and ideas for further research to summarize and reflect on my research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Overview

My guiding question is: How should teachers use authentic materials for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools? Chapter two examines the four topics which are related to my guiding question: cultural teaching, authentic materials, Chinese immersion schools, and language acquisition. The purpose of this capstone is to explore more credible ways of developing language teaching by exploring the above themes, to help future Chinese immersion teaching.

Culturally Responsive Teaching(CRT)

Definition of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching, also called culturally relevant teaching, is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Gay, 2002). Harmon mentioned that in 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that school segregation mandated by law was unconstitutional (Harmon, 2012). This could be called a historic change that paved the way for educational equity among all races and cultures. However, sixty-six years later, non-white students are less successful than white students academically (Harmon, 2012). Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) or Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is a pedagogical practice that strives to motivate and empower students by connecting curriculum and learning to their culture (Vavrus, 2008). In Howard's "Bright Ribbons: Weaving Culturally Responsive Teaching Into the Elementary Classroom", she also claimed that culturally responsive teaching incorporates aspects such as the teacher's personality, the

look, materials, and function of the classroom, through to teaching methods, testing formats, and classroom management skills. Geneva (2018) also mentioned the existence of a semiotic relationship between communication, culture, teaching, and learning, which has far-reaching implications for the implementation of culturally responsive teaching (p. 77).

Research and Background of CRT

Ladson-Billings wrote in her article, "If teachers are to be effective, they need to be prepared to teach children who are not white" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 161). This quote summarizes CRT's fundamental principle that CRT bolsters students' belief in themselves by making cultural connections when teaching academic material (Vavrus, 2008).

Culturally Responsive Teaching or pedagogy developed out of the need to help students of color who have historically lagged behind their white peers in academic performance. As Ladson-Billings (1995) stated in the previous paragraph, the advent of CRTs can help teachers reflect on their teaching, rather than blaming a lack of academic achievement on students' culture. Vavrus also wrote, "CRT strives to increase the engagement and motivation of students of color who are failing both academically and socially" (2008, p. 49). In the United States, schools continue to be run by white middle-class administrators and teachers; therefore, white middle-class values and norms have always preceded non-white cultures (Vavrus, 2008). When a school focuses solely on white culture, it sends a message to all non-white students that their culture is not valued (Vavrus, 2008). In other words, when white teachers intend to use the culture of

their students to indoctrinate them, white teachers are actually instilling their cultural norms and values in their students. (Pewewardy as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1993).

As discussed in the previous section, white teachers do not know the extent to which their culture affects how and what they teach because they refuse to acknowledge their cultural identity. One of the foundations of CRT is for teachers to look inward and reflect on their cultural values, beliefs, and prejudices. Doing so is necessary because teachers need to understand how their white identity gives them certain privileges that differentiate them from their nonwhite peers. and how these privileges create the illusion that the United States is a nation founded on equity and democracy (Vavrus, 2008).

Development and Effects of CRT

Teachers can do a great job of providing students with culturally responsive instruction. First, teachers need to gain knowledge of their students' cultures. Geneva Gay (2002) pointed out that teachers need to know the cultural characteristics and values that impact learning. Some of these things include cooperative problem-solving, how children interact with adults, and gender roles (Gay, 2002).

Traditional teaching strategies emphasize the teacher-student dynamic: The teacher is the expert and adheres strictly to the curriculum that supports standardized tests while the student receives the knowledge. Culturally responsive teaching becomes especially important. Today, teachers have more diverse classrooms and must teach differently to students who do not have the same background or experience. The significance of culturally responsive teaching is that it needs to build on personal and cultural experience and prior knowledge. It needs to be justice-oriented and reflect the social context we live in now.

Besides learning about different cultural characteristics, it is essential to learn about the contributions of different cultures in various subject areas, meaning teachers must be motivated to become life-long learners. Teachers need to consider how they will adapt their white middle-class created curriculum to meet the needs of their multicultural classroom (Vavrus, 2002). Gay also pointed out that teachers who are serious about implementing CRT in their teaching need to become experts at defining multicultural assets and failings of the curriculum they are required to teach and make changes to boost its quality (2002). An example of this may be teaching different cultural versions of universal folktales and discussing the literary qualities of rap or hip-hop. This teaching style would make school more interesting for students of color and help them develop critical thinking skills (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Culturally responsive teaching can manifest in a number of ways. Using traditional teaching methods, educators may default to teaching literature by widely accepted classic authors: William Shakespeare, J.D. Salinger, and Charles Dickens, for example, adhering to widely accepted interpretations of the text. Ladson-Billings wrote that CRT needs to meet three criteria: students must experience academic success, students must develop and maintain cultural competence, and students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995). According to Ladson-Billings (1995), the purpose of using CRT methods in the classroom was to help students realize their academic potential, leading them to think positively about themselves. By cultural competence, Ladson-Billings meant that teachers needed to use their students' culture to motivate their desire to learn (1995). And by critical consciousness, she wrote that teachers need to

support students in their development of “a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique the cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.162). In other words, let students become actors in the world in which they live. According to Ladson-Billings, the importance of teachers using CRT methods in their classrooms is to reach all students. She attributed a teacher's failure to do this to a student's academic death. She wrote, “Death in the classroom refers to teachers who stop trying to reach every student or teachers who succumb to rules and regulations that are dehumanizing...” (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 77).

Culturally responsive teaching, on the other hand, acknowledges that there is nothing wrong with traditional texts, but strives to include literature from other cultures, parts of the world, and by diverse authors (Childers-McKee, 2007). It also focuses on finding a “hook and anchor” to help draw students into the content using their past experiences.

In Ladson-Billings’ book, *The Dreamkeepers* (2009), she explored how successful white teachers of African-American students incorporated Culturally Responsive teaching in their classrooms. Some practices she observed were the use of graphic organizers, encouraging students to relate to literature at a personal level, role-playing, and the consistent use of realia such as letters, maps, guest speakers, and photographs. In terms of teaching children literacy, Billings wrote that successful teachers of African American children use different reading strategies and different types of literature, build on their students’ prior knowledge, and have high expectations of them as scholars (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Culturally Responsive Teaching or pedagogy developed out of the need to help students of color who have historically lagged behind their white peers in academic performance. As Ladson-Billings (1995) said in the previous paragraph, CRT came to fruition to help teachers reflect on their instruction instead of blaming a student's culture for the lack of academic achievement. Vavrus (2008) wrote, "CRT strives to increase the engagement and motivation of students of color who have been both unsuccessful academically and socially" (p. 49). In the United States, schools continue to be led by white middle-class administrators and teachers; thus, white middle-class values and norms always carry precedence over those of nonwhite cultures (Vavrus, 2008). When schools solely focus on white culture, it sends a message to all nonwhite students that their culture is not valued (Vavrus 2008). In other words, white teachers are instilling their cultural norms and values in their student's education when they should be using their students' cultures to instill them with an education (Pewewardy as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1993).

From analyzing Gay and Ladson-Billings, it is clear their ideas around CRT complement one another. While Ladson-Billings's ideas were more philosophical and centered around the ethics of using CRT in the classroom, Gay's (2002) criteria delved into its practical implications by focusing on hands-on teaching applications that teachers need to apply in their classrooms. This capstone now examines how CRT and Chinese Language teaching methods of teaching correspond.

Application of CRT

In contemporary Chinese foreign language teaching, educators increasingly apply Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Alain, 1990). Similarly, Chinese language teaching aims to

engage students from diverse countries, each with its unique civilizations and cultures. Being a teacher in this context goes beyond possessing exceptional pedagogical skills; it requires confidence in one's national culture when standing in the classroom. Culture encompasses various dimensions, including material, knowledge, and concepts. Currently, Chinese language teaching primarily focuses on cultural content at the material and knowledge levels, such as paper cutting, Chinese knots, calligraphy, tea art, history, and communication. However, cultural content at the conceptual level often receives less attention.

When teaching Chinese as a foreign language, it is crucial to seize classroom opportunities. For example, when teaching the story of "The Foolish Old Man Moves the Mountain," students may ask questions that reflect significant cultural differences. Such instances cannot be avoided. Teachers with cultural confidence need not fear these questions but can use them as catalysts to explore core values in Chinese culture. Concepts like overcoming challenges, perseverance, the proverb "man will conquer the sky," mutual assistance, and the significance of "home" in Chinese society can be discussed. Some of these concepts may share similarities with Western values, while others distinctly reflect Chinese characteristics.

Teachers with a comprehensive understanding of Chinese culture can openly discuss these topics, offering foreign students alternative cultural perspectives and life values. Strengthening cultural communication through language acquisition stands as a primary objective of Chinese teaching. For instance, the concept of empathy can be introduced in social science lessons using the well-known saying, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Regardless of the type of question arising from different

modes of thinking, a profound understanding of Chinese culture empowers teachers to engage in discussions about guiding values.

The five-thousand-year-old Chinese civilization has a long history, is broad and profound, and has a set of systematic values, such as benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and trustworthiness, loyalty, filial piety, honesty, shame, courage, gentleness, respectfulness, thrift, and so on. In contemporary times, concepts such as seeking truth from facts and dialectical thinking have also been absorbed into China's cultural values, and Chinese language teaching can spread Chinese culture around these concepts.

As this capstone mentioned earlier, culturally responsive teaching can represent teaching across age, gender, race, and other types of diversity. Faculty can share the achievements and expertise of people from different ethnicities in each subject area. They encourage students to draw on their pre-existing knowledge and cultural experiences to make connections with academic content. In the Chinese immersion teaching environment, this specialty can be well utilized to make teaching efficient and effective.

Teaching Use of Authentic Materials

Definition of Authentic Materials

Authenticity is an enduring topic in foreign language teaching. Since Sweet (1899) began to discuss the authenticity of foreign language teaching materials, the discussion has gradually extended to the authenticity of learners, the authenticity of practice activities, the authenticity of language classrooms, the authenticity of teaching activities, and so on (Breen 1985; Lee et al., 1995; Guariento & Morley, 2001), but

authenticity of instructional materials remains a central issue (Gilmore, 2007; Rings, 1986).

In the field of international Chinese teaching, the issue of authenticity, particularly regarding teaching materials, receives significant attention. Various researchers have criticized the presence of "interrogation-style" question-and-answer dialogues in textbooks (Tong Bingzheng, 1991), the use of artificially fabricated teaching materials (Yang Defeng, 1997), and the disconnect between textbook grammar and actual spoken language (Tao, 2005; Meng Guo, 2009). Furthermore, concerns have been raised about the tendencies towards "nationalization" and "textbook language" (Li Quan, 2007). The evolution of pedagogy greatly influences our understanding of authentic teaching materials.

As the communicative functional method and task-based teaching method gain prominence in international Chinese teaching, greater emphasis is placed on the inclusion of authentic materials in the development of teaching resources. Notable examples include the "Multimedia Interactive Chinese Textbook," "Tell It like it is," the "Original Chinese" series (Xian et al., 2012), and "Working with Spoken Chinese" (Jie & Tao, 2014b). These practices not only accumulate valuable experiences in developing authentic teaching materials but also contribute to theoretical discussions surrounding authenticity. As theory advances and practices deepen, we come to realize that the authenticity of language extends beyond its influence on textbook content—it is fundamentally connected to teaching methods, pedagogical concepts, and even our underlying views of language. Consequently, it becomes imperative to continue systematic and in-depth research on authenticity issues (Tao, 2005).

While studies by Tao (2005), Xian et al. (2012), Sultan Jie, Tao Hongyin (2014a), and Meng Guo (2014) have made significant advancements in this area, much of the related research primarily focuses on enhancing traditional teaching materials by making them more "real" through corpus-based approaches. It is essential to further theoretical research and practical endeavors that directly employ authentic materials in the compilation of teaching resources.

Benefits

Authentic materials of international Chinese textbooks are emphasized because the use of authentic corpus in teaching has many advantages, including but not limited to the following aspects: In cultivating learners' ability to communicate in Chinese, authentic corpus has inherent advantages. The purpose of teaching Chinese as a foreign language is to train learners to use Chinese to communicate. To achieve this goal, learners should master authentic Chinese in communication. Authentic materials are the verbal output of communicative behavior, which truly reflects the application of language in real context, and is suitable for communicative language input, so as to cultivate students' ability to deal with a real communicative environment. Meng Guo (2009) pointed out that it is difficult to arouse the interest of international students with clear and standard Chinese listening materials that are divorced from real life. The use of authentic materials in teaching allows learners to apply what they have learned, reducing the embarrassment of being useless and unable to speak.

Teaching with authentic materials can arouse the enthusiasm of learners and cultivate their autonomous learning ability (Wang & Li, 2017). Allowing learners to deal with real words can stimulate their learning motivation and make it easier for them to

achieve autonomous learning. The phenomenon of "Malu Chinese" (Meng Guo 2014: 156) reflects the strong demand of learners to be exposed to authentic language communication. Once learners learn and become accustomed to acquiring language and cultural knowledge from real communicative activities, they can greatly improve their autonomous learning ability. Authentic materials are conducive to a more comprehensive presentation of language knowledge and help to cultivate learners' comprehensive language ability and language communication ability. Sultan Jie and Tao Hongyin (2014a) pointed out that some of the rich discursive phenomena reflected in the authentic materials in traditional textbooks have not been noticed, and some have not yet been excavated. The content of this pragmatic knowledge is low in the "organized" traditional textbook corpus, and the compatibility with the knowledge system and teaching framework of the traditional textbook is low. Only with the help of authentic materials, these very valuable language knowledge and communication skills can be presented and can be learned and mastered more fully by learners.

Authentic materials are essential for enhancing learners' understanding of the culture of the target language community. Chen Changlai (2005), the editor-in-chief, emphasizes the limitations of the school environment in providing students with genuine exposure to the real context of the Chinese community. To overcome this, it is recommended to incorporate video materials, radio programs, and other authentic language resources to deepen students' awareness of the social and cultural background of Chinese. However, it is important to recognize that authentic materials may also raise social and cultural issues. Hence, when developing textbooks and designing teaching

activities, it is crucial to offer appropriate guidance that encourages critical thinking and diverse perspectives.

Challenges

Although utilizing authentic materials in teaching offers numerous benefits, it also presents significant challenges in compiling teaching materials. These challenges include practical difficulties, limitations stemming from inadequate language research, and inconsistencies with the current teaching system. Problems arise in acquiring and processing corpora since authentic materials, which result from real communication, cannot be manually written or scripted like traditional teaching materials. Video materials, along with audio materials, are crucial components of authentic materials as they encompass speech and body movements, forming a comprehensive symbol system for daily communication. The absence of body language in real communication often poses difficulties (Guo, 2014: 244; Jie, 2014; Tao, 2014a). Consequently, collecting authentic materials imposes higher demands on the recording environment and may involve concerns such as privacy protection. Furthermore, incorporating existing video materials unavoidably raises copyright issues.

Authentic materials, especially spoken materials, contain numerous pragmatic components. However, research on these components remains insufficient, and their integration into the international Chinese teaching system remains incomplete. Xian et al. (2012) emphasized that foreign or second language teaching has long prioritized the development of language structure knowledge and proficiency while neglecting pragmatic and textual abilities. Traditional textbooks primarily focus on language structure and rarely address pragmatic components. However, when utilizing authentic

materials for teaching, addressing a substantial number of pragmatic components becomes unavoidable. The lack of pertinent research in this domain poses challenges for material developers. Consequently, some scholars advocate for the inclusion of additional research findings in discourse pragmatics within Chinese as a foreign language instruction and textbook development (Jie & Tao Hongyin, 2014a).

Difficulties also arise in presenting knowledge and designing exercises. Researchers who do not support the use of authentic materials generally argue that new words and cultural knowledge presented in such materials are challenging to organize systematically, leading to teaching and learning difficulties for educators and students alike. Xian et al. (2012) concluded that employing authentic materials for language teaching encounters issues in language forms, such as language level, clarity, and dialect influence. Concerning language content, the concentration of discourse content poses a challenge, as does the processing of teaching materials. This encompasses determining how to present text and designing teaching activities and exercises based on real materials.

Application

The authentic material is the material for people from the native language countries, not the language material specially simplified for foreign language learners. So videos, books, posters, menus, road signs, and advertisements are all authentic material. The reason why the corpus produced by "editing" is not authentic is that even if the editor is a native speaker, as long as the corpus is not produced in communication, the communicative factors cannot fundamentally, directly, and comprehensively affect it. The

appearance of language is replaced by other factors (such as the purpose of expressing language knowledge), then the corpus produced in this way does not have authenticity.

Authentic materials should be produced by the participants of the communication. So any teaching materials that have been processed to "adapt" to the American environment are not authentic materials. (e.g., textbooks, textbook editors). A related question is how to view the authenticity of the corpus produced by non-native speakers in the context of international Chinese language teaching. The general view is that the more native speakers' speech output, the more authentic it is because it is more natural, authentic, and standard. Starting from the communicative nature of authenticity, it is not necessary to tie authenticity to native speakers. As long as the corpus is produced in communication, it is authentic even if it is mediated by a bilingual speaker. Mediated authentic materials can provide some pragmatic knowledge that native speaker corpus cannot provide, such as the substitutive means by which bilinguals respond to challenging situations (Sudan, 2014). This knowledge is important for learners but has been underappreciated in traditional textbooks.

Authenticity will be expressed at the levels of phonology, discourse, grammar, pragmatics, and cultural content. The authenticity of the corpus will be expressed through all levels of linguistic elements. Authenticity is expressed in the phonology of the participants, who usually have more or fewer accents, including dialectal accents and foreign accents; a large number of new words and phrases, idioms, discourse markers, and "unconventional" usage of words in the authentic materials is a manifestation of discourse authenticity; the existence of seemingly ungrammatical. There are structures in the authentic materials that seem ungrammatical but can be said in real contexts (Barfield

2003). There are many manifestations of pragmatic authenticity, for example, by repeating someone's words briefly to express approval of the speaker during a conversation, and also by using this way to change the topic and take the initiative in the conversation.

In short, the use of real corpus for Chinese teaching not only allows students to learn and master Chinese language knowledge but also stimulates students' interest in learning. In this way, while improving students' basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, they can also develop their language communication skills, so as to truly achieve the teaching goals.

Teaching in Chinese Immersion Schools

Definition

Immersion school is also called an immersive school. This capstone adopts the translation method of "immersion school". Because "immersion" often refers to state and "immersive" often refers to action, the translation as "immersion school" is more in line with the characteristics of this type of school, referring to the state of the students in the foreign language environment (Betts, 1946). Immersion teaching is a kind of bilingual teaching, in which language is not only a teaching method but also a teaching content. The Chinese immersion program in the United States refers to the immersion teaching mode that operates the project in the current basic education system in the United States. Immersion programs can be divided into different types based on immersion time, introductory stage, and the composition of participating students (George, 2003). Through the quantitative analysis of the national project database provided by the US Mandarin Immersion Parents Council (MIPC), and through the self-built database

Immersive Imagery Services, the information of the existing database is supplemented, and the historical changes and status quo of the development of Chinese immersion projects are more deeply understood (MIPC, 2021). Chinese immersion programs develop in different patterns across states, school districts, and cities. Some programs are very successful, with student numbers increasing each year, while others are forced to cancel. Divided by school districts, there are two main types of schools offering Chinese immersion programs: "radiation type" and "balanced type"; It can be further divided into "top-down" and "bottom-up" types. The learners of the Chinese immersion program conform to the general law of language learning: they are mainly concentrated in the primary stage of primary school, and the number of students in the advanced stage decreases. Most existing immersion mode is dominated by a 50%:50% time allocation (MIPC, 2021).

The Development of Chinese Immersion Education

In recent years, Chinese immersion programs have flourished in the United States. As of July 2019, a total of 315 schools in the United States have opened Chinese immersion programs (MIPC, 2021). The so-called immersive teaching, as the name implies, is a closed language teaching project that uses the target language for teaching around the clock. In the United States, there were originally immersive teaching programs in English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese (Linnell, 2019). However, with the rise of the Chinese language, some states have launched Chinese immersive teaching programs for students in grades 12 and below (Lu, 2019). It has achieved rapid development within a time. According to the Dean of the Confucius Institute at the University of Minnesota, there are currently more than 20 schools in the

United States that set up immersive Chinese programs (Xu, 2012). The basic model is: In some elementary schools, teaching is divided into English and Chinese departments. In the Chinese Department, there is no "English" subject, and the Chinese class is replaced. Besides, other major subjects, such as mathematics, social sciences, and common sense, as well as teacher and student communication, are also conducted in Chinese. Because the students are young and immersed in the artificial Chinese environment all day, they can learn Chinese more naturally in a subtle way (Wang, 2019).

Chinese immersion schools have created an all-Chinese teaching environment, that is, from full-day kindergartens, students are provided with all the necessary conditions for contact with the Chinese language and culture. What is said, seen, written, and used is 100% Chinese. Take the school where the author works as an example. From kindergarten, Chinese teaching was adopted completely, and English teaching was added for one class in the second grade. From the fifth grade, they gradually began to teach science classes in English. (Each school's syllabus and curriculum are different).

Advantages and Challenges for Chinese Immersion School

Efficient and fast is the biggest advantage of immersive Chinese projects. Because students are immersed in the Chinese language environment all day, their speed and ability of language acquisition are much higher than traditional second-foreign language students (Jiang, 2021). At the same time, due to the subtle effect, their cultural awareness is also stronger.

Immersive teaching can more effectively develop students 'flexible ways of thinking and cognition. Students' language skills and math skills are better than those of non-immersive students. According to the website of a Chinese immersive elementary

school, students studying in immersive schools have a much higher mathematics ability than students of the same age, and English standards are not lagging. According to the website of a Chinese immersive elementary school, 92% of the students in Nova Minnesota achieved an excellent level on the mathematics test in reading and mathematics exams in English is 79, means 79% of the students achieved an excellent level in the English reading exam, of which more than half of students have reached the highest level of super-excellent prescribed by the state (CARLA). Compared with other schools, when students in immersive schools take less than one year of formal English teaching and only take one hour of English class per day, such achievements can be described as magical. This fact fully shows that immersive Chinese education is indeed successful and worth studying.

Immersive Chinese teaching is a new thing, and it also faces some problems during its development. Compared with the maturity of immersive education in other languages, Chinese immersive teaching urgently needs to establish a scientific system (Jin, 2017). Although immersive Chinese teaching projects have been established in many areas of the United States, it is only a matter of exploration and exploration that it is necessary to think and discuss establishing an immersive Chinese teaching theoretical system and studying its teaching modes and methods to make its teaching effect better.

From the perspective of teaching operations, classroom teaching is inseparable from teachers, and teachers who are adapted to immersive teaching are currently seriously in short supply. Relatively speaking, qualified Chinese teachers in the United States are not enough, and teachers who are truly competent in immersive Chinese teaching are rare (Pratt, 2020). What I have seen so far is that in today's Chinese

immersion schools, many teachers have not received special training in immersion teaching, and some have no college education or even have not obtained a teacher's license, the lack of teachers is a great limitation to the development of immersive Chinese schools. In addition to Chinese teachers, immersive elementary schools also urgently need Chinese teachers in arts and physical education courses. Therefore, it is urgent to introduce and train qualified Chinese teachers (Linnell, 2001). Meanwhile, the teaching materials suitable for immersion in Chinese teaching are not abundant. Nowadays, there are not enough Chinese textbooks suitable for overseas teaching, and Chinese textbooks for immersive teaching are more difficult to find. This is also the reason for this capstone, a set of materials suitable for Chinese immersion schools can often do more with less.

Strategies of Immersion Teaching Methodology

Teachers create a variety of Chinese language learning methods for students and a language exchange platform for students. In classroom teaching, vocabulary teaching is carried out by means of physical display, body language, pictures, and the combination of pictures, texts, and sentences, so that students can understand and learn vocabulary through intuitive teaching aids and vivid pictures (Xu, 2012) For example: when teaching the words of the month, you can use the calendar to flip through the teaching, or you can use the cards with the month to teach; when teaching words of different shapes, you can directly draw different graphics on the blackboard, or you can use cardboard to fold Different graphics for teaching; when teaching vocabulary such as piano, ballet, disco, etc., teachers can let students perform or PPT display diagrams to let other students guess new vocabulary. In the classroom, teachers encourage students to boldly use spoken Chinese for vocabulary guessing, vocabulary solitaire competitions, etc., through various

forms to help students understand and strengthen classroom vocabulary learning and lay a solid foundation for Chinese language acquisition.

Language Acquisition in an Immersion Environment

Definition of Language Acquisition

From the perspective of sociolinguistics, proposed in the book *Language Acquisition* (1990), language acquisition refers to the process in which a person acquires language knowledge in a certain way, develops language use habits, and improves language useability, and the development of language ability depends on language practice. The current status and problems of Chinese language acquisition for immersion program students are mainly as follows: due to cultural differences and negative transfer of language and culture, in the process of Chinese language learning and language use, students often experience phonology, pragmatics, semantics, and grammar (Smith, 2017). Brown (1994) also mentioned that in the process of language acquisition, the error rate of words and grammatical passages occurs from time to time, the use of language rhetoric is inflexible, and the students' tones and intonation are often heard.

Routledge pointed out that cultural factors are the soul of second language acquisition (2011, pp. 107–128). In the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, helping foreign students to recognize the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and to accept and identify with Chinese culture can reduce pragmatic, semantic, and grammatical errors in the process of Chinese learning, and promote the acquisition of Chinese language acquisition. In the process of learning the Chinese language, students in the immersion program will inevitably encounter cross-cultural communication problems of values, cultural customs, and ways of thinking (Morgan, 2002). The influence of

cultural factors in the process of Chinese language acquisition has been the focus of attention. Overcoming cultural barriers and exploring the impact of culture on students' Chinese language acquisition is to meet the needs of cross-cultural communication in the new era. The better the understanding and mastery of Chinese culture, the better the effect of Chinese language acquisition; the language environment where Chinese is the mother tongue is the advantage of students' Chinese language acquisition; to improve the language acquisition level of Chinese language learners, it is necessary to strengthen the introduction of Chinese culture (Antoine, 2020).

Development of Language Acquisition

"The fundamental purpose of foreign language teaching is not to impart grammatical knowledge, but to cultivate communicative competence; the language produced by learners must not only meet grammatical requirements but also meet social norms, be reasonable and appropriate" (Lü, 2020, p164). "Communicative Competence" was first proposed by American anthropologist and sociolinguist D. Hymes in 1972. This concept is opposed to Chomsky's "Linguistic Competence", which includes both language ability and language use.

With the introduction of the concept of communicative competence and the development of linguistic theories, people gradually realized that "to acquire any language, one must acquire its pragmatic rules and culture" (Lü, 2020, p164). Every language has its grammatical rules, as well as its own set of pragmatic rules (that is, how to use language appropriately to accomplish interpersonal communication). And pragmatic rules are closely related to the culture to which they belong. It involves the social system, customs, way of thinking, values, moral standards, lifestyle, national

psychology, and aesthetic viewpoints of the groups that use this language. Language is both a part of culture and the carrier of culture. Different language groups have different cultures, and their language usage rules are also different. Achieving successful communication with different groups of people is inseparable from understanding each other's cultural knowledge. Therefore, in order to learn a foreign language and acquire good communicative competence with this foreign language as a carrier, one must acquire the cultural knowledge it carries.

Foreign language cultural acquisition is different from native language cultural acquisition. The cultural acquisition of the mother tongue is carried out in parallel with the language acquisition. When Chinese students acquire knowledge of the mother tongue, they also acquire the cultural knowledge of the correct and appropriate use of the mother tongue; and when they learn English or other foreign languages, they often emphasize language knowledge, The learning of grammar rules, while ignoring the acquisition of cultural factors carried by this foreign language. Therefore, even excellent foreign language learners with strong language ability are prone to pragmatic errors, communication barriers, and even Cultural Shock in the communication with native speakers, and the consequences are serious. As the famous linguist Morgan once pointed out, when foreign language learners communicate with people who speak the language, their pronunciation or syntactic errors are often tolerated, and their violation of the appropriateness of language use is considered inappropriate (Morgan, 2002). Therefore, in order to acquire the ability to communicate smoothly with the people of the foreign language nation, it is necessary to acquire the knowledge of the culture of the foreign language while learning the knowledge of the grammar of the foreign language.

After recognizing the necessity of cultural acquisition for foreign language learning, many researchers have begun to study cultural acquisition and put forward some theoretical frameworks, the Acculturation Model is more influential. Its main point of view is: foreign language learning is a part of cultural adaptation, and the degree of adaptation of the learner to the target language determines the degree of foreign language acquisition. In other words, learning a foreign language is also learning and adapting to a foreign culture. This theory is based on research on foreign language learning in natural environments. The process of learning a foreign language is a process of gradually adapting to this new culture. This is because language is both the main means of expressing culture and the carrier of culture. Often learning a foreign language inevitably involves the learner's perceptions and attitudes toward the people who speak the language. To learn this language well, learners must understand and adapt to the ideological system and belief system expressed by the language, as well as the cultural styles, customs, and communication systems involved (Parks, 2020). The acculturation model also believes that the degree of adaptability of the learner to the foreign language culture is reflected in his social distance and psychological distance from the culture. When a learner, as a social member of his native-speaking nation, contacts a member of another nation, there will be many social factors that affect his attitude; these factors constitute the social distance for him to adapt to a new culture and learn a new language. Psychological factors are determined by the learners' own emotional factors (Ellis, 1994).

Application

First cultural acquisition should be based on the mainstream culture and synchronic culture of the target language culture. The same language group is often an

organic complex of multiple cultures, including mainstream cultures and subcultures belonging to various groups. For example, in American society, Asian-American culture from the East and African-American culture from African states are all subcultures. As foreign language learners, we should acquire its mainstream culture, because the mainstream culture represents the cultural orientation of the vast majority of people in the target language group. Furthermore, culture is not constant, it changes all the time (Morcom, 2019). The actual culture of any language group has its historical origin, and we should understand the historical evolution of its synchronic culture, but the focus of cultural acquisition should be on its current cultural content because it represents the current cultural content. The level of development and the future direction of cultural development.

The second, cultural acquisition should eliminate cultural stereotypes and reduce prejudice (Johnson, 2003). Stereotypes are a holistic cultural orientation, that is, a tendency to treat each member of a cultural group as a representative of that culture, with the result that members of each cultural group are treated as if they belonged to it. The representative of the group has the cultural characteristics of this group. Cultural stereotypes make people generalize and describe the target language culture with overly simple language while ignoring the individuality of its culture. This cultural stereotype ignores the individual cultural characteristics of the target language nation, which is undoubtedly detrimental to communication. The cultural acquisition is to let students avoid wearing the glasses of cultural stereotypes to contact the target language culture. Therefore, when we take the mainstream culture of the target language group as the main content for cultural acquisition, we must also take into account the subcultures of

different groups in the mainstream culture and the differences between them, and try our best to contact some people with different social classes, ages, genders, etc. The subculture of the group concretizes its understanding of the target language and culture.

Prejudice is "an aversion to a state of mind based on a false or immutable generalization. This state of mind may also be expressed or perceived by others" (Johnson, 2003, p. 106). Also, "It may be directed against a group as a whole, or against a group that exists as a whole/ individuals of a certain group"(Johnson, 2003, p. 106).

Prejudice is not a general error of perception; it, like a cultural stereotype, has a persistent emotional content: it is stubbornly resistant to evidence that corrects it; it is a rigid, irreversible, uncorrectable attitude; it is based on error. It is a negative attitude towards other groups or individuals, an unhealthy and unreasonable state of mind. The existence of prejudice seriously affects interpersonal communication between different cultures. Therefore, in order to successfully communicate with people of the target language culture, we should reduce prejudice through necessary cultural acquisition, so that learners have a healthy and peaceful attitude towards the target language culture.

Third, the cultural acquisition must overcome ethnocentrism. William Graham Sumner (1906) believed that ethnocentrism refers to "a nation regards itself as the center of the world and its own culture as a frame of reference for other nations; it measures the behavior of other nations with its own cultural standards and takes Isolate myself from other cultures" (Johnson, 2003, p. 108). This is often the product of unconsciousness—people often take it for granted that their own national values, social norms, sociolinguistic norms, etc., are more real and correct than other ethnic groups or groups. Ethnocentrism is a common phenomenon. Every nation in the world and

members of any group often show different degrees of ethnocentrism consciously or unconsciously. Because ethnocentrism has a wrong understanding of people who are not of their own national culture, it is easy to cause wrong interpretations of their behavior, leading to mutual distrust and even mutual hatred between different nationalities or cultures; because it believes that the national culture is the only one in the world A reasonable culture can also lead to cultural conflict. In addition, ethnocentrism makes oneself feel superior, measures the behavior of non-members according to its own cultural norms, and tries to change the way of thinking and living habits of others. It is a psychological factor that has a greater impact on “communication and is not conducive to cross-cultural communication” (Singleton, 2004, p. 267). Therefore, in the process of cultural acquisition, we should pay attention to overcoming ethnocentrism. Only more understanding and more contact can create opportunities for reducing the influence of ethnocentrism. Through the cultural acquisition, we should ultimately aim at the cultural relativism of the acquired culture. The so-called cultural relativism, that is, behavior in a culture can only be understood and evaluated by its own criteria. This means that in cross-cultural communication, only the beliefs, values, and social norms of the other's culture can be used as standards to interpret and evaluate their behavior.

Cultural acquisition is not only the process by which learners acquire cultural knowledge of the target languages but also the process by which they acquire Cultural Awareness. Cultural awareness means that the learner believes that cultures are all equal—each culture has its own unique attributes, and no one culture is superior or inferior to the others. To gain cultural awareness, the learner must have a deep understanding of the mother tongue culture and the target language culture. To achieve

this goal, we must step out of the rut of the mother tongue culture and examine and reflect on the mother tongue culture from an outsider's perspective, which can reduce prejudice and ethnocentrism; at the same time, we must also examine the target language culture from an insider's perspective. Only by acquiring its mainstream culture and understanding its subculture can we eliminate cultural stereotypes and measure and evaluate its social and language behaviors from the perspective of members of the target language culture.

Differences in students' language and cultural backgrounds and diversification of learning motivations (Singleton, 2004). This phenomenon requires teachers to be able to teach students according to their aptitude, and the first step in "teaching according to their aptitude" is to understand the "material". The first is the question of student composition. In terms of language and cultural background, the so-called heritage students, the Chinese they have been exposed to and their Chinese proficiency are very different. The first type of students have a strong language background and a certain understanding of Chinese cultural customs; the second type of students can only understand and speak simple Chinese; the third type of students can neither speak nor basically understand. For example, growing up in a family of mixed ethnic groups, only the father or mother speaks Chinese or a certain dialect, or the ancestors immigrated to the United States earlier, although both parents are Chinese but do not speak Chinese, they all belong to a certain Chinese family background "with a particular family relevance", (Fishman, 2001, p.169) or learners with a heritage motivation of the Chinese nation, "learners with a heritage motivation", (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). According to the author's recent survey on the language background and learning motivation of 317 students in elementary,

intermediate, and advanced Chinese courses in three state universities in North Carolina, Texas, and California, 118 of the students are basically bilingual, accounting for 37 of the total number of people. From Lü's paper, there are 58 (18.3%) students who have some contact with Chinese culture at home but no language contact, and 141 (44.5%) students who have no language and cultural background (non-Chinese and Asian). It would be nice if we could divide students from different backgrounds, but many schools do not have such conditions. Even after being divided into classes, there is still the problem of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude.

Emphasis on interactive contextual design and classroom activities with flexibility and originality. Interaction is an essential feature of learning and a fundamental principle of teaching. Cognitive psychology research (Ellis, 2010; Pütz & Sicola, 2010) shows that in the process of language learning, from the processing, storage, and internalization of input information to the output of language, there is no difference between the learner and the content. The result of positive interaction with the environment. Scholars represented by Long put forward the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1981, 1983a, 1996; Pica & Doughty, 1985), that in conversation (or learner and native speaker, or learner and learner) learning What the reader is engaged in is not only the general conversation practice but also the negotiation for meaning and the generation of language. The negotiation process mobilizes the input information and the learner's inherent language ability and selective attention. Coupled with contextual prompts, the learner can quickly and accurately understand and absorb the input information. Long (1983b) further proposed that interactive modifications facilitate the effective understanding and absorption of input language materials by students. In interactive activities, the

adjustment of both parties can clear the obstacles in communication. Questions, clarifications, or confirmations that you don't understand are always given, and feedback is made to clarify the other party's meaning and the other party's intention. Nation (2001) pointed out that the value of negotiation for meaning is that it can help learners pay attention to and understand the meaning and usage of vocabulary and some sentence patterns in different and new contexts. In other words, the usage in the new context helps the learner selectively notice the input information, obtain a deeper understanding and absorption, and thus promote the generation of language. In the case of students' diverse language and cultural backgrounds and uneven levels, student-centered teaching methods, such as cooperative learning and student-student interaction, show their superiority and necessity. Research in pedagogy (Oakley, et al., 2004; Slavin, 1996) shows that cooperative learning, active learning, and communicative language teaching (Felder & Brent, 2009; Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Spada, 2007) are not only beneficial. The learner's ability to use language and contribute to the development of cognitive, emotional and social factors. The results of language acquisition research (Gass & Serlinker, 2008) show that: providing rich and diverse teaching input that is easy to understand and can attract learners' attention (comprehensible input; noticing hypothesis) can effectively help learners to obtain correct and appropriate, paragraphic expression (pushed output). Experiential learning and cooperative learning are based on the constructivist theory of learning, which requires teachers to provide corresponding contexts and appropriate social and cultural environments so that students can construct their own learning through meaningful understanding and discussion with their classmates, exchange opinions, and reaching consensus through interaction.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

The purpose of this capstone is to explore the research question, *How can teachers use authentic materials to make teaching more reliable for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools?* Chapter One introduced the reasons why I developed this question. Chapter Two reviewed the development of authentic materials instruction and summarized the authentic materials facilitation strategies. Chapter Three provides a detailed designing process of authentic materials for cultural teaching in a Chinese immersion program. The goal is to make authentic materials for learning more engaging with clear instruction for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools. I am a 4th-grade teacher and I am currently creating learning units based on authentic materials for the 4th grades in my curriculum. The goal is to make learning units based on authentic materials more engaging and provide clear guidance for future Chinese cultural studies. For this study, I intend to create a unit of study based on authentic materials to meet the Language Standards and the Common Core Standards for 4th-grade science, technology, mathematics, social studies, and literacy. When I create my curriculum, I provide students with learning materials that are relevant to real students in China.

Curriculum Overview

My plan for the project is to create authentic materials-based learning for 4th-grade students. The created unit will match standards and will be added to the 4th-grade curriculum. The unit will integrate target language, language arts, technology, social studies, and math. The unit will focus on Chinese Language Learning, which will

also integrate with reading, writing, and math. The unit will start with a driven question, and each lesson will be driven by a question as well.

The curriculum is based on the Minnesota Academic Standard English Language Arts K-12 for Kindergarteners. The reading benchmarks were 4.1.10.10 and 4.2.10.10, which state to “actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding, including the appropriate selection of texts for personal enjoyment, interests, and academic tasks” (Minnesota Academic Standard English Language Arts K12, 2010).

In this research, by reviewing the characteristics and theoretical application of culturally responsive teaching, authentic materials, Chinese immersion schools, and language acquisition, I started to design my curriculum. The course structure mentioned above along with the state standards helped me form ideas about how to group students, grade readings, and evaluate curriculum.

Project Description

In my research, I will use the Yinghua Academy lesson plan template to create my curriculum. Yinghua Academy is the only full immersion Mandarin Chinese K-8 school in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It opened in 2006 as the first public charter Chinese immersion school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school in the Midwest.(Yinghua Website, 2023)This lesson plan is based on the Teach-Practice-Check mode. I am going to create a unit related to authentic materials teaching. There will be 16 lessons, a unit test, and a project. I'm going to create a unit related to teaching authentic materials. There will be 16 lessons, and there will be a unit test and a project. In this unit, students will start with a true traditional Chinese story, after which students will have the

opportunity to learn more about the story and learn new words and phrases that may appear in it. During the learning process, students not only have the opportunity to learn new phrases but more importantly, students can learn about real traditional Chinese stories. Cultural teaching through authentic materials.

Figure I. Yinghua Academy Weekly Lesson Plan Template

Yinghua Academy Weekly Lesson Plan

Term __ (Week __) Week of Month ___ --- Month __, Year

Day 1

Date:	
Theme:	
Unit:	
Subject:	
Integrated Subjects:	
Grade/Team/ Teacher:	
Standard(s)	
Lesson Objective(s)	
Do Now	
Teach Point 1: Know	
Practice: Activity:	
Check Show	

Teach Point 2: Know	
Practice: Activity	
Check Show	

Setting and Participants

The project takes place in Yinghua Academy, which was founded in 2006. It is a Chinese immersion charter public school in the United States. Yinghua Academy serves students in grades K-4 with a full immersion curriculum. The introduction of English language teaching is delayed until grade 2. In grades 5 through 8 instruction switches to a 50 percent Chinese, 50 percent English model. The school's curriculum team creates cutting-edge curricula recognized nationally and internationally for their effectiveness, leading to bi-literacy in Mandarin Chinese and English for all students. It covers all State Standards and the Core Knowledge Sequence, building both subject area knowledge and Mandarin fluency from year to year.

The curriculum will target new Chinese immersion school teachers who are having a hard time adjusting to U.S. classrooms because of different teaching philosophies, different mindsets, inadequate teaching skills, or lack of knowledge about Western classrooms. Not only limited to new teachers who teach in Chinese immersion schools, but the audience may also include readers who are interested in knowing the different teaching philosophies between Western and Eastern education systems and how the difference may affect the teaching and learning process.

Timeline

The following table will help me to monitor my project progress.

Figure II. Timeline for authentic materials-based learning

Peer reviewer	May- July 2023
Write chapter 4 and project	July 2023
Rewrite/ Revise	July-August, 2023
Complete all pieces of the capstone	The end of July/ The beginning of August 2023
Round Table Presentation	August 2023
Apply the project	2023-2024 school year

Assessment

According to the second chapter, the learning of authentic materials has a great relationship with students' knowledge acquisition. Based on research, every time we do authentic materials learning, I assess students by asking them questions about cultural teaching. Additionally, all materials for students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing come from the front-line teaching classrooms in China. After completing this unit, students should be able to conduct cultural assessments and effectively achieve the goals of each Chinese lesson. In the long term, I will use continuous learning records to track students' Chinese abilities.

Finally, I will conduct a formative assessment in each lesson to keep track of students' Chinese proficiency. Each group has a different lesson plan and assessments vary between groups. When we finish a unit and move on to the next topic, I will conduct a summative assessment to assess the students' Chinese proficiency and reorganize the group based on the assessment results.

Summary

The project focuses on creating authentic materials of information and providing resources to assist students learning Chinese in Chinese immersion schools and hopefully help them improve their Chinese skills and foster in-depth learning from a cultural perspective. A research approach that emphasizes the importance of gathering real-life examples and information will be implemented. Choosing a practical research approach ensures that the project remains focused on both teachers and students in the everyday teaching process. I hope that this research can solve real classroom problems and help immersion students in their daily learning. Through the discussion of this topic, it is hoped that these issues will attract more attention, focus on real classroom situations, and connect these situations with authentic materials.

Chapter One introduced the motivation and necessity for cultural teaching in Chinese Immersion programs to implement authentic materials. Chapter Two reviewed the development of culturally responsive teaching and authentic materials instruction with a historical perspective and summarized the strategies for Chinese Immersion Schools to implement the instruction in current school settings. Chapter Three demonstrated the methods and paradigms in the process of designing the curriculum, outlined the process through which the curriculum was planned, as well as answered my research question: *How can teachers use authentic materials to make teaching more reliable for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools?*

CHAPTER FOUR

Reflection/Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of the capstone is to investigate the research question: “*How can teachers use authentic materials to make teaching more reliable for cultural teaching in Chinese immersion schools?*” addresses an essential aspect of language education.

As Chinese immersion schools aim to provide students with not just language proficiency but also a deep understanding of Chinese culture, using authentic materials becomes crucial. Authentic materials refer to resources that originate from native Chinese-speaking contexts, such as newspapers, books, videos, advertisements, and real-life conversations.

Teaching culture in language immersion programs is challenging yet rewarding. Incorporating authentic materials in the classroom offers several advantages. Firstly, it provides students with exposure to genuine language usage, allowing them to grasp idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, and cultural nuances that textbooks and artificial materials might lack. This exposure fosters a deeper connection to the language and culture and enhances the student's overall language competency.

Moreover, authentic materials help bridge the gap between the classroom and real-world situations. By simulating real-life scenarios, students can develop practical communication skills, which are invaluable in their future interactions with native Chinese speakers and when engaging with Chinese culture in various contexts.

Nevertheless, the use of authentic materials presents its challenges. Teachers may find it difficult to curate appropriate materials that are both culturally relevant and

age-appropriate for their students. Additionally, some authentic materials might contain complex vocabulary or cultural references that are beyond the student's current proficiency level, potentially leading to frustration and disengagement.

In this chapter, I provide an in-depth reflection on the significance of utilizing authentic materials in Chinese immersion cultural teaching. Throughout the course development process, I have gained invaluable experiences as a researcher, writer, and learner. Notably, my extensive literature review on conducting assessments emerged as a critical aspect of my capstone project. This unique perspective on assessing student learning through guided cultural teaching has profoundly impacted the course's teaching plan.

According to the development of the Language Arts curriculum in our Chinese Immersion program, we will have a stronger emphasis on students' oral skills. The implementation of the guided reading curriculum will not only assist students' reading but also their speaking skills.

This chapter embarks on a journey that mirrors the dynamic evolution of our Chinese Immersion program's Language Arts curriculum. This evolution unfolds with a resolute commitment to augmenting students' oral language skills. Through the strategic integration of the guided reading curriculum, our program aims to foster a robust emphasis on oral proficiency. This transformative approach is not only envisaged to elevate students' reading competency but also to empower their spoken language abilities. This strategic integration reflects the harmonious interplay between receptive and expressive language development. By prioritizing oral proficiency, we aspire to nurture students who are not only adept readers but also confident and articulate speakers.

Reflection

A large body of literature supports the use of authentic materials in teaching languages. These materials appear effective in motivating learners, arousing their interest, and exposing them to the actual language they are to face in the real world. Furthermore, these materials trigger the success of students in learning a foreign language by exposing them to real-world language. Badri and Salehi (2017) believe that using authentic materials can encourage learners to learn a language by establishing their feeling of learning an actual language. Baleghizadeh (2010) also found that increasing learners' motivation and reflecting positively upon their learning process is a major advantage of utilizing authentic materials. In contrast, part of the literature advises against using authentic materials in classrooms owing to the extreme cultural bias in these materials and their complicated structures and words, which can frustrate the learners; nevertheless, given the numerous benefits of authentic materials compared to their disadvantages in teaching languages to ESL/EFL learners, it is recommended that authentic materials be used in EFL classrooms to enrich the learning process.

Teachers can plan for novel versions of teaching reading comprehension to their learners. These teachers can successfully help their learners improve their speaking and reading skills. In the meantime, being exposed to adequate amounts of authentic materials can assist learners in improving their reading skills. The present findings are beneficial for students and can help them become motivated when experiencing language in a realistic lively manner. Given that acquiring knowledge of the culture is crucial for learning a language, the proposed technique in this study can help students enhance their intercultural communicative competence and familiarize themselves with the culture of

the target language through the use of real texts written for real audiences. With a key role in teaching a foreign language, authentic materials appear to be effective in improving reading fluency and reading ability.

Taking "Yuan Ri" as an example, what questions can the teacher ask?

1. What did you see? (Actually, this is the best question, because it can trigger students to say a lot of things, whether it's comments or questions, you can speak according to their questions. If no one speaks or everyone talks about it, the teacher The following questions can be used to guide students.)

2. What is the story mainly about? What holiday is it?

3. What is hanging on the wall?

4. What is this person carrying?

The process of self-reflection of a teacher was one of the critical guided reading strategies (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). In this chapter, I will reflect on the capstone process as a researcher, writer, and learner. Also, I will review the literature reviews, discuss the possible implications, and analyze the limitations of authentic materials and cultural teaching in the Chinese immersion area. Lastly, I will talk about the future implications and the use of the curriculum results.

Since the type of interactions and participants that generate the corpus are diverse, the types of authentic materials are also rich and varied. They can be face-to-face conversations or non-real-time conversations such as micro-messages and emails; they can be interviews between interviewers and interviewees, or talks, conversations, and casual conversations between multiple people; they can be academic seminars in university classrooms or bargaining in the marketplace, and so on. In principle, the

corpus produced in these communicative modes can be used as an authentic textbook corpus. In terms of the types of communicative participants, they can be native speakers of Mandarin, native speakers of Chinese dialects, native speakers of overseas Chinese languages, and native speakers of foreign languages. In terms of developing teaching materials from authenticity, all of the above authentic materials can be used as alternative materials to develop diverse teaching materials and provide learners and teachers with diverse teaching materials.

Create a Chinese language situation in classroom teaching to strengthen oral communication and repeated practice between students in groups. Teachers can perform and demonstrate in spoken Chinese, and practice and consolidate after class until all students can fluently use spoken Chinese to conduct situational conversations (Pratt, 1992). For example, when teaching the topic of birthdays, you can use the birthdays of your classmates as an invitation to design and simulate a birthday party. The students guessed birthday gifts for each other, performed Chinese songs, and more. It is the nature of students to love acting. Teachers guide students to study in class fully, prepare carefully after class, and choose their favorite roles and programs to perform. Finally, the "Best Speaking Award" and "Best Performance Award" were selected. Creating such a situation stimulates students' interest in Chinese language learning and further cultivates students' Chinese language acquisition habits.

The current teaching system and traditional teaching materials are complementary to each other, and authentic materials teaching materials and traditional teaching materials will be different in terms of knowledge structure, presentation, training, etc., so there may be problems that are incompatible with the current teaching system, including

teaching concepts, differences, changes in syllabus, improvement in textbook design, differences in classroom teaching methods, changes in evaluation systems and changes in teacher training. Of course, the authentic materials teaching material is not to subvert the existing teaching system, but to consolidate the foundation, expand the space, make up for the deficiencies, and better achieve the ultimate goal of international Chinese teaching.

Conclusion

Chinese culture is an important factor affecting immersion students' Chinese language acquisition

From the perspective of sociolinguistics, language acquisition refers to the process in which a person acquires language knowledge in a certain way, develops language use habits, and improves language useability, while the development of language ability depends on language practice. Culture is a very important factor affecting the language acquisition of immersion students. The Chinese language acquisition process of immersion students is a process of acceptance and identification with Chinese culture. Chinese culture contains the profound cultural connotations and values of the Chinese nation, as well as some social customs and ways of thinking. The better the immersion students understand Chinese culture, the better the Chinese language acquisition effect will be. If the understanding of traditional Chinese culture is insufficient, pragmatic and semantic misunderstandings and errors will easily occur in cross-cultural communication, resulting in resistance and difficulties in language acquisition.

Chinese culture and immersion in students' Chinese language acquisition are inseparable and interact with each other. While learning the language, you must learn the culture of the target language. To truly understand and master Chinese culture, one must understand and master the Chinese language. To acquire and use the Chinese language, one must simultaneously learn the Chinese culture contained in the Chinese language. The more you know about Chinese culture, the better your Chinese communicative ability will be. The degree of cultural adaptation of immersion student learners to the target Chinese language is directly related to their target Chinese language proficiency. Chinese language acquisition is a process of continuous adaptation to Chinese culture. Social distance and psychological distance are two important concepts used to analyze the degree of acculturation. Social distance is the relationship between the Chinese language learner group and the Chinese target language group. The farther the social distance between the two groups, the less contact they have, and the less conducive to acquisition; the closer the distance, the more contact, the more beneficial Chinese language acquisition; and psychological distance is the relationship between individual Chinese language learners and Chinese target language groups. Psychological distance affects the amount of language input. The closer the psychological distance, the greater the amount of language input, which is more conducive to Chinese language acquisition.

Improving the language acquisition level of Chinese learners requires cultural teaching to run through the entire language teaching

Language teaching is inseparable from cultural teaching. We should start with the introduction of Chinese culture, strengthen the instillation and expansion of cultural knowledge in the second language teaching classroom, and introduce culture throughout

the entire language teaching process. Immersion teaching teachers can properly design the teaching plan, through the teaching method of inspiration and motivation, while teaching language knowledge and skills, through the background elaboration method to moderately reveal the hidden cultural phenomena behind it, eliminate cultural strangeness, and through the comparison of similarities and differences Reduce cultural misreading, compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western cultures through three aspects: structure, semantics, and pragmatics, provide Chinese cultural supplements and cultural narration, give full play to the subjective initiative of immersion students in Chinese language acquisition, and help immersion students form an understanding of Chinese. "Positive transfer" in language acquisition.

Some principles and techniques

During the curriculum development process, we have summarized the following principles and techniques:

Selecting Materials Based on Thematic Framework: With numerous Chinese immersion teaching topics available, we first establish the overarching theme for the entire curriculum. From there, I carefully select relevant video and language materials, focusing on the details (especially the scripts) to decide if they qualify as potential language resources. The aim is to cover diverse topics and activity forms under the corresponding theme. For instance, the chosen theme is "Chinese New Year," where students practice not only the preparations for Chinese New Year but also explore related topics such as wearing new clothes and hats, the legend of the mythical beast, and more, thereby providing a rich variety of language training and content.

Adopting "Intercept Complete Language Segments" for Material Selection: To

maintain high authenticity while ensuring practicality, I strive for a balance between these two factors. Therefore, in the course development, we utilize the approach of "intercept complete language segments" for material selection. A complete language segment should comprehensively explore a small topic, including a topic introduction, discussion, and occasionally a summary, with possible tangents related to the main topic without completely deviating from it. In addition to segment completeness, we consider factors such as the number of language knowledge points, speech clarity, language speed, and duration when selecting materials. The goal is to extract a high-quality, complete language segment from a single episode as the foundation for course development.

Designing Course Tasks Guided by Language Materials: Striving for an organic integration of language materials and training tasks, we utilize video materials as a guide, combining them with real communicative contexts to design tasks. For instance, in the rehearsal of the mythical beast story, the first part involves teacher-guided reading with students to discuss "What is the mythical beast?" and "How to subdue the mythical beast?" The second part focuses on students discussing and rehearsing their mythical beast stories, leading to discussions about the mythical beast's character and the role-playing task. Language structure knowledge teaching continues to be guided by the materials. Typically, repeated language structures in the materials are identified, further clarifying their functions and connecting them to related language structures, forming the knowledge and practice points for the course.

Fostering Language Communication Skills in Task Design: We thoroughly explore the language content in the videos, emphasizing discourse knowledge, particularly idiomatic expressions, communicative formulae, interaction strategies, and

context interpretation. These aspects gradually familiarize students with authentic conversations, enhancing their understanding and grasp of the contexts, attitudes, and perspectives of speakers. In comprehension exercises, we first guide students to understand the speakers' basic attitude towards the mythical beast ("strange creature, destructive"), then lead them to comprehend the true intention of the materials ("saying the opposite politely, giving gentle criticism"), and finally encourage students to express their opinions on this criticism. Based on inputting authentic language materials, we emphasize cultivating students' oral output abilities and designing various types of task exercises to enhance their communicative competence.

Summary

In conclusion, the strategic integration of authentic materials in Chinese immersion schools holds profound implications for cultural teaching and language learning. When skillfully employed by educators, these materials augment the acquisition of cultural insights and linguistic competence, fostering well-rounded and culturally sensitive language learners.

To maximize the benefits of using authentic materials, teachers must strike a balance between providing cultural insights and linguistic challenges that align with their students' proficiency levels. By thoughtfully selecting and adapting authentic materials, educators can create a positive and engaging learning environment that fosters cultural appreciation and language growth.

A judicious selection and adaptation of authentic materials catered to students' proficiency levels is vital to capitalize on the benefits of this approach. Empowering educators through targeted professional development opportunities, including workshops,

seminars, and collaborative sessions, can equip them with innovative instructional strategies, facilitating the seamless integration of authentic materials into the curriculum.

Moreover, professional development opportunities for teachers can significantly enhance their ability to incorporate authentic materials in the classroom effectively.

Workshops, seminars, and collaborative sessions can help educators explore innovative teaching methods, share best practices, and address challenges related to cultural teaching.

Ultimately, the successful integration of authentic materials in Chinese immersion schools will contribute to producing culturally competent and proficient language learners who can navigate real-life situations with confidence and respect for Chinese culture. It will enable these students to develop into global citizens capable of building bridges between cultures and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

The outcome of effectively utilizing authentic materials in Chinese immersion schools is the cultivation of culturally astute and linguistically proficient individuals. Equipped with a deep understanding of Chinese culture and language, these students are aptly prepared to engage as global citizens, effectively bridging cultural gaps and promoting cross-cultural appreciation and understanding. Embracing authentic materials as a pedagogical cornerstone empowers students to navigate diverse cultural landscapes with confidence and respect, heralding a new era of cultural fluency in the realm of language education.

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