BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND PRACTICE IN AN INTRODUCTORY CHINESE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

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This study was an action project conducted in an introductory Chinese language college-level class. The aim of this research was to examine if the dialogues between the researcher and the instructor will facilitate the integration of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) philosophy occurs within an introductory Chinese language classroom setting. The instructor's teaching beliefs before and after the dialogue were examined through the observations and interviews. The research also included the language learners’ expectations on language learning. Six times’ in-class observations, two feedback meetings, and one CLT mini-lesson modeling were scheduled throughout the whole research. The researcher provided feedback to the instructor about her lessons and introduced CLT features and strategies. The hypothesis was that the interactions between the researcher and the instructor will increase the frequency of communicative activities and target language use in the beginning level Chinese language course.

From the collected and analyzed data, it was found that the students expected to learn Chinese culture along with the language learning. Improving their communicative competence was the main goal that the language learners enrolled in the class. However, the students showed reluctance to speak the target language in class while they believed more target language exposure and use will help them with the communicative competence improvement. At the same time, they felt secure with the help of English during the instruction. The instructor showed great interest to utilize CLT inside her class after the feedback meetings. More meaning exchange and communication-based instruction was found in her teaching. From the post-interview, the instructor agreed that language learners would benefit from communication in the language.
In conclusion, the dialogue between the instructor and the researcher impacted the instructor’s teaching style and belief. Consistent professional supports would be necessary for the language educators to realize pedagogical changes. Through providing feedback based on in-site observations and class modeling, the instructor participant was able to conduct CLT strategies in class. The instructor realized the importance of meaning negotiation in language learning.
This study is dedicated to my mentors who supported me with unconditional trust and guided me with great patience. You taught me how to be a better person.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks to my sisters and mother, you all are my solid foundation of my life. I can’t have a better family than this. I also appreciate the teachers and friends who help me with revision: Professor Angela Garner, Janet Holton, and Geethika Liyanage. Your help means a lot to me as an international student. And thanks to all of the prayers from my family and friends that gave me peace and joy!
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

While the Chinese program in the U.S. was expanding in a dramatically fast speed, Chinese language became one of the challenging languages to learn for English speakers (Asia Society, 2008; Dobuzinskis, 2011; Ye, 2013). In the 2007-2008 academic year, national enrollment in Chinese language studied by K-12 public school students increased by 195% compared with the number in 2004-2005 (ACTFL, 2012). It is hard to get access to efficient Chinese language teaching because of the lack of qualified Chinese language teachers, curriculum, and professional development capacity (Asia Society, 2008; Duff & Lester, 2008). According to Wang and Kirkpatrick’s (2012) research, English was used as the medium language in Chinese as Foreign Language (CFL) class worldwide. The insufficient target language use by learners in world language (WL) classes was found in Burke’s studies in U.S. (2005, 2006, 2011).

Burke (2010) gave a detailed description of a typical U.S. high school Spanish class. In her beginning vignette, it took a while for a blindfolded visitor to recognize that she was in a foreign language class. The communication between the teacher and students was in English. The students chatted with each other in English. It was only when the students read questions and answers on the board at the teacher’s request, the students would use Spanish. What is a language course if it does not encourage students to speak the language within the classroom? Students should be able to improve their communication skills over time rather than to do translation practices.

The ideal language teaching model provides opportunities for language learners to exchange meaning in the language in class, which is a key feature of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) classrooms (Burke, 2006, 2007). The proficiency-based instruction features instructor-student and student-student interactions that lead to more frequent target language
using inside and outside classrooms, and the communicative competence of the learners is valued (Burke, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2012). Chacon (2005) stated that the rationale for using CLT in language classrooms is second language (L2) learners’ need to study language for communicative purposes; this rationale “implies a shift from teaching accuracy (grammar rules and translation) to focus on language as meaning” (p. 260).

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2012) incorporated the “5Cs” into the foreign language teaching standards—communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. According to the National Standards for Foreign Language Education (2012), Communication language other than English is the main goal of the Communication category. Although the WL educators and researchers have presented considerable benefits of using communicative teaching methods, many U.S. language teachers in elementary, secondary, and higher schools still use English as their medium language and value rote grammar learning and translation over communication (Burke, 2011).

**Rationale of the Study**

According to the Modern Language Association survey (2010), the undergraduate Chinese language course enrollment grew by 18.2% from 2006 to 2009. Chinese became the third fastest growing language in the U.S. The words “growing”, “expansion” constantly appeared in the articles that talked about “teaching Chinese” or “teaching and learning Chinese”, which showed the rising need of effective Chinese language teaching in U.S. Therefore, qualified Chinese language teachers and a well-developed curriculum became urgent for high quality language teaching. CLT has been recognized as the most effective language teaching method according to the literature (Burke 2006, 2010, 2013; Ellis, 1997; Savignon 2002). If CLT is integrated, I believe Chinese language teaching will improve language learners’ linguistic
competence through negotiation of meaning and target language use. In CFL class, English has been the dominant class language for classroom management and class interaction (Wang & Kirkpatrick, 2012). “In recent years, English was adopted as the medium of instruction for half of the core curriculum for the Master’s program of Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages in China, which was established in 2007 for providing sufficient CFL teachers and developing their intercultural understanding” (p. 2). Thus, integrating CLT philosophy in CFL classrooms in the U.S. will promote the Chinese language learners’ communicative competence.

According to the literature, difficulties in implementing CLT in WL classes include: 1) The specific beliefs toward language teaching and particular rituals shared by the WL teachers; 2) unfamiliarity with CLT and the lack of the professional training in CLT for WL (Burke, 2006, 2011, 2012; Cheng, 2002; Savignon, 2002). All of these issues will be further discussed later in this chapter.

**Definition of Terms**

The following is a list of terms that were used during the research, and their definitions are explained below.

**Target Language**- The language that is taught in a WL class.

**Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**- CLT is a language teaching philosophy that facilitates language learning by promoting meaning negotiation inside classroom. Language learners’ communicative competence is the emphasis of the CLT method (Burke, 2005, 2006; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2002).

**Communicative Activity**- The classroom activities that reflect CLT principles allow language learners to focus on meaning negotiation in the language.

**Teacher’s Beliefs**- Certain learning and teaching experiences and the instructional values that the
teacher has, and they significantly influence the teacher’s instructional style and curriculum
design (Burke, 2011).

**Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL)** - Chinese is taught as a second language to the speakers
of other languages.

**Research Questions**

In order to promote the target language use and implementing CLT strategies inside an
introductory Chinese language class, the following research questions are the focus of this study:
1. What are the students’ language learning expectations?
2. What effect, if any, does collaboration between an instructor and a researcher have on
classroom practice?
   a) What methods did the instructor use prior to getting feedback?
   b) What CLT strategies did the instructor try after modeling and feedback meetings?
   c) What are the changes of the instructor’s beliefs about teaching Chinese classes at beginning
      level in college?

**Summary**

This chapter introduces the concept of CLT and the importance of implementing the CLT
philosophy into a Chinese foreign language class. The rationale of the study and the research
questions were explained after the definition of terms were presented.

Chapter 2 presents a literature review about language teaching methods, the main features
of CLT, and the barriers of integrating CLT in class practice. In chapter 3, the methodology of the
research is described in detail. The results collected from the research and the conclusions were
discussed in Chapter 4. The recommendations to language learners, language teachers, and
profession developmental leaders are given at the end of the thesis.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Major Language Teaching Methods

Language researchers’ understandings about second language acquisition have considerably changed in the past century (Musumeci, 1997). According to Theisen (2011), world language WL classes 20 years ago were different from today’s classrooms because of the lack of expectations of language use for communicating with native speakers of the language. In the literature, linguists and language educators have gradually come to appreciate the significance of learners’ communicative competence in language teaching and learning. Richards (2006) stated that early theories about language learning focused mainly on mastery of grammatical competence. However, Musumeci (1997) revisited traditional language teaching through introducing the second language teaching theory shared by several educators of 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. When “Foreign” language learning was synonymous with studying Latin, these educators viewed language as a communicative system as the goal was to speak, read, and write in Latin.

The top research in language teaching field today discusses the need more frequent use of the target language in class and the growth of learners’ communicative competence happen in U.S. WL classrooms (Theisen, 2011). This section contains a brief introduction to some main language teaching methods and approaches in the past several centuries including: Grammar-translation method, direct method/natural approach, Audio-lingual method, and communicative language teaching method.

Grammar-translation (G-T) method. At the end of 18th century, teachers emphasized grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary, and completing written exercises, which was called as Classical Method, which gradually was known as G-T Method (Brown, 1994; Chang,
The G-T method became a dominant language teaching method from the 1840s to 1940s in the field of European and foreign language teaching as other language teaching methods were blooming, and the modified version of G-T is still widely utilized in today’s WL class (Chang, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Instead of encouraging the learners to experiment with the language, G-T language teachers usually advocate learning sentence structures and complex grammatical rules instructions. Instead of focusing on oral communication, the G-T method is characterized as relying heavily on teaching grammar, practicing translation through writing and reading (Chang, 2011; Griffiths & Parr, 2001). In a typical G-T class, Hadley (1993) reported that learners usually were given grammar rules, bilingual vocabulary lists, and translating exercises. G-T teachers constantly compare native language of the students with the target one, and there are few chances for students to speak or listen to the target language (Hadley, 1993). The G-T method was criticized by the later linguists and language educators for its heavy emphasis on rote learning and drills, and providing little opportunities for students to speak or listen to the target language. Hadley also stated that “the lack of orientation towards proficiency goals is the most obvious drawback of this method, at least as it is traditionally described” (p. 91).

The direct method and the natural approach. At the end of the 19th century, the natural approach provided the foundation for the direct method, which later was gradually accepted by some reformers. The natural approach guided the language teachers to view the second language learning more like the first language learning (Richards, 2001). Along with the growing distrust of the notion that the words of different languages could be equivalent in meaning and dissatisfaction with the G-T method, the direct method was developed initially in an attempt to integrate more target language use into the classroom (Howatt, 2004). Howatt agreed that the direct method aimed to compensate for the drawbacks of the G-T method by demanding
language learners use the target language in class, and the class was conducted exclusively in the
target language. The underlying belief of this teaching method was that the students learned a
language by listening to it intensively, and this method was mainly based on the way how
children learn their native languages through association of words and phrases with visual
objects (Hadley, 1993). Terrell (1977) stated that language learners could respond in both L1 and
L2 when he initiated natural approach teaching, which she believed was to put students in a
secure learning environment. In her explanation of the natural approach, correction to learners’
speech errors was undesirable. Hadley (1993) viewed that exclusive target language instruction
was criticized by the researchers when the simple, brief explanations in students’ native language
could be more efficient. The direct method could confuse language learners by being constantly
exposed to rigid, inaccurate target language practicing (Hadley, 1993; Richards, 2001).

Audio-lingual method. In the 1940s and 1950s, the development of psychological
theories and linguistic research paved the way for the growth of the Audio-lingual Methodology
(Hadley, 1993). In Johnson’s (2004) view, behaviorism dominated the Second Language
Acquisition field until the end of the 1960s. At that time, the most influential psychological
theories belonged to behaviorist and neo-behaviorist schools. Meanwhile, structural, or
descriptive, linguistics became the center of linguistic studies thereby emphasizing the
importance of learners’ behaviors in studying procedure, such as language learning oral practices
and pattern drills. Thus, Audio-Lingual Methodology characterized unconsciously internalized
language habits through dialogue memorization and pattern drills (Celce-Murcia & Prator, 1979).
Believing that language is a set of habits, supporters of the Audio-Lingual Method instructed the
target language without reference to learners’ mother tongue (Hadley, 1993). Ignoring learner’s
cognitive ability and rigid practices became the main criticism of this method.
Communicative language teaching. The curriculum and instructional approach that facilitated the improvement of language learners’ communicative competence within a context that stimulates interpersonal communication in the target language in classrooms was viewed as Communicative Language Teaching (Burke, 2007, 2011; Savignon 2002). In both Europe and the U.S., researchers and language experts initiated a functional-notional syllabus, language for specific purposes movement, and communication-oriented language teaching during the 1970s (Savignon, 1972, 1991). In contrast to earlier language teaching methods, which emphasized the isolation of teaching linguistic elements (like grammar, vocabulary, sentence pattern), CLT involved a more flexible, vivid, and integrated classroom atmosphere that allowed students to communicate primarily in the target language in class (Savignon, 1972, 1991). Since communicative competence played a significant role in CLT, it is necessary to include below a brief summary of communicative competence and its components.

CLT Features

CLT aims to improve learners’ communicative competence through implementing communicative activities (Burke, 2006, 2010). The main features of CLT will be discussed in this section.

Communicative competence. Theisen (2011) believed some language classrooms in the U.S. had been transformed to reflect an increasing emphasis on developing students’ communicative competence over the last several decades. The transformation in WL classrooms coincided with the influences brought by CLT educators and researchers whose aim was to improve language learners’ communicative competence (Hymes, 1970; Savignon, 1972, 2002).

Chomsky (1965) introduced the difference between competence and performance, which distinguished his linguistic theory from sociocultural features. As a response to the limitations of
Chomsky’s theory, Hymes (1972) noticed that Chomsky’s performance idea did not distinguish learners’ actual performance and underlying rules of performance. As a result, Hymes (1972) developed a broader, more elaborated communicative competence theory that included “linguistic competence or implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar, and contextual or sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in context” (Yano, 2003, p. 76).

Savignon (2002) gave a relatively clear and comprehensive framework for communicative competence consisting of grammatical, discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic competences. The following section explains the four components of communicative competence.

**Grammatical competence.** In CLT, grammatical competence was viewed as the ability to use language rules in speech, expression, and negotiation of meaning (Savignon, 2002). Savignon (2002) defined grammatical competence as the ability to identify the language’s lexical, morphological, syntactical, and phonological features and to utilize all of these components to organize sentences in the target language. In contrast with common misconceptions of CLT, supporters of CLT value improving learners’ grammatical competence in their learning processes (Burke, 2006; Thompson, 1996). Savignon (1991) stated that interpersonal communication would not occur without sentence form, structure, or “a set of shared assumptions about how language works”, and speakers’ willingness to participate in meaning negotiation (p. 268).

Additionally, CLT teachers pay equal attention to L2 learners’ four aspects of communicative competence (Burke, 2006). Canale and Swain (1980) concluded from their three linguistic studies that focusing mostly on grammatical competence in the classroom was not a sufficient condition for the improvement of students’ communicative competence. In other words, language learners’ grammatical competence was not a good predictor of their communicative
competence. These researchers, however, explained it would be inappropriate to conclude from these studies that the development of grammatical competence is irrelevant to or unnecessary for the development of communicative competence.

**Discourse competence.** Savignon (2002) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) explained discourse competence as the learners’ ability to connect individual sentences to develop a paragraph. ACTFL (2012) described language learners’ proficiency in five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. ACTFL also included specific standards for the language speakers’ discourse competence in the proficiency. According to ACTFL, a speaker’s discourse competence was a good indicator of a speaker’s language proficiency level.
TABLE 1: DISCOURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH PROFICIENCY LEVEL

*(ACTFL, 2012)*

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<th>Level</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguished</strong></td>
<td>Use persuasive, highly sophisticated, and tightly organized discourse.</td>
<td>Persuasive and hypothetical discourse; Dense and complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Superior</strong></td>
<td>Communicate with accuracy and fluency; Use extended discourse without unnatural hesitation.</td>
<td>Relationship among ideas is consistently clear; Able to produce a series of paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced</strong></td>
<td>Sustain paragraph discourse</td>
<td>Connected discourse of paragraph length and structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate</strong></td>
<td>Sentence-level language; could ask questions and answer questions</td>
<td>Could write a series of loosely connected sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Novice</strong></td>
<td>Short messages; everyday topics; isolated words and phrases.</td>
<td>Produce lists and notes; Words and phrases level</td>
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**Sociocultural competence.** Second language learners need to identify certain knowledge about the cultural context of the language they are studying. As a response to Chomsky’s (1965) undue emphasis on abstract grammatical knowledge in second language acquisition, Hymes (1972) proposed a theory of language competence, which included the ability to use language appropriately within a cultural context. To further Hymes’ theory on communicative competence,
Canale and Swain (1980) included sociolinguistic competence, which initially combined sociocultural rules of use with rules of discourse, as one of three components in the communicative competence framework. They stated that the primary consideration in using these sociocultural rules should be given to appropriate use of certain propositions and communicative functions within a given sociocultural context based on factors like topics, participants’ roles, settings, and norms of interaction. The definition of sociocultural competence, described by Savignon (2002), was a broader theory than sociolinguistic competence identified in Canale and Swain’s (1980) research. In Savignon’s (2002) perspective, sociocultural competence requires language speakers to possess knowledge about the social context in which the language is used. Thus, sociocultural competence helps language learners know how to use and respond to language appropriately in given settings and conversation.

**Strategic competence.** In developing strategic competence, second language learners use communication strategies to compensate for the learners’ unfamiliarity with the language rules as they engage in conversation. Savignon (2002) explained strategic competence as the ability of the language learners to solve the difficulties caused by their lack of understanding of grammatical rules and cultural context. Strategic competence may compensate for second language learners’ insufficient competence in grammar, sociocultural, and discourse. In other words, the development of strategic competence contributes to speakers’ overall communicative competence. (Savignon, 2002)

Researchers classified two types of strategic competence in the language teaching field: reduction or avoidance strategies and achievement strategies (Ellis, 1985; Faerch & Kasper, 1983). Reduction or avoidance strategies involve adjusting one’s message to low-level word expressions. Faerch and Kasper (1983) explained that language learners sometimes say what
they can, but not what they want to because of their lack of language knowledge. Unlike reduction or avoidance strategies, Faerch and Kasper explained that achievement strategies could be either co-operative or non-co-operative, and learners’ meanings are expressed by alternative ways like non-verbal language. The co-operative achievement strategy refers to learners’ desire to be helped by conversation partners when asking direct questions (like “what do you call…?”) about unfamiliar expressions or using indirect actions (like pauses, eye gaze, etc) as signals for help (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991). In Xue’s (2013) research on Chinese graduate students’ communicative competence in U.S. higher education institutions, achievement strategies contributed more than reduction strategies to language learners’ communicative competence.

**Communicative activities.** Burke (2010) introduced 10 techniques for language teachers to use to promote communication in the target language in the language classrooms. One of the suggestions was to integrate communicative activities in the world language classroom. According to Nunan (1989), communication task was defined as task that “involve the learner in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form” (p. 10). As Ellis and Shintani (2013) described, task-based language teaching allows the L2 learners to engage “in meaningful meaning-focused communication through the performance of tasks” so that their communicative competence is enhanced (p. 135). Negotiation of meaning helps language learners focus on conveying meaning rather than worrying about the accuracy of their production.

Some studies on the communicative activities showed the evidence that language learners benefited from the activities in terms of learning outcomes on accuracy, fluency, and cultural awareness of the language. Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993) conducted research with six Japanese college students to study the students’ output performance after the focused communication tasks.
The teacher pushed the student to produce language by requesting the students to further clarify their sentences. The research was conducted in two experimental groups of students, each consisting of three students. Significant increase of students’ language accuracy was showed after the teachers conducted the communication-focused tasks in one group while the other one (without communication-focused tasks) didn’t show any improvement.

**Grammar instruction in CLT.** Thompson (1996) identified the four most widespread misconceptions among language teachers, including the most persistent misunderstanding: that CLT means no grammar teaching. Most concerns about CLT focus on the students’ accuracy of the language forms (Thompson, 1996). In Cang’s (2011) research, the reason why CLT was not widely used in Taiwan was because teachers believed that CLT encouraged language learners make grammatical errors, and some CLT practices “may lead to fossilization of learner’s errors (p. 17).” In contrast with this widespread misconception, many linguists and methodologists who support CLT acknowledged the importance of grammar instruction in the second language classroom. Savignon (1991) asserted that communicative teaching and learning would never take place without the forms, structures, and a shared sense of language accuracy, along with the participants’ willingness to collaborate in meaning negotiation. Canale and Swain (1980) extended this notion of grammatical competence within a communicative competence context when they suggested that grammatical competence should be an essential concern for any communicative approach whose aim is to allow language learners to “express accurately the literal meaning of utterances” (p. 30).

In Savignon (1991)’s research, results from a study indicated that the meaning-focused exercises contributes to language learners’ communicative ability, and learners concentrate the best on grammar instruction when it relates to learners’ negotiation needs. Burke (2006, 2011)
has suggested implicit grammar instruction occurs more often than explicit grammar teaching in CLT classrooms. Learners must apply language rules during negotiation of meaning in practical communicative contexts (Burke, 2006, 2011). Additionally, in CLT classrooms, explicit grammar teaching should appear after learners have expressed their grammar needs in communicative behaviors (Burke, 2006, 2007; Savignon, 1991). Ellis (1997) also suggested learners acquire implicit language forms through noticing, comparing, and integrating language to make it understandable rather than only through form-centered grammatical instruction.

**Students’ expectation on language learning.** Students’ language learning beliefs can greatly influence the way that how the students prefer to learn a language (Horwitz, 1988; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). According to Horwitz, if a student believes vocabulary learning and grammar rules are the core of learning a language, then the student would spend the most of the language learning time on memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules “at expense of other language learning tasks” (p. 289). They also found that students’ overdue emphasis on language accuracy might lead to the learners’ less participation in communication-based tasks in class.

Students’ foreign language learning goals and expectations were examined in some research. Megnan et al. (2014) found that the U.S. students believed being able to involve in multilingual communities, communication, and culture are the most three valuable goals in language learning among the 5C’s standards.

**The Barriers Impeding Implementation of CLT**

From the literature, there seems to be a disconnect between second language acquisition research and what really occurs in the language teaching class.

**Limited implementation and research of CLT classrooms.** Although second language research studies have shown the benefits of CLT for more than 40 years, the G-T approach still
dominates U.S. language teaching and many U.S. WL teachers still mainly utilize English as the medium in instruction (Burke, 2006, 2011, 2012). In Burke’s studies, using native language and focusing on language accuracy in class is especially common in beginning and intermediate-level language classes.

**Conventional wisdom and deep structure.** Burke (2011) studied the barriers held by WL teachers regarding implementation of CLT methods. She believes that the conventional wisdom and deep structure, shaped from WL teachers’ personal educational experiences, tend to emphasize rote grammar learning and translation. In her study, these WL teachers taught reading, writing, listening, and speaking as separate skills. The teachers’ ultimate goal of teaching WL, in the 21st century, was to facilitate mastery of the language and promote grammatical accuracy in their students. Burke (2011) characterized the deep structure practices valued by language teachers as the use of translation when introducing new vocabulary lists, intense and independent grammar practice, insufficient involvement of cultural elements, and use of the first language as the medium of instruction.

**Summary**

Various language teaching philosophies and theories have been involved in language teaching and learning in the past centuries worldwide. Accuracy-based instruction was recommended to be gradually replaced by communicative teaching, which is the method characterized by meaning-based tasks, communicative interaction, and meaningful negotiation in the language. The later one aims to promote language learners’ communicative competence. This research will provide more details about CLT strategies and how CLT can be implemented in language classes.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

According to Burke (2013), the on-site consultation and participant-observation in the field can be effective and beneficial for teacher professional development. In this study, after analyzing the existing teaching methods and learning environment of the Chinese language class observed, I provided feedback and introduced the CLT philosophy to the teacher. The teacher’s instructional changes also were recorded before and after the action research. The hypothesis of the research was that the feedback from the researcher and the comments from student interviews would provide helpful data to show CLT creates an environment conducive to improve students’ communicative competence. In this chapter, the research approach, the context and participants, data collection instruments, and the data analysis methods, and procedures utilized in the study are discussed. The limitations of the study also are discussed.

Approach to Research

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) describe qualitative researchers as those who will “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 8). In this study, qualitative research was used to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the students’ language learning expectations?
2. What effect, if any, does collaboration between an instructor and a researcher have on classroom practice?
   a) What methods did the instructor use prior to getting feedback?
   b) What CLT strategies did the instructor try after modeling and feedback meetings?
   c) What are the changes of the instructor’s beliefs about teaching beginning level Chinese classes in college?
Combined data collected from in-class observations and interviews with the instructor of the introductory college-level Chinese language class and three of her students were analyzed. The instructor and her Chinese language class were considered to be a case. The case study approach draws attention to what we can learn from each individual’s experience in one case, independent from others (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The research conducted in the case study setting will offer unique insight into language teaching and a better understanding of the nature and attributes of communicative language teaching.

Participants

Patton (2002) states that each participant in qualitative research has to be selected purposefully. With this goal in mind, I invited Dr. Wang from Smithfield University and three volunteers from her class to be my research participant.¹ The three students were interviewed so that the language learners’ perspectives could be studied in the research.

The Chinese language instructor: Dr. Wang Qi became an assistant professor at the School of Arts and Sciences at Smithfield University after graduating from a large university in the Midwest with a Ph. D in East Asian Languages and Culture in 2011. Since Dr. Wang’s expertise is in East Asian culture and language, she integrates Chinese culture into the Mandarin classes she teaches. Her undergraduate students are able to gain valuable access to the cultural context of the language. Dr. Wang divided each chapter from the textbook² into nine class periods, and a selected topic was emphasized on in each class period. The Smithfield University three-year Chinese program provides undergraduates with a minor in Mandarin. Dr. Wang’s students were in their second semester of studying Chinese language.

¹ All names of people and schools have been changed to protect their identities.

² Integrated Chinese
The three student interviewees. Dane was interested in international politics and Asian cultures. After he made his decision to pursue an International Studies Degree, his major required him to take foreign language credits. He invested a lot of time and energy in Chinese learning, and was one of the most motivated language learners in the class. Like Dane, Bethany also had to complete the intermediate level of a foreign language as a major requirement. Bethany majors in both Marketing and International business, and she enjoys learning Chinese language. Jordan, a Biology major student, started to study Chinese language because of his Chinese friends and his interest in Chinese pop songs. The researcher asked for three volunteers to participate in the research, and three of the students agreed.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data collection instruments included the observation protocol and field notes from observations and student interviews and instructor meetings and interviews. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) stated that “Because different ‘lenses’ or perspectives result from the use of different methods, often more than one method may be used within a project so the researcher can gain a more holistic view of the setting” (p. 64).

Figure 1. Timeline of the research. This figure illustrated the specific dates during the research.
**Classroom observations.** According to Glesne and Peshkin (2006), observing in the field “provides the opportunity for acquiring the status of ‘trusted person’” (p. 39). Participating in a social setting and being part of it will help the researcher to observe the behaviors of the people from the setting, and they will give the researcher chances to experience both unexpected and expected moves of the people. The field observations highlighted the teacher-student and student-student interaction for further examining the teaching methods and techniques utilized by the instructor and the students’ response to the teaching. After permission for the field observation was given, the classroom observations were arranged. The Chinese language class was observed six times, once per week from January 22, 2014 to March 5, 2014 except for the exam week (see Figure 1 for timeline). Each observation lasted 50 minutes—the length of one class period.

During the observations, the activities, interactions, and instruction were recorded in detailed field notes (see Appendix A for observation protocol). Four main areas were emphasized: grammatical competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and sociocultural competence. Also, the interactions between teachers and learners were documented. In the observations, the way the teacher conducted her classes, the frequency of grammatical teaching, the language used in class, and the level of students’ engagement during the in-class activities were noted.

During the observation, the researcher didn’t interrupt the teaching in the class. Although the researcher’s goal was to promote the use of CLT in the Chinese class, the researcher only took field notes during the observations. The aim of observations was to learn the teacher’s teaching style, the students’ language learning environment, and how did the instructor’s teaching change after the dialogue with the researcher.
**Interviews.** Interviewing is the most common way to collect data and information in qualitative research (King & Horrocks, 2010). Seidman (2012) believes stories are a way of knowing, and interview was to make the others tell stories. He states, “when people tell stories, they select details of their experience from their stream of consciousness” (p.7). The interviews with the instructor uncovered her beliefs about language teaching. Four interviews were conducted in this research. The pre-interview and post-interview occurred with the instructor before and after the observation weeks (Appendix B and C). Three students from the class were interviewed to include language learners’ perspectives (Appendix D). Each interview with Dr. Wang was around 30-40 minutes in her office, and the student interviews were 20-30 minutes long in a reserved room in the Student Union.

Glesne and Peshkin (2006) mentioned the meaning of interview—“the opportunity to learn about what you cannot see and to explore alternative explanations of what you do see is the special strength of interviewing in qualitative inquiry” (p. 65). Thus, the interviews with the Chinese language teacher and three learners provided data about their understanding and preferences related to language teaching and learning. The questions for the teacher aimed to discover her teaching philosophies, and to probe her perspectives about her curriculum and instruction in the language teaching class. The interviews with the instructor and the three students were transcribed by the researcher word for word.

**Feedback meetings.** Two feedback meetings were scheduled once every three weeks from January 22 to March 5, 2014. Feedback and suggestions were given out of intention of promoting target language use in class. Other techniques about building a more communicative language classroom environment also were discussed at the meetings. Reflective comments about using CLT skills from the instructor were recorded by the researcher in her field notes.
**CLT mini-lesson demonstration.** In order to introduce the CLT methods to the instructor in a visual and interactive way, an English-free, immersion-based Chinese lesson was demonstrated by the researcher in class. I had training in CLT methods during a language teaching course at Smithfield University and I am a native Chinese speaker. The vocabulary teaching, grammar instruction, and communicative activity with CLT features were highlighted in the lesson. Visual pictures were used to introduce different animals and an implicit grammar point of “have” and “don’t have”. Students were allowed to move around and exchange objects. The researcher and the instructor debriefed the lesson at the second feedback meeting.

**Data Analysis**

Three data resources were used for data coding. As Glesne (2006) wrote, coding is a “progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected data (i.e., observation notes, interview transcripts, memos, documents, and notes from relevant literature) that are applicable to your [our] research purpose” (p. 152). The interview transcription, the notes from classroom observations and feedback meetings were thoroughly read. The main themes and ideas were determined and coded by the researcher. The “like-minded” (p. 133) pieces were located and categorized to build an organized framework and fulfill the research goals. The themes about the students’ and the teacher’s language teaching and learning beliefs emerged while the data was studied. The themes from different data resources were compared and contrasted to answer the research questions.

To identify the teacher’s teaching philosophies, the researcher used the coding of pre-interview to compare and find themes from the transcribed interviews of the post-interview and the researcher’s field notes of the classes. The interview results from the three students were analyzed to exam the students’ response to the teaching style and their preferable learning styles.
The students interview data was also compared with the field observation notes and the instructor interview transcription for getting students’ perspectives about language teaching and learning. All of the themes were presented in the results section, too.

**Establishing Credibility**

According to Johnson (2008), triangulation increases the researchers’ credibility and accuracy. Triangulation helps to ensure the researcher to perceive the situation from different perspectives by providing greater depth and dimension which could be achieved by “collecting different types of data, using different data sources, collecting data in different times, and by having other people review your data to check for accuracy and adjust your findings” (Johnson, 2008, p. 102). Glesne’s (2006) suggestions about establishing trustworthiness of researchers’ interpretations are to “use more than one method for data collection and more than one type of respondent” and “consciously and continuously search for negative case” (p. 166).

In this research, triangulation was achieved by the researcher conducting the interviews with the teacher and the three students and collecting, transcribing, and interpreting the observation notes. The different types of data contributed to an overall picture of what happened inside and outside the introductory Chinese language class.

My intention to be as objective as possible as a role of researcher during the interviews and observation helped me to present different aspects of the Chinese language teaching and learning. To remain objective, the researcher visited the classroom for multiple times and interviewed both the instructor and several students. My thesis committee members provided feedback on my thesis so that the data could be interpreted, analyzed, and presented in an appropriate and credible manner.
Limitations

One of the limitations was the amount of time allotted for the research. It was the second semester of the introductory level Chinese language class. The students already gained some basic knowledge about the language and formed their learning habits. This might affect the influence that the research had on the teaching in the class. Six weeks was really short and it can be challenging for the students and the teacher to experience the CLT techniques in such a short period time. The researcher also only had training in CLT during one course and has had limited teaching experience herself.

Another limitation is the limited time for the classroom observations and the feedback meetings with the teacher. The six observations within the classroom setting cannot provide an overall view about the whole semester’s Chinese language course or instructor’s overall teaching approach. The two feedback meetings can only offer limited amount of assistance for the instructor to promote the communicative teaching features inside of the class.

Although there were limitations to the research, it is still reliable and trustworthy due to the nature of the study. Different data resources were collected in order to gain a relatively comprehensive understanding about the Chinese language class. The different perspectives were gathered and compared. The instructor was not demanded to make any instructional change unless she decided to.

Summary

In this chapter, the research approach was discussed. The instructor participant and student participants’ background were introduced. Additionally, data collection and analysis also was described. The intervention that impacted the class practice included three parts: observation, feedback debriefing based on observation, and CLT mini-lesson demonstration. The
limitations of the research were discussed in the chapter: the limitation of the research time and the research participant’s lack of knowledge and experience with CLT methods.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

In this section, the results will be presented according to themes that were found during data analysis. The language learning and teaching beliefs shared by the language learners and the language educator in the interviews also will be discussed.

Language Learning Expectations

There were many language learning expectations from both the instructor and the students. Three main themes related to students’ language learning expectations are presented in this section.

Learning the culture with the language. All three student interviewees showed great interest in learning Chinese culture. Getting access to the Chinese culture motivated them to take the course. Dane said, “I was going to say to learn the Chinese language, but to learn culture context within that to culture events, better connect to Chinese language too, right? I expect to learn the culture along with the language.” Jordan said, “…I have a lot of Chinese friends at home also. I was like I want to know their language. I like some of the Chinese songs. Like right now is Jay Chou. I have couple albums of his, I listen to it, I don’t understand it, but it sounds really good. I tried to sing along with it.”

Improving communicative competence. Participants wanted to be able to communicate with other Chinese-speakers. Bethany described, “Hopefully, I can get the basic level of Chinese, like, at least to have a conversation, without breaking it too much. I have higher expectations for speaking… cause I really want to speak well.” “I can recognize the characters really fast, but speaking them and pronounce[ing] [them] right with the tones and everything is another challenge.”

Jordan shared his struggle with speaking Chinese in class. However, he was still willing
to try his best to work on his speaking skills. When he was asked about his expectations of the class, he answered, “To improve my communication … hopefully I can have enough confidence to go out and talk with someone…”

**Target language use in class.** When the three students were asked how often they think they should be required to speak Chinese in class, they agreed that they should speak Chinese as much as possible. Bethany mentioned, “I think we should do it as often as possible. The more you are exposed to the language, the more you practice it, and then the more likely you are to be fluent. It will be the second nature.” Dane agreed with Bethany by saying, “I think speaking is the most weak point. Well, it is my weak point. I think it would be ideal if we could speak more in class. I prefer more free conversation…” He understood that they were at introductory level which made it very difficult to do more conversation practice in class in Chinese.

**Class Routines and Instructor’s Instructional Approaches**

According to the data collected using the observation protocol, high target language frequency from the instructor was observed in all six classes, although the instructor initiated the most of the classroom interactions. During the class, the teacher divided her lesson into three categories: vocabulary, grammar, and contextualization.

**Class routines.** Dr. Wang always started a class by bowing to students along with a Chinese greeting: “同学们好(Hello, class),” The students would respond by saying “老师好(Hello, teacher)”. The mood of Chinese learning was set at this point.

**Vocabulary.** The instructor usually started with a quiz, which aimed to motivate the students to memorize new words before they came to the class. The instructor would ask students to translate vocabulary items, which took around three or four minutes. For example, the instructor would ask one student how to say “tomorrow” in Chinese. The student would answer
“明天 (tomorrow)”. Or, the teacher said “星期 (week)” to one student, and the student would translate the Chinese word to English “week”. Each student would be asked two or three times on average in the quiz. Since the students were supposed to come to the class knowing the meaning and the writing of the words, Dr. Wang usually went over them by modeling each word and let students repeat after her so that they were able to practice the pronunciation. After the quiz, a Chinese vocabulary list was utilized to further introduce the use of the words. Dr. Wang usually contextualized the vocabulary to make sure students understand the meaning of each word.

**Grammar.** After the new words were taught, students would be presented with bilingual grammar explanation slides, and then the instructor transitioned to and explicit grammar lesson. Dr. Wang would explain the logical relationship in English. The English explanation of the grammar point was presented in the PPT slides with the key words bolded. For instance, once the instructor taught the grammar of “…怎么 (how come)…”. A Chinese sentence and its English translation were showed on the PPT slide, “我们今天考试，你昨天晚上十点就睡了” (we have a test today, you went to bed at 10 p.m. last night). The English sentence (integrated the grammar in it was: “We have a test today. How come you went to bed at 9 last night?” Dr. Wang explained to the class: “把‘怎么’放在 curious facts 前面” (put ‘怎么’ in front of the curious fact). Then, the students were asked to say the sentence in Chinese correctly to show the speaker was curious about the fact by using “怎么”.

**Contextualization.** After being presented with the explicit grammar point and vocabulary, then students would engage in short conversations with the instructor or a partner. And, then students would come up with new sentences by using the new words and the correct grammar. This practice would allow students to learn the language accuracy and new vocabulary. Two
types of interactions were observed: “Come up with examples” and “imitating conversation”. Spontaneous language output from the learners occurred in the later kind of interaction. For example, the students learned the sentence structure “when someone does something, I am doing...” by being asked to answer the teacher’s question- “When I called you, what were you doing?” The interaction was in Chinese, and the student would be expected to answer the question by using the taught sentence structure.

Instructor’s target language use. For most of the class time, Dr. Wang spoke Chinese to the students. She would read the new vocabulary in Chinese, and in most of her conversations with students were in Chinese. Furthermore, she would model how to say a sentence with new grammar rules and vocabulary. Then, the students usually repeated the sentences first. In the contextualization part, which lasted for 10-15 minutes, Dr. Wang and the students used the target language most often. Dr. Wang asked students questions in Chinese in turn and students would answer the questions with correct vocabulary and grammar rules.

The students also were taught the basic expressions in Chinese such as “Teacher, I have a question” and “I don’t know” at the beginning of the semester so that they could ask questions and respond when they had some difficulties. Several students were observed initiating questions in Chinese by asking “I don’t understand, teacher” during the classes and got their questions answered.

Major Instructional Methods Used Prior to the Feedback Meetings

During the six classroom observations, Dr. Wang was observed using CLT, G-T and ALM methods at various times for various purposes.

CLT. The instructor’s teaching showed CLT features prior to the instructor-researcher feedback meetings. In the first several classes, some basic expressions and the pinyin-the
Chinese language pronunciation system were taught. The basic terms like “teacher”, “I have a question”, were also taught. Dr. Wang continually reminded students to speak the target language in the class. It was observed that she encouraged the students to ask questions in Chinese in class. At the end of contextualization session, the students were sometimes paired with a partner to practice on conversation in Chinese. The students were able to communicate in Chinese for three to four minutes based on the topics from the textbook. Some of the pairs were picked to perform their short skits to the class after the practice.

The instructor shared some experiences that students left during the class without explanation. It is helpful that the students are taught how to speak the common daily expressions, like to ask permission of leaving room in Chinese. The students showed an awareness to use certain basic Chinese expressions after they were introduced. In one of the classes, a student raised her hand, and said “can I go to the bathroom?” Wang immediately realized she should introduce the expression to the students: “Next time, if you want to go to bathroom, you can say ‘我想去厕所’”. The student then asked: “I forgot where the bathroom is.” Another student asked immediately: “teacher, how should we ask ‘where is the bathroom’?”

**G-T method.** The instructor tried to maximize the target language use, while utilizing G-T methods at the same time. Dr. Wang translated certain content, such as new words and grammar rules into English for the students.

Dr. Wang taught grammar by using English grammar terms (such as “subject”, “verb”, “object”), the Chinese grammar markers. The English explanation was followed by some Chinese sentences examples along with the English translation. The students were chosen to create different sentences that included the grammar. For instance, one of the grammar points was about the past tense marker—“了”. Dr. Wang taught the students how to ask a past tense
question and how to give a positive/negative past tense statement. The PowerPoint slide included the grammar explanation: “了: past tense marker. Positive: Subject+verb+了+object. Ex: 他看了这个电影; Negative: subject+没有+verb+object; Question: Subject+verb+object+了+吗/没有? Ex: 他看这个电影了吗?” After the explanation, the students were asked to translate the sentence “He drank my coffee” in the forms of positive, negative, and question. Each student was assigned a partner to practice the three forms of the sentences by using the past tense marker “了”.

English was used by Dr. Wang for further clarify the grammar rules or some exceptions. For instance, when the instructor introduced the time concept, she said “bigger concept goes before smaller concept” to illustrate the order of the time items in a sentence. Then she gave some examples to further explain the grammar rules, like “昨天(yesterday) 下午(afternoon)”. When she was introducing the grammar “besides... also…”, she told the class that “you can drop the first verb in the sentence”.

In the student interviews, they shared with the researcher that they thought it was helpful to use some English in the class. Bethany mentioned, “…we just don’t know that much (Chinese vocabulary) yet, so, I feel like you can probably use English a little bit, help you out a little bit, maybe like half English half Chinese, but that just until you know the proper Chinese words for the English that you can replace it…”.

**Audio-Lingual method.** Dr. Huang usually presented the model way to pronounce the vocabulary or the sentences and let the students to repeat after her, which was one of three main interactions in Dr. Wang’s class. Sometimes, Dr. Wang would ask the students to repeat a sentence one by one after her modeling. The whole class also repeated new words or sentence structures together. For instance, Dr. Wang required one student to repeat the sentence after she
said, “除了英文，我还会说中文” (except English, I also can speak Chinese). Several students were picked to say the sentence after Dr. Wang, and the class repeated the sentence together. This teacher-student interaction sometimes occurred with error correction. The students usually were asked to say the word again if they made mistakes of the grammar or the pronunciation. One day, a student pronounced the word “日记” (diary) wrong, Dr Wang corrected her by saying, “It should be ‘riji’, okay, follow me, ‘riji’”. Then, she gave the students a hand gesture, which meant to let the whole class followed her to pronounce the word after her modeling.

**Features of CLT Implemented After Feedback Meetings**

The instructor was willing to try additional CLT techniques after the feedback meetings with the researcher. The instructional changes were found in the last two observations inside the Chinese class. The changes and students’ reactions to the changes will be discussed in the following section.

**Communicative activity.** Communication task or communicative activities are often used to help the students improve linguistic competence through students-centered meaning negotiation between the students in class. Communication was defined by Nunan (1989) as “involve learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than for from” (p.10). Some instructional suggestions were given by the researcher for the purpose of implementing communicative activities in the class. The instructor integrated more communicative activities, which increased student-student interactions, and allowed for more target language output from the students. A more active language learning atmosphere was also observed by the researcher.

In one of the lessons, the students were taught the transition word “then”, Dr. Wang showed a series of comic pictures about a man called “Tom”. The pictures talked about the daily
routine of Tom: Tom gets up at 7:00 a.m.; Tom takes a shower at 7:10; Tom cooks the breakfast at 7:30; Tom went to work at 8:00; and so on. Dr. Wang asked the students to describe each of the picture in order based on the vocabulary and the sentence structure of the lesson. The class was excited about the way they learned the new grammar and the vocabulary. After the slides were showed, the students were asked to write down five facts about their daily lives just like what they were showed. Some of them read their sentences in front of the class in Chinese.

In the second feedback meeting, Dr. Wang explained that one of her Chinese classes just learned a scenario in the textbook about store, bank, and post office. I suggested that the students be divided into 3 groups and represent the store, bank, and post office separately. Each group could learn the functions of the station they represented. Two group members could go to the scene standing next to their group, and complete their task. Dr. Wang was fascinated by the idea and decided to try it out in her class. She told me the activity was successful except she made slight modifications when we met each other.

**Interaction in target language.** More interaction between the instructor and the students seemed apparent in the last two class observations. It seemed that more target language output with the correct use of different vocabulary and grammar from the language learners was expected from the instructor in the last two observations. In the first four classes observed, the students were asked to repeat after the instructor more than the last two class periods. In the last two classes, the students appeared to be more immersed in the communication in target language environment. They needed to integrate grammar structures and the vocabulary they had already learned in past class meetings and express the meaning of an occasion or a picture in the target language. During the last class, the instructor and the students communicated in the target language for fifteen minutes. Also, the students seemed to concentrate and were engaged during
the whole lesson. The instructor started more short conversations that initiated negotiation of meaning with the students. For instance, during the second to last class observed, Dr. Wang interacted with the students by making phone calls in Chinese with them. The students were role-playing and answered questions in Chinese. It seemed that language learning focused more on the meaning rather than the forms in the last two classes.

**Instructional strategies.** After the short Chinese lesson that featured CLT methods was modeled by the researcher, Dr. Wang started to use visual pictures to teach and review new vocabulary with the students rather than translate the vocabulary in English. In the feedback meeting, she said the way I started the lesson by showing the students the pictures of items reminded her that she once used the paper cards with characters on one side and pictures on the other side several years ago. Instead of the quiz where gave the students questions to directly translate from Chinese to English or from English to Chinese, during the last two classes, she presented the PPT slides with comic pictures to represent the meaning of the vocabulary, and the students were asked to read the characters on the PowerPoint slides in turns. In that way, the language learners were able to associate the vocabulary with the real items and concepts, and avoided the misunderstanding of the meaning of the words caused by translation.

When students asked how to say the certain words in Chinese, Dr. Wang avoided telling the students the Chinese equivalent that had been taught before For instance, one of the students asked how to say ‘where is the bathroom?’”, and Dr. Wang reminded them a song they learned in the past. She said, “Do you remember that song? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 我的朋友在哪里(where is my friend)?” She modeled the sentence by saying: “厕所在哪里(where is the bathroom).” Then, the class understood how to say the sentence.
The Instructor’s Teaching Beliefs

The data from the pre-interview and post-interview were compared and contrasted. The instructor seemed to understand and value CLT more after learning more about it during the feedback meetings.

Creating communication environment. Dr. Wang believed a good world language teacher should integrate more activities into the language teaching to make the classroom atmosphere more motivating to facilitate the language learning process. In the pre-interview, Dr. Wang elaborated on her belief about being an excellent language teacher in general. Her standards could be applied to any subject content’s class at the time, such as being sincere and respecting the students. Compared to the answers from pre-interview, Wang’ definition included some new words like “interactive”, “communication”, which showed a more communicative perspective in the post-interview. She said, “…I would like to think of more communicative activities and ways to integrate the pedagogical forms, to cultivate a more interactive, livelier atmosphere. That is in my ideal world, in my ideal classroom. My class should be a place where students can really just communicate [in Chinese] and learn to talk in Chinese. Not…for credits or just for tests.” From the observation notes, the instructor started to implement more communicative activities in the class after the two feedback meetings.

Target language use. Dr. Wang’s awareness of using Chinese in the classroom and implementing CLT techniques was noticed after the feedback meetings. In the pre-interview, the instructor thought the best way to learn a language was that the learners committed to the language learning and being persistent. “I always tell my students that there is no magic to learn language fast. I told my students no one learns a language overnight. So, I told them to be consistent.” Compared with the pre-interview, she believed the best way that her students can
learn the language is immersion in talking or “learning a song, even by watching TV drama.” This will help the language learners to gradually get used to the immersion environment and the whole target language use atmosphere.

After the researcher modeled the CLT mini-lesson, instead of using a bilingual vocabulary list, Dr. Wang started to use visual aids (pictures, body language, etc.) to introduce the new vocabulary so that the students associated the vocabulary with the concept directly. Introducing the words by using pictures avoided translation in the classroom, although the students could still see the English translation of the vocabulary in their textbooks. Before the CLT techniques were introduced to Dr. Wang, she started the lesson with a quiz that required the students either to write down the vocabulary when they heard the English translation (or the opposite), or translate the words when they were given the vocabulary item (or the opposite) in turn.

The instructor believed for the next semester’s introductory level Chinese language class she would utilize the CLT techniques. She mentioned she would like to set rules at the very beginning of the Chinese language class in the feedback meetings. For instance, no English is allowed in the class. The common Chinese expressions will be introduced during the first couple weeks’ Chinese language teaching. Wang explained,

I think, it is more important to give the students a set of strategic expressions, such as ‘class begins; and good morning teacher; how to you say this in Chinese; can I go to the bathroom; when is the homework due?’ Just the common classroom language uses. I think this is not only just for the beginners Chinese students, but for different levels of Chinese language learners in the beginning of the semester. [I] should bring list of common expressions, classroom expressions to facilitate.
Goals for beginning language students. Helping the students to improve their communicative competence was confirmed in Dr. Wang’s answer to the question of “What do you hope the most that your students could learn from your language class?” Before the research was conducted, the solid language foundation was what Wang hoped the most that her students can learn from her class. She said she would like her students to prepare their “building blocks.” “I always tell my students that vocabulary items, grammar points, and example tests are the building blocks, and they have to master it, to begin with that. They know after they master these building bricks, they can use these bricks to build whatever they want.” She also believed the ultimate goal of learning a language was for communication. Dr. Wang thought the language learners gained the vocabulary and communicative competence separately. After gaining certain vocabulary and basic knowledge, the learners would be able to acquire the language.

After the research was conducted, Dr. Wang hoped her students could handle having a short conversation in Chinese by using the knowledge they learned from the class. “A strong foundation in terms of how to navigate basic communicative scenarios, and inspires in them a desire to learn Chinese language. Striking them a desire[of Chinese learning], desire to talk in Chinese,” Wang said.

Following a structured teaching frame. Although the instructor agreed with the CLT principles, Wang expressed her thought that she was not going to give up her effective language teaching structure of vocabulary, grammar, contextualization. During the pre-interview, Dr. Wang shared that she believed that an excellent world language teacher should base the curriculum and instruction on a certain plan. “There has to be sincerity, meaning that the lesson plan has to be very systematically persistent. The certain pattern that students could follow. The certain pattern for students to expect.” The structured language learning process in which the students are able
to expect along the learning and the certain patterns that the teacher can follow provided her the security in teaching. She elaborated,

I think it is more motivational, the students will enjoy the class more. It helps enhance pedagogical goals. I am not completely willing to give up the structure. A set of clear pedagogical goals, but what I learned from our communication is that what is equally important is to encourage students to use these language skills in a natural environment, in a natural communicative scenario.

The Instructor’s Concerns of Using CLT

The instructor shared her concerns about losing a structured curriculum frame. One of the biggest concerns of using CLT methods in the class for Dr. Wang was that she believed her students would benefit the most from a firm, structured curriculum, and she did not believe that CLT could allow for this to occur. Dr. Wang expressed concern with spending more time on communication than focusing on grammatical accuracy.

The instructor reported that she considered adjusting some of the instructional suggestions to match her teaching preference. Dr. Wang gave the feedback about replacing the bilingual new words list by more visual PowerPoint slides. She preferred to group the words in a logical way that there were certain relations between the words in a group like what she did. In her opinion, however, utilizing PPT slides fell short of presenting the words in a reasonable way, which may fail to give students a better sense to remember or review.

Summary

This chapter discussed the data collected from the interviews, classroom observations, and feedback meetings. The themes that appeared from data analysis were presented in this section. The students’ language learning expectations, the instructor’s teaching methods prior to
the intervention, and the teaching belief changes were the main focus of this chapter. At the end, the teacher’s concerns about using CLT were discussed.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research questions will be answered by discussing the results. The study aimed to probe the students’ language learning beliefs. The possible impacts that the dialogue between the researcher and the instructor had on the teacher’s teaching beliefs and the instruction inside the classroom were also documented. The feedback meetings and CLT mini-lesson modeling, which highlighted the CLT theories and techniques, are also discussed in this chapter.

Discussion

The feedback meetings and the CLT modeling class seemed to impact the instructor’s understandings about CLT. During the feedback meetings, different aspects of Chinese language teaching were discussed. Also, the development of language teaching methods was introduced, and the main features of CLT were emphasized. The feedback about the teacher’s Chinese language class was given after three weeks in-depth observation. Although a more communicative language teaching atmosphere was observed after the meetings through more target language use and CLT strategies utilization found in the classroom, the instructor shared her concerns toward the lesson plan designed and classroom techniques used in the class. Dr. Wang reflected on her teaching after integrating CLT awareness into her class and showed she was willing to alter her previous beliefs based on her professional development experience with the researcher. The results are discussed in the following sections according to the researcher questions asked during this study.

What are the students’ language learning expectations? The research included the language learners’ perspectives in language learning, and the students’ Chinese language learning belief and preference. From the research results, learning Chinese culture and being able to speak
the language were the learners’ intentions to take the course. Communication and culture were college students’ learning priority in a research that examined students’ learning expectations in foreign language classes (Megnan et al., 2014). Exposure to the culture-related content in class (for instance, learning some popular Chinese songs) was the most enjoyable part of the class for the students.

Additionally, the conflict between the students’ expectations of enhancing communicative competence and their reluctance to use target language in class was found in the data from the field observation and the students’ interviews. Improving their communicative competence was the students’ eventual goal of learning the language. During the interviews, the students expressed their willingness to speak Chinese as much as possible in the class.

However, they also believed the assistance of English made them feel more comfortable. Most of the students preferred to speak English when they had the communication needs either with the instructor or the peers in the class. They believed they were not ready to communicate with others in Chinese at the time or were not able to handle the conversation due to the shortage of knowledge of the language (vocabulary, or grammar). From the interviews with the students, they held the opinion that learning a certain amount of vocabulary was necessary before navigating conversations in the language. The language learners from the introductory level Chinese class felt challenged when they were put in a whole target language environment for the first time.

**What methods did the instructor use prior to getting feedback?** World language teachers often use a combination of language teaching methods in their classrooms (Gallagher, 2011). More than one language teaching method was used by Dr. Wang during the field observations. The instructor used G-T methods and Audio-Lingual methods, and some CLT
techniques (such as some common Chinese expressions and partner practice) in her teaching. A high frequency use of the target language was observed by the researcher, and most of the in-class interactions between the students and the instructor were started by the instructor. The instructor tended to translate some vocabulary and grammar structure into English during the interactions with students and during grammar instruction.

The instructor showed CLT awareness in her teaching even before the feedback meetings were conducted. The CLT techniques such as using basic Chinese expressions, goal to maximize target language use, in-class practice with partners, and song teaching were observed during the researcher’s visits to the class. The instructor encouraged the students to use Chinese throughout the research. The instructor was open to the collaboration with the research because of her willingness of conducting more communicative language lessons.

Burke (2011) found that most WL teachers value certain deep structure practices that emphasize translation, grammatical accuracy, and correct pronunciation, and believe they are important to language learning. Dr. Wang used several of these deep structure practices in her teaching to promote optimal learning of Chinese. Additionally, the translation quiz was a motivation for the students to memorize the vocabulary and practice writing characters outside of the classroom. Students also were asked to memorize the pronunciation and the orthography of the vocabulary. Explicit grammar instruction was conducted, and it was followed by students’ intense practice of applying the grammar in their newly created sentences. The grammatical knowledge was presented in English, and the English syntactic terms were utilized in the grammar instruction for further clarifying the rules. After giving the grammar and examples, the language learners practiced to make sentences with the grammar knowledge in Chinese, which provided the most opportunity on target language use to the students in class.
The students were asked to follow the teacher’s pronunciation modeling by repeating either a vocabulary item or a sentence. It was used during the error corrections also. When the students made a mistake, the instructor helped them correct the sentence or the pronunciation and require the student or the whole class to practice on it.

The students preferred to speak English in the class when they were communicating with the instructor or other students when they had questions about how to say things or about grammar. Even though speaking in Chinese was encouraged by the instructor in class when they were asking questions or communicating with their peers, the language learners still believed that speaking English was allowed in the class and they naturally spoke their native language. In the research about code choice in Chinese language classroom conducted by Wang and Kirkpatrick (2012), they found that English was used for the purpose of classroom management, further explanation or clarification, and interaction with the students by the Chinese language teachers in Chinese as a foreign language classroom. So, the instructor might believe that English use in the classroom is helpful, and that resulted in difficulty of building a Chinese-only classroom environment.

**What CLT strategies did the instructor try after modeling and feedback meetings?**

Instructional changes were found after the feedback meetings and a CLT-featured Chinese lesson was modeled with the students. The dialogue between the researcher and the instructor mainly focused on providing feedback to the instructor on her instruction in the classroom and theoretical supports of promoting the communicative degree of the class. A lesson demonstrating CLT techniques, such as immersion, and student to student interaction in Chinese (a communicative activity), was implemented. As a result of this experience, Dr. Wang was interested in trying different CLT methods.
The instructor increased Chinese use in the last two times’ Chinese class observation, and she employed some practical instructional techniques in the classroom to avoid English use. For instance, more visual aids were added in the vocabulary presentation and review and grammar instruction. Furthermore, the instructor’s communicative activity that gave the students chances to utilize the target language under a meaningful context was conducted successfully in the class.

Instead of presenting vocabulary with an English-Chinese word list, Dr. Wang reviewed the vocabulary by presenting the students pictures of the items or the action words. In this way, the instructor didn’t have to have the students translate the vocabulary. The instructor shared that she needed some adjustments on the new way to get used to them, and so did the students. However, the textbook that the students were using included bilingual vocabulary lists, and they still likely learned the new vocabulary by looking at the English translation of the words or the texts.

More student-teacher interactions and authentic communication were found in the last two class observations. After the feedback meetings, the current class was taught in a more meaning-focused manner, which allowed the students to use the vocabulary and grammar in a real conversation situation. The students concentrated better when the meaning-focused conversations occurred. Burke (2010) believes a language classroom can start with implementing communicative activities to promote communication in target language with and among the language learners. An activity that described one day of the life of Mr. Gao immersed the students in the whole target language environment, which made them more alert and engaged actively in the language learning by using the vocabulary and grammar they learned. Thus, the CLT-featured instructional assistance would be necessary for the language classroom to increase target language use and interaction within the class.
Burke (2010) also encourages world language teachers to promote communication inside the world language classrooms by teaching or even posting the common expressions like “I need to leave the room”, “I need to get a pencil”, and so on for beginners. Dr. Wang taught several expressions such as “hello, teacher”, “I have a question”, and “Can I use the bathroom”, but she and the students liked the idea of learning more common Chinese expression, and a discussion about how to say “I need to go the bathroom” and “where the bathroom is” in Chinese was observed by the researcher. Since the common sayings are practical and short, students’ awareness of using short common expressions inside the classroom was easily triggered by a discussion like that.

**What are the changes of the instructor’s beliefs about teaching beginning level Chinese classes in college?** Dr. Wang showed great interest in using CLT methods after she learned more about it. However, she still possessed the conventional wisdom of the language teachers in Burke’s (2011) study with the main goal of language learning being to teach for mastery of the language and grammatical accuracy. According to the findings from comparing the pre-interview and post-interview, the instructor believed a more communicative language classroom would facilitate the language learners’ linguistic competence and improvement after the dialogue between the instructor and the researcher occurred. However, she emphasized that she would continue to use a structured language approach in her class because it was more predictable for her and the students and allowed clear language teaching goals to be accomplished.

Dr. Wang expressed her concerns toward implementing communicative activities more often. In one meeting, she said, “It sounds really ideal and fun, but how can I really use the techniques in my class?” Dr. Wang believed a well-designed instructional structure included
posting clear instructional objectives that were grammar-focused for the different class periods, and certain units focused on various forms needed to be completed by the end of the semester. Mastering language forms and memorizing vocabulary and grammar were viewed as the “foundation” of the language proficiency by Dr. Wang. She believed after the students build a solid foundation, the communication will naturally follow. Rather than learn the knowledge of the language through communication, learning basic words and grammar rules was highlighted in Dr. Wang’s introductory Chinese language class.

After the action research, the researcher observed that Dr. Wang’s class used more target language and involved more meaningful language learning. In the post-interview with the instructor, she stated the goal of language learning should be communication, and a more communicative learning atmosphere needed to be created for the language learners. More target language use from the students was her goal in her class.

**Conclusion**

The research bridged theory and classroom practice in a meaningful way. The dialogue during feedback meetings brought the CLT philosophy to the teacher and the class. Both the teacher and the students in the research agreed that more Chinese should be used during the class time. CLT can promote the communication inside language classroom successfully via conducting communicative activities and other strategies (Savignon, 2002; Richards, 2006). In conclusions, I provided certain recommendations for language learners, teachers, and professional development leaders who desire to promote more communicative classrooms.

**Recommendations for learners.** It is significant that the language learners in this study had the awareness to use target language in class and participate in the in-class communicative activities. The language learning environment is important for the learners. Engaging in language
learning and taking the risk of making mistakes will contribute to create an active learning atmosphere. At the same time, understanding and supporting each other in the language class will make learning easier for everyone. Language learners from this research were aware of the importance of being exposure in a target language environment, and they were willing to speak the language more if given more chances, and more motivation to, in class. The students will never feel ready to communicate in the language unless they are required and supported to in class. The language classroom should be a place that allows learners explore the language with guidance.

**Recommendations for language teachers.** An open attitude to instructional changes and collaboration can help language teachers gain a better understanding about the nature of language learning. It is hard for language educators to make some instructional changes that have certain conflicts to previous curriculum and instruction beliefs, especially without professional support. Looking for collaboration with the colleagues, administrators, and profession developmental leaders is necessary for language educators’ growth in the field. After the collaboration with the researcher, the instructor clearly indicated that she was ready to apply some of the CLT techniques and strategies to promote CLT in her class.

CLT philosophy integrates the four skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing), emphasizes meaningful communication, and makes language class more organic and active. Language educators should be aware that the certain teaching beliefs held by some WL teachers leads to an instruction that focuses on grammar and translation and teaches reading, listening, speaking, and writing separately, and seen to be more structured (Burke, 2011; Gallagher, 2011 ). Using the CLT philosophy also requires structure, routine, and careful planning.

In addition, it is crucial that language educators share their philosophy with language
learners. Dr. Wang’s beliefs about language learning impacted the students’ learning beliefs significantly. In the research, the instructor and the students shared the similar language learning beliefs. I believe that if the instructors believe in using a communication-oriented language learning environment, the students also will.

**Recommendations for professional developmental leaders.** The collaboration between the researcher and the teacher in the researcher seemed to impact Dr. Wang’s classroom practice and her language teaching beliefs. The teacher believed the on-site collaboration was helpful in building a communicative learning environment. Feedback meetings and the modeled CLT lesson provided the insights into language teaching and learning for both the researcher and Dr. Wang. So, collaboration between professional development leaders and language teachers should occur more often to fulfill the instructional changes.

From an enrollment rate survey of higher education language courses conducted by Modern Language Association (2009), the comparison of introductory and advanced undergraduate Chinese language course enrollment in 2009 showed that the ratio of introductory to advance was 4 to 1 in nation-wide colleges. Chinese language course lose the students along the way from the introductory to the advanced level. The necessary efforts of keeping students’ language learning interests and improving students’ linguistic competence need to be taken by the program coordinators and curriculum development leaders of Chinese language. CLT provides a language teaching philosophy that can offer rich language speaking and culture experiences to the language learners, while still being structured, and can improve students’ language proficiency (Savignon, 2002; Burke, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013). Therefore, additional instructional support and professional development should be available to teachers.
REFERENCES


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the Standards for Foreign Language Learning. Foreign Language Annals, 45(2), 170-192.


APPENDIX A: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (Gallagher, 2011)

Teacher: ___________________ Date: ___________ Class: ___________________

Time: __________ #of students________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(explicit, implicit, both, comparison of languages)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(separate from language instruction, combined with language instruction)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Types of Activities</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audio/Listening</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual Aides</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/Writing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

1. How do you define an excellent world language teacher?

2. How do you believe language learners study a world language effectively?

3. What should language teachers do during the first several weeks in their language classes? What about the whole beginning stage?

4. How would you describe the grammar teaching in your class? What do you think about grammar teaching? (For instance, what do you think is the most effective way to teach grammar?)

5. What do you hope the most that your students could learn from your language class?

6. How do you assess what your students learnt from your classes? If there is any, what are the results like?

7. What is your biggest challenge as a language educator?
APPENDIX C: POST-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

1. How do you define an excellent world language teacher?

2. How do you believe language learners study a world language effectively?

3. What should language teachers do during the first several weeks in their language classes? What about the whole beginning stage?

4. What do you hope the most that your students could learn from your language class?

5. What do you think about Communicative Language Teaching as a teaching philosophy in general?
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS

1. What impacted your decision to take Chinese 1010 (peers, career, interests)?

2. Could you describe some of the learning experiences you gained this semester (i.e. the interaction between the instructor and you, between you and other students)?

3. Could you think of the lesson you have enjoyed the most in Chinese 1010 class?

4. What do you want to learn the most from this course? What are your expectations for this class?

5. How often do you think you speak Chinese in the class generally (out of 100%)?

6. How often do you think you should be required to speak Chinese? Why?

7. What is the most efficient way for you to learn Chinese?
Informed consent Form for Social Science Research
Bowling Green State University
Chinese Language 1010 Students

Title of Project: Bridging the Gap between Communicative Language Teaching and Practice in an Introductory Chinese Language Classroom
Principal Investigator: Ning Zhang, School of Teaching and Learning
Contact Information: 529 Education Building, Bowling Green, OH, 43402; 419-601-9023; nzhang@bgsu.edu

1. Purpose of the Study: I will be examining the possibility of implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) philosophy into your introductory Chinese language course. In order to provide a Chinese language curriculum that could improve students’ communicative skills, the study will focus on diagnosing the current teaching and developing dialogue with your instructor on how to integrate CLT on a daily basis. The research questions are: 1. What CLT strategies did the teacher use to promote CLT within the beginning Chinese language classes? 2. How did the dialogue between participants and researcher impact the learning and teaching of the class? 3. How did the dialogue between the instructor and researcher impact the learning and teaching of the class?

2. Procedures to be followed: If you agree to be observed, you will be observed by me twice each week for six weeks. The goals of the observation are to further study the teaching styles of the instructor and learning experiences of the whole class (e.g.: the interactions between students and students, between the instructor and the students; how often the target language is used). If you are willing to be interviewed, you will be interviewed only by me for 60-70 minutes in my advisor’s office, 529 Education building, on campus, when she is not present. The goals of the interview are to further study your learning experiences from the class and your expectations of learning Chinese.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Deciding to participate or not will have no impact on participants’ relationship with Bowling Green State University. The researcher will not interrupt the instructor’s teaching and students’ learning during the observation. The interview will be scheduled depending on your preference. Your decision of participating or not participating will not influence your relationship with your course instructor, and your grades will not be impacted either. The aim of the research is to study the possibility of new teaching method
implementation in Chinese teaching classroom, not to judge the students’ learning outcomes or instructor’s teaching.

4. Benefits: The goal of the research is to improve Chinese language teaching and students’ learning experience. It is necessary to include your feedback as a Chinese language student in the research so that my research includes multiple perspectives about teaching and learning the language. My hope is that your learning will improve as a result of the dialogue that occurs with your instructor, you, and me.

5. Duration / Time: The observation will occur two times each week for 6 weeks. The interview will last 60-70 minutes.

6. Statement of Confidentiality: Only I will know your identity. The instructor will not know which of you participate in the study. If the research is published, information will not be given to identify you. Names will be removed from the data and replaced with a code or pseudonyms. Our conversations will be highly likely quoted in my research. If that is the case, you will be informed. If you agree with quotation, I will protect your identity by using pseudonyms. Data collected from the students will be stored in a locked file cabinet.

7. Right to Ask Questions: You have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. You are able to ask me questions about the research. You could contact via E-mail at nzhang@bgsu.edu or by phone at 419-601-9023. Also, you can contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Brigid Burke, with questions at bburke@bgsu.edu or 419-372-7324. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419)372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu.

8. Voluntary Participation: Participation is voluntary. If you do not want to participate, observations and conversations related to you will not be included in my research. You can decline to answer specific questions during the interviews. You can withdraw from the study at any time by notifying me.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in the research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep your records if you would like one.

Please choose one of the follow options:
☐ I agree to you observing me.
☐ I agree to you interviewing me.
☐ I agree that you can observe me and interview me.
I, the undersigned, verify that the above informed consent procedure has been followed.

Participant Signature: [Signature]
Date: [Date]

Investigator Signature: [Signature]
Date: [Date]
Informed consent Form for Social Science Research
Bowling Green State University
Chinese Language 1010 Instructor

Title of Project: Bridging the Gap between Communicative Language Teaching and Practice in an Introductory Chinese Language Classroom
Principal Investigator: Ning Zhang, School of Teaching and Learning
Contact Information: 529 Education Building, Bowling Green, OH, 43402; 419-601-9023; nzhang@bgsu.edu

1. Purpose of the Study: I will be examining the possibility of working with you to implement the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in your introductory Chinese language course. In order to provide a Chinese language curriculum, that could improve your students' communicative competence, I will focus on assessing your current teaching and developing dialogue with you on how to integrate CLT in daily teaching. The research questions are: 1. How was Communicative Language Teaching implemented in the Introductory U.S. Chinese Language Classroom? 2. What CLT strategies did the teacher use to promote CLT with the beginning Chinese language classes? 3. How did the dialogue between the instructor and researcher impact the learning and teaching of the class?

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be interviewed by me during the research. I will need the permission of observing your class from you for staying in your introductory Chinese language classroom. We will meet for the feedback and discussion each two weeks for 6 weeks. I also will interview 3 of your students for consideration of getting the perspectives from the language learners.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Deciding to participate or not will have no impact on your relationship with Bowling Green State University. The 60-70 minutes interview and feedback meetings will be scheduled depending on your preference. Any instructional decision will be made by you. The researcher won’t interrupt your instruction plans.

4. Benefits: The goal of the research is to improve Chinese language teaching and students’ learning experience. The ultimate purpose of the study is to better Chinese language teaching, and provide a better language learning environment for Chinese language students. A benefit of the research is that you will learn about communicative language teaching method, which has been shown to
improve language learners’ proficiency.

5. Duration / Time: The interviews will last 60-70 minutes. Each of the 3 feedback meetings will last 1 hour per two weeks. The whole observation duration will be six weeks.

6. Statement of Confidentiality: Only I and you students will know your identity. If the research is published, information will not be given to identify you. Names will be removed from the data and replaced with a code or pseudonyms. Our conversations will be highly likely quoted in my research. If that is the case, you will be informed. If you agree with quotation, I will protect your identity by using pseudonyms via E-mail. The aim of the research is to study the possibility of new teaching method implementation in Chinese teaching classroom, not to judge the students’ learning outcomes or instructor’s teaching. Data collected from the participants will be stored in a locked file cabinet.

7. Right to Ask Questions: You have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. You are able to ask me questions about the research. You could contact via E-mail at nzhang@bgsu.edu or by phone at 419-601-9023. Also, you could contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Brigid Burke, with questions at bburke@bgsu.edu or 419-372-7324. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419)372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu.

8. Voluntary Participation: Participation is voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any time by notifying me. You can decline to answer specific questions.

If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep your records if you would like one.

_________________________________________  ________________
Participant Signature                         Date

I, the undersigned, verify that the above informed consent procedure has been followed.

_________________________________________  D  ____________
Investigator Signature                         Date