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CHALLENGES NATIVE CHINESE TEACHERS FACE IN TEACHING CHINESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO NON-NATIVE CHINESE STUDENTS IN U.S. CLASSROOMS

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By

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This qualitative case study targeted the perceptions of Chinese teachers (n= 7) who had teaching experiences in China or Taiwan and the challenges they faced in transitioning to teach non-native Chinese students in U.S. classrooms, specifically about their teaching beliefs, styles, pedagogy, classroom management strategies which may be different from that of American education system. Results showed that Chinese teacher participants encountered numerous challenges including language barriers and culture shock, different perceptions and expectations of the roles of the teacher and students, communication with parents, different teaching pedagogies and styles, classroom management, and inclusion of students with special needs. The main findings suggest that Chinese teachers need to be prepared to face the hurdles of having more responsibilities in classroom management, inclusion of students with disabilities, and communication with parents in the U.S. classrooms and acquire knowledge and skills of American teaching pedagogies, classroom management and special education.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Topic and Problem

As a native Chinese pre-service teacher, I am always interested in getting to know what the challenges are that native Chinese teachers face. As a graduate student in foreign language education, I have been well educated in a variety of methods and approaches to foreign language learning, theory and research based instructional practices as well as classroom management strategies. However, when I first started to teach Chinese as a foreign language in U.S. classrooms, I was surprised to find that I still encountered challenges that I was not aware of before. I know a large percent of Chinese teachers in the U.S. are native speakers from China/Taiwan and many of the newly arrived teachers may be experiencing similar challenges. Having their voice and insights heard could help educators understand this unique foreign language teacher population and what can be done to help them adjust better to U.S. classrooms.

Under the George W. Bush administration, the secretaries of education, state and defense, along with the director of national intelligence have developed a comprehensive national plan to expand U.S. foreign language education beginning in kindergarten and continuing throughout formal schooling and into the workforce with new programs and resources (National Security Language Initiative, 2006). The Chinese language has been designated as one of the most “critical” foreign languages to advance national security and global competitiveness. This has lead to the awarding of over thirty Foreign

Language Assistance Program grants for Chinese (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The College Board has instituted the AP Chinese test and organized related programs for preparing students. Hanban, a consortium of more than a dozen high-level Chinese government agencies, has established Confucius Institutes all over the world to improve the teaching of Chinese language and culture abroad (Robert, 2007).

There was an estimated 200% growth in Chinese language programs in the United States in just four years since 2005. However, according to the archived document from the U.S. Department of Education (2006), only 44% of American high school students are enrolled in foreign language classes as reported by the 2002 Digest of Education Statistics. Of those students, 69% are enrolled in Spanish and 18% in French. Less than 1% of American high school students combined study Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Japanese, Korean, Russian or Urdu. The quantity and quality of Chinese language teachers remains the key bottleneck in building capacity (Asia Society, 2008). There is a trend to expand instruction in the Chinese programs and other less commonly taught languages, but finding qualified teachers is a major challenge because of the limited foreign-language education programs that provide teaching certification in the Asian Languages (Brecht & Walton, 1993). The gap between the increasing growth of Chinese language programs in K-12 public schools and the shortage of qualified and certified Chinese teachers is great.

In the United States, the shortage of Chinese teachers results in a vast majority of teachers being recruited from China, or from native Chinese living in U.S. but who lack the appropriate teaching certification in Chinese. The vast majority of Chinese teachers who are teaching in U.S. K-12 Chinese language classrooms and those would-be Chinese teachers were formally educated in mainland China or Taiwan. They face a wide range of challenges teaching in a context extremely different from the culture and educational system in their country of origin. These challenges may include teaching beliefs and styles they hold regarding pedagogy, classroom management and discipline, learner-centered and self-regulated instruction, standard-based curriculum development and assessment, working with linguistically, ethnically, culturally, and cognitively diverse students, students with special needs, and communication with parents and school administrators. Therefore, preparing Chinese teachers to adapt to the public education culture in U.S. through appropriate training and teacher education programs is crucial for helping them to be successful in U.S. classrooms.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The United States is becoming a more multilingual nation than ever (Carolos F. D., 2001). According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 report, the Hispanic and Asian populations in the United States have experienced the fastest growth over the past decade. Scholars have called for changes in teacher education to prepare for the increasingly diverse student population in America's schools (Banks, 2006). It is particularly true for native Chinese language educators who were educated outside of U.S. and had teaching experiences in their country of origin, but now are teaching in U.S. K-12 classrooms.

Teaching a language is not only about teaching the language itself (Valdes, 1986). Efficient cross-cultural communication is also a significant component in foreign language education. In a multicultural classroom, in which teachers and students come from varied backgrounds, both may approach the situation with different cultural values and expectations about their roles (McKay, 1993). Thus, the complexity of teaching and learning increases when teaching is put into a context of cross-cultural practices. In order for native Chinese teachers to be effective with culturally diverse students, it is crucial that they first recognize and understand their own worldviews; only then will they be able to understand the worldviews of their American students (M. J. Bennett, 1993). Researchers assert that in order for eastern teachers to interact effectively with their students they must confront their own biases (Banks, 1994; Gillette & Boyle-Baise, 1995; Nieto & Rolon, 1995), learn about their students' cultures, different learning styles and perceive the world through diverse cultural lenses (Banks, 1994; Gillette & Boyle-Baise, 1995; Nieto & Rolon, 1995; Sleeter, 1992).

The relationship between student and teacher does seem to take on a somewhat different character in collectivist East Asia. However, the United States and countries of the Western world are usually characterized as being individualistic in nature, placing more emphasis on the individual rather than the group (Ginsberg 1992). Jin and Cortazzi (1998) examined the cultural differences of western and eastern secondary school students. . American students characterized a good teacher as one who is able to arouse the students' interests, explain clearly, use effective instructional methods, and organize a range of activities. These are very much the “teaching skills” taught in typical western teacher education method courses. The Chinese students, however, prefer the teacher to have a deep knowledge, be able to answer questions, and be a good moral model. McGinnis (1994) points out language students and teachers have divergent cultures of instruction; native Chinese teachers tend to place more value on accurate use of the language while American students place more value on creative and communicative language use (p.16). Schrier (1994) suggests that native language speakers have linguistic competency and are a “living example of the pragmatics of the target language” (p. 56); however, this does not always transfer automatically into good teaching, these traits can lead to disaster when the person is untutored in American pedagogy.

Due to the shortage of qualified and certified Chinese-language teachers and lack of Chinese –language teacher education programs in U.S., a majority of Chinese-language teachers in the U.S. are not properly trained in teaching Chinese as a foreign language for American school settings. They are mostly short-term visiting teachers sponsored by the Chinese government or teachers who are certified to teach other subjects by using emergency credential to teach in American public schools. Chinese-language teachers who lack proper training tend to lack knowledge and strategies of effective teaching pedagogy, classroom management, and communication capacity with students, parents and other colleagues, etc. that align with the needs of American schools and usually create learners with low motivation and even chaotic classrooms (Stella, 2007).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

A large percentage of Chinese foreign language instructors are native speakers of Chinese. However, their teaching beliefs, styles, pedagogy, classroom management differ from American schools. There are challenges for teachers of Chinese to adapt their teaching practices to the environment in the United States. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to students who are non-native Chinese speakers in U.S. classrooms. The research will identify common challenges of teachers with previous teaching experience in mainland China and/or Taiwan and offer possible insights to overcome them. This research could help identify the challenges that Chinese teachers face and the insights gained can inform professional development for teachers of Chinese. The results of the study will provide a great service to the Chinese teaching profession in the United States and will equip future Chinese teachers with a better understanding of how to adapt more effectively to the U.S. teaching environment.

1.4 Research Question

The research questions addressed in this case-study are the following:

What are the major challenges that native Chinese teachers face in teaching non-native Chinese speakers in American K-12 classrooms?

Sub-questions

1. What are the major differences between teaching Chinese in China/Taiwan and the U.S.?

2. What were the major challenges in teaching non-native speakers in U.S. classrooms?

3. Which specific experiences helped to successfully work through the challenges encountered while teaching Chinese to non-native speakers in U.S.?

Chapter 2 Methodology

In order to explore the major challenges that native Chinese teachers teaching in U.S. K-12 classrooms face, a qualitative instrumental case study approach was chosen and two major sources of information, surveys and interviews, were included in the data collection.

2.1 Rationale for a Qualitative Design

In order to explore the major challenges native teachers of Chinese face in teaching non-native Chinese students in U.S. K-12 schools, a qualitative case study was chosen and interviews constituted the major method of data collection. The following provides a rationale for the qualitative approach and outlines the procedure used in data collection and analysis:

Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning—how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world. People live in their own world of experiences and schemes. This study described the challenges that native teachers experienced and those that helped them to successfully work through the challenges they encountered while teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speakers. It details how the participants made sense out of their experiences and it was the interpretations of their experiences that was of most interest to me as a researcher. Interviews serve as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. For the current study, I interpreted and analyzed what I learned from these interviews and triangulated this data with fieldwork surveys, interviews, profiles, e-portfolios, and teaching materials created by the participants

Given the complexity of issues the native Chinese language teacher tends to encounter in cross-cultural Chinese teaching classrooms, it was desirable to obtain a more rich and thick description of their own teaching practices by using a qualitative design. In depth interviews with the Chinese teachers allowed for a more complete expression of ideas in a realistic context of one-on-one dialogue.

2.2 Sampling Method

Since the study is an instrumental case study, selecting cases was very important. According to Stake (1995), the goal of sampling is to “maximize learning” through studying unusual cases, therefore the guiding principle for this study was: diversity and participant's willingness to share. I used purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2009), which considers the type of case study that is most promising and useful for the intention of this study. When developing a purpose sample, researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population (Berg, 1998).

2.3 Selection of Participants

The Nebraska Department of Education and the Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education in the College of Education and Human Sciences at UNL secured a Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant that provided funding to support two 10-day Chinese Institutes (June 13-23, 2010 and July 10-19, 2011) for 50 teachers of Chinese. In choosing a purposeful sampling of teachers from the program to interview, I wanted a maximum variation of characteristics from teachers who I felt could articulate a variety of perspectives. Since the intent of this research is to explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to non-native Chinese speakers in U.S. classrooms, seven teacher participants were selected according to the following criteria: (a) they had education and teaching experience in mainland China/Taiwan and now are teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speakers in U.S. K-12 classrooms; (b) they taught Chinese in U.S. in K-12 schools, the levels of Chinese classes and grade levels taught , and the teacher's professional development background were as diverse as possible; (c) they agreed to participate in the study. In addition, gender, age status and level of English proficiency were also considered to provide as much diversity as possible.

The seven participants selected from the 2010 and 2011 institutes are those who meet the criteria of being a native speaker of Chinese, who have taught in China/Taiwan, and are now teaching in K-12 U.S. schools. The following table shows the basic characteristics of participating teachers:

Table 1. Demographic Information of Chinese Teacher Participants

Demographics of Chinese Teacher Participants (n=7)		
Characteristics	Category	Number
Gender	Male	1
	Female	6
Age	30-39	4
	40-49	2
	50-59	1
Levels Taught	1,2	2
	1,2,3	1
	1,2,3,4	2
	1,2,3,4,AP	2

Grades Taught	K-5	1
	6-8	1
	9-12	5
School Setting	Private	1
	Public	6
Years of Teaching in China/Taiwan	1-3	3
	3-5	2
	>6	2
License	In-service with license	6
	In-service with no license	0
	In license program	1
Education Degree	With an education degree from U.S.	3
	Without an education degree from U.S.	4

2.4 Data Collection

Case study research, according to Creswell (2009), involves “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system”. He also suggests that “case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.” In my case study, data were collected from multiple sources: teachers' profiles, surveys, semi-structured and open-ended interviews, and their journal reflections. The process of "making sense of the data" involved content-analytic procedures. The researcher examined the interview and observation data for themes that appeared across individuals. The researcher also coded data (i.e., transcripts) to be broken down by restructuring them in new categories to allow themes to emerge. This research study involves the collection of information via a 10-minute survey all completed online and a 30-minute interview of five questions. The survey was administered using Survey Monkey. The interviews with all the participants were conducted in Chinese and audio taped through Skype. The audio recorded data were transcribed and then translated verbatim into English.

2.5 Validation Approaches

Two validation methods were used to demonstrate the validity of my analysis from the data collected. To increase reliability, triangulation (Stake, 1998) was accomplished in several ways. I also used member checking to determine the accuracy of these qualitative findings through sharing with Chinese instructors who participated in the Chinese institutes. Upon completion of the data analysis study participants had the opportunity to respond and comment on the findings of the polished themes for cross-validation purposes.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, I conveyed to participants that they were participating in this study, and explained the purpose of this study. I respected the decisions made by all participants even if they refused to answer some of the interview questions, or felt uncomfortable sharing their personal experience on those topics. The researcher was cautious about the wording of the interview questions to make sure not to cause participants anxiety or mental distress. Informed consent was obtained before conducting this research and pseudonyms were used for those who participated in this research. The audiotapes were transcribed by the primary investigator. The data were analyzed and used to identify themes related to the research. Audio tapes were stored in a locked cabinet, and destroyed upon completion of the data analysis process. The investigators for this study are the only ones with access to the data collected from the survey and interviews. Identities of all participants are protected by reporting aggregate data from surveys and using pseudonyms when reporting qualitative data, thus minimizing the risk to participants.

Chapter 3 Findings

*3.*1The Language Barrier

Although Chinese teachers took part in this study, all have been residing and teaching in the U.S. for at least three years. A majority of them reported that the language barrier prevents them from being understood well by the American students and hinders communication. Teacher Wang who has eight years of teaching experience in the U.S. still struggles at times with her students laughing at her pronunciation and accent in the class, she also has problems understanding what students say to her, or comprehending conversations among the students.

The language barrier also prevents Chinese teachers from using humor as a tool for establishing a classroom climate conducive to learning. The frequent use of humor by American teachers in the classroom helped to create a more positive learning environment by breaking down barriers to communication between the teacher and students. Teacher Zhen revealed that she found it difficult to incorporate "*American humor*" into her classroom. She commented, "*American teachers can easily address some of the interruptive behaviors in the classroom by using humor. However, being a Chinese teacher coming from a completely different cultural background with limited language ability, it is pretty difficult for me to pick up American humor. You will still need to be cautious in order to do it appropriately."*

3.2 "Teacher is the Authority"

Students in the United States can challenge their teacher's views and speak their own minds, but in a hierarchal culture such as in mainland China and Taiwan, students are expected to respect their teachers as authorities and accept the classroom rules and what is taught without question. Teacher Yang stated that she did not expect such a huge culture difference when it came to student classroom behaviors. She remarked,

"I was taught since I was a child, like all the students in China that students should listen to the teacher in the class and do things that the teacher tells you to do. But in

America, the one value that nearly every American would agree upon is individual freedom. Whether you call it individual freedom, individualism, or independence, it is the cornerstone of American values. It permeates every aspect of our society and allows American students to disagree and even argue with their teacher and parents."

Teacher Jin shared with me one of her awkward encounters with her student due to the Chinese cultural influence of viewing the teacher as the "authority" of the classroom. She was once accused of "*being rude*" by a student when she took her pencil to use during the class without asking. She explained to me, "*I didn't expect that student would care that I just took her pencil to use for a second. Teachers in Taiwan do not ask students for permission if they want to use their student's textbook or pencil. You just pick it up from the student's desk and give it back after you are done using it. Nobody would have an issue with that.* "

Chinese teachers need to exert much more effort to earn the respect from the students. Teacher Liu spoke about the expectation changes she had from the day she started to teach in America and now. She believes that most Chinese teachers should drop their false expectations that they may have held about teachers as the authority of the classroom. She said, "*Don't take it for granted that you will have the respect from the students from day one as you walk into the classroom. You have to earn your respect through your teaching, the way you manage the class, being fully prepared for your lessons, and the positive teacher-student relationship."* She also revealed that investing time to build more positive teacher-student relationships outside the classroom can reinforce the positive behaviors from American students in the class. For instance, she always goes to sit with her students during lunch hours and attends her students' sporting activities.

3.3 "This is not What I Expected"

Every teacher in the study expressed concerns for their limited knowledge of classroom management skills and experience. The teachers desired to have their attention fully focused on teaching rather than spending time managing the disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Compared to a typical Chinese classroom, there are more classroom management issues that Chinese teachers need to attend to in the American classroom. They felt frustrated by the unexpected large amount of disruptive behaviors such as "*talking when the teacher and other students are talking", "frequently asking for permission to go to the restroom"*, etc. Teacher Chen reflected on his first year teaching which he thought fell short of "establishing norms and routines" for the beginning of the class. He remembered that she did not establish any routines and classroom rules about speaking between the teacher and students and among students themselves. In her fifth year of teaching in the same school, teacher Zhen said she did not expect to have to communicate with her students about "*classroom rules*" and update the rules on a regular basis. She commented on what a challenging task she faces communicating with students about classroom routines:

"Once I had the 'call the policeman' rule, this allowed my students to call my name before speaking. It turned out that this rule was not clear and specific enough. They started to call my name all at the same time and talk at the same time before I called on them. Therefore, I had to add a rule that specified when they could talk. They are not allowed to talk before I call their names. My classroom rules will be renewed and updated on a regular basis, which demonstrates how many new problems I encounter every day."

There was a survey conducted in 2010 by the China Youth and Children Research Foundation which polled about 4,000 high school and vocational school students in China, Japan, the United States and South Korea (Laura Robertson, 2009). The survey results revealed that Chinese students spent the greatest amoung to time doing homework. Nearly 80% of Chinese students spent at least eight hours a week in school, and 56.7% spent two or more hours working on homework. By comparison, only about 25% of U.S. students had more than two hours of homework each night. Chinese K-12 education has a greater emphasis on academic achievement versus extracurricular activities. However, in the U.S., a "well-rounded" student with glowing recommendations from teachers and participation in various extra-curricular activities will often get into a stronger university than a student who has perfect grades and S.A.T. scores. Therefore, many new Chinese teachers are surprised to see how "*unmotivated*" some American students are, and they come in the classroom without effective management strategies that would fit into the American classroom environment. Teacher Lin and Chen admitted that American students do not study as hard as they expected, and the time they spend on managing classroom disruptive behaviors composes a large part of their instruction time. Chinese teachers struggle with students who don't turn in their homework and those who disrupt other students during class.

Teacher Liu reported that she did not expect to invest so much time thinking up many innovative instructional activities in order to maintain students' interest level in learning the Chinese language. Teacher Liu taught in Taiwan for five years before she came to the U.S. to teach Chinese. She said, *"I did spend lots of time thinking of instructional activities when I was in Taiwan teaching, but the activities did not necessarily need to be very interesting or entertaining. But teaching my students here in the U.S., I feel it is important to entertain your students through your instructional activities and create interest in what you are teaching."* Teacher Chen also reported that Chinese class is not regarded as important by American students since foreign language is required to graduate from high school, but is not tested on an admission test for U.S. universities. Students often argue with her for less homework and they expect Chinese class to be "fun" and "easy".

3.4 "Teach The Way You are Taught"

The majority of students in China tend to obey authority and they are used to a teacher-oriented approach to teaching. However, student-centered learning, that is, a focus on student learning and creating an engaging learning environment, is highly encouraged in American classrooms in contrast to the teacher-centered learning method in most Chinese classrooms. Student-centered learning is focused on the student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning. This classroom teaching method acknowledges the student voice as central to the learning experience for every learner. Student-centered learning requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning. Teacher-centered learning has the teacher at its center in an active role and students in a passive, receptive role. Teacher Zhen expressed that she learned "*the teacher does most of the talking and students follow the teacher doing drills",* and she began teaching in the way she was taught. However, she quickly found out that "*teach the way you are taught*" does not work in the American classroom at all.

Students are believed to all be unique individuals with different learning styles and intelligences in American education. American teachers approach topics of language learning in a variety of ways in order for more students with their different learning styles and intelligence to be able to apply their learning style and life experiences in the context of language learning. Chinese teachers Jin, Zhen, and Yang reported in the interviews that they all experienced great difficulty in transferring their way of teaching using "*the way they were taught*" into the "*American way of teaching*". They claimed that language teaching in America is focused on communication while in China, language classes typically is geared toward beginning with grammar and then applying the grammar into the communication contexts. Teacher Wang said, "*American students will not be* *motivated and engaged in learning my class at all if you teach the way I was taught".* She said her students learned much better after incorporating the varied strategies that suit different learning styles. *"For example, I use visuals to go along with the Chinese texts in writing for visual learners, while for the kinesthetic learners I plan instructional activities to allow them to move around the classroom or I use my body language to show the tones of the Chinese pronunciations".* She realized that transitioning to the American way of teaching is respecting students as individuals. Having them engage with academic content by using different approaches of teaching could be challenging to the students but provide them with greater opportunities for success.

Several Chinese teachers reported that they started using many more approaches and rewarding strategies to engage and motivate American students than they used teaching in mainland China or Taiwan. Games have been incorporated into the classrooms by Chinese teachers for the purpose of engaging students in learning the language since this allows students to practice language skills in a more motivating manner. Teacher Jin acknowledged that she rarely played games when she was a student in China and that is why it was difficult for her at the beginning to think that games could assist in achieving language instructional goals. Three teachers also stated that the extrinsic rewards such as giving stickers, points, and candies to students has proven to be an effective strategy for them.

3.5 Help Students with Special Needs

Three teachers working in public schools pointed out that there is a huge performance gap between highly gifted students and those with special needs. Teacher Zhen reported that she has 4 out of 18 special education students in one of her Chinese language classrooms. She said, "*I would usually have special education students in my Chinese beginning classes. Most of them have learning disabilities such as autism which can lead to a huge performance gap in my classroom. Some highly gifted students can absorb what I taught them very fast while students with special needs may take a much longer time to comprehend the idea. I feel I do not have any other strategies besides spending my lunch time every weekday to tutor those students.*"

Teacher Wang also stated that she has the challenge of not having enough time to assist students with special needs in the class. She commented on one of her ADHD students who needs a lot of her attention in order to redirect him to get back on task, and two other students in her class with cognitive delays and emotional disturbances also need a lot of extra help and attention. She feels overwhelmed when she is needed at the same time by several students. Teacher Liu said she had a hard time dealing with an ADHD student in her Chinese class, "*He is always the one talking at the beginning of the class before I speak. He talks with his neighbors about how he performed in yesterday's football game and the places he traveled. If I said something to him asking him to stop chitchatting with others, he would shut down completely for the rest of the class.*"

3.6 Parents Stand by Their Children's Side

While comparing teaching in mainland China and Taiwan, four Chinese teachers noted the challenges they faced in dealing with parents when they are teaching in American schools (Chen, 1988). Teacher Yang reflected on her past experience of having constant email correspondence with half of her students' parents in one class. She commented, *"I didn't spend so much time dealing with parents when I was teaching in Taiwan".* Students' parents contacted her for different purposes, mainly ranging from praise, help for their children, and complaints about grades. Teacher Liu commented on how important it is to have contact with parents on a regular basis. This allows the teacher to gain support and build a relationship when the teacher needs to inform them of their children's negative behaviors in school. She said, "*I know some Chinese teachers are not used to contact with their students' parents since we just don't contact parents that often while we are teaching in China. Chinese parents always choose to stand by the teacher's side. However, American parents do not want to be contacted only for their children's negative behaviors, or they will be offended. American parents want to only hear from the teacher when their children do well in school."*

Teacher Wang said most American parents stand by their children's side whenever a situation arises. She said she had some of her students who did not turn in their homework and then lied to their parents that they did. *"Some parents are nice. After they saw the homework grade online, they will email me to check with me whether their kids turned in the homework or not. But, there are also parents who choose to stand by their children's side no matter what and accuse me of giving a low grade to their kids without* *reason."* She reported that she always receives emails from parents asking why their children's homework grade is 0 for some weeks. From now on, she tends to be cautious in keeping all the "evidence" of students not turning in their homework, just in case some parents do not trust her.

Teacher Chen commented that he faces pressure from the parents when he is trying to give them suggestions regarding how students can balance their extracurricular activities and academics. He said, *"One time I noticed a student had been sleeping in my class because he was tired due to many extracurricular activities. I contacted his parents to advise the child to drop some of his extracurricular activities because every student has a limited amount of energy. If you expect him to perform well in academics, enough time should be guaranteed to study and rest. Failing a language class can really hurt his GPA, limiting his opportunity for attending a good college."*

Chapter 4 Discussion

The major findings of this study related to challenges native Chinese teachers face in teaching Chinese as a foreign language to non-native Chinese students in U.S. Classrooms.

Language ability plays a vital role in the process of Chinese teachers transitioning to teaching in U.S. classrooms. Many Chinese teachers participating in this study reported a lack of English language proficiency that posed great challenges in communication with students. Due to limited language proficiency of the Chinese teachers along with their Chinese accents, students may have trouble understanding them. Teachers also encountered difficulties in not being able to understand students' responses in the class hindering communication between them. With an entirely different cultural and linguistic background, Chinese teachers tend to avoid using any American humor with their students.

Chinese teachers transitioning into U.S. schools encounter the challenge of reconsidering their roles as a teacher to align more with U.S. teaching practices. Most of the perceptions of teaching and learning held by the Chinese teachers were greatly influenced by their past learning and teaching experiences as well as the culture of education in mainland China and Taiwan. How those teachers position themselves as a teacher in the American school setting seems to be the key that will affect their future teaching style and how they interact with students. They begin to perceive their role as shifting from being "a professional authority" to becoming more of a "facilitator" assisting students to accomplish tasks cooperatively with their peers to develop their competency in communication. Teachers gradually perceive their new role as the one who helps students construct their own understanding and students are the real "protagonists" in the student-oriented American classroom environment. Teachers may feel offended when challenged if they position themselves as the "power" and "authority" of the classroom in which no student is supposed to confront them (Guo, 2002; Wang, 2005). This explains why some teachers do not feel comfortable receiving suggestions and concerns from their students.

Chinese teachers have higher expectations of student performance than the expectations students hold for themselves. The U.S. model of a "well-rounded" education encourages students not only to invest time in academics but also in extracurricular activities. Compared to the Chinese culture of education, greater emphasis is put on academics than any other activity in the students' life. Oftentimes Chinese is seen as an elective and not a required foreign language in American high schools. Chinese language is then considered by many American students not to be as important as other subjects such as English, math, or science. Some American students taking the Chinese language class aim only to fulfill the requirements for graduation from high school rather than trying the best they can to succeed in the class. Conflicting expectations between the Chinese teachers and the students with the individualistic nature of the American culture lead to classroom management issues in the Chinese language classrooms. Chinese teachers are not familiar with American students negotiating with them about the homework load and expect Chinese class to be "easy" and "fun". Once the homework load and difficulty exceed the students' expectations, they often end up not doing their homework.

Most Chinese teachers who've had teaching experiences in mainland China and Taiwan reported their challenge in changing their teaching methodologies to align with U.S. teaching practices. Learning the Chinese language for many non-native Chinese students in the United States can be extremely demanding since most of them do not have any prior knowledge of speaking tonal languages and do not have the language and culture environment to practice the language after they leave the classroom. "*The Chinese way of teaching"* focused on delivering facts and knowledge in order to score high on standardized tests (Julian D. Linnell, 2001). This teacher-oriented approach seemed not to work with American students. Chinese teachers face the formidable task of shifting their teacher-oriented approaches, which greatly emphasize teaching vocabulary and grammar, into student-centered learning involving students in cooperative activities using the language. Chinese teachers gradually became aware that teaching American students meant to individualize the learning process and teaching in customized ways from which students with different learning styles, prior knowledge, and abilities can benefit. Engaging students in meaningful and intriguing communicative activities is an extremely potent way to reinforce language learning.

Many Chinese teachers did not expect such a large variety of classroom management issues occurring in their classrooms and through this have learned many classroom management skills upon reflections on their experiences. Chinese teachers reported spending large amounts of time on unexpected classroom management issues occurring during the class. Since American students do not generally perceive teachers as authorities, at least not as they are in China, many of them become disruptive if they are not engaged in learning activities. Compared with teaching "obedient" Chinese students, Chinese teachers feel the responsibility to communicate with American students about classroom rules and routines, and time spent monitoring the disruptive behaviors during the class can be overwhelming. This idea is reflected in many teachers' reflection journals posted on their Google site e-portfolios. Teacher Zhen reported that she has learned that she has to keep the classroom rules simple but consistent. She also commented, "*As a teacher, we should let our students have a clear idea of what they can do and what they cannot do in our class. If I see a student repeating an improper behavior, I would report it to his/her advisor or school so that they can be aware of the issue they are facing in their classroom. Preparing effective activities in class also helps me manage my class because my students will be busy learning not busy talking".*

In China, the achievement of students with disabilities has not been required to be included in official program evaluations, and no specific evaluation procedures have been developed. Children with severe or multiple disabilities, and some children with moderate disabilities, are still excluded from learning in regular classrooms and do not attend standard schools in China (Pang & Richey, 2006). Including students with disabilities in the Chinese foreign language classroom presents more unique challenges for Chinese teachers. Students that have learning disabilities, especially with language disabilities in their first language, will have more difficulties in learning a foreign language (Barr, 1993; Schwarz, 1999; Scott& Manglitz, 2000). Teachers from China are no stranger to tutoring after classes, but Chinese teachers, especially those who did not attend teacher preparation programs in U.S., are often lacking the knowledge to adjust curriculum and teaching strategies for students with special needs. Students with special needs in the Chinese classrooms often create difficulties for the Chinese teachers to cater to the various needs of students of different levels.

Chinese teachers need to cooperate with parents more when teaching in American classrooms. A positive relationship is desired with not only students, but also parents. Reporting only negative behaviors, prior to building any rapport, to American parents could offend them. Chinese teachers should invest time early in building relationships with American parents when the students are performing well in the class. The cultural differences and linguistic barriers pose a challenge to Chinese teachers, which may lead to the reluctance of the teacher to talk with the parents or the parents to distrust the teacher.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

The study examined the perceptions of Chinese teachers who had teaching experiences in China or Taiwan and the challenges they faced in transitioning to teach non-native Chinese students in U.S. classrooms. It was not surprising for me to discover that the participating Chinese teachers coming from a different linguistic and cultural background encountered language barriers and culture shock. However, what is worthy of discussion are the challenges caused by strong views pertaining to certain aspects of teaching held by teachers. These strong views reflect their teaching philosophies, beliefs, and values which were shaped by their prior learning and teaching experiences involving interactions in their home countries. However, those viewpoints can be ‘biased’ in different situations (Chen, 2006). Chinese teachers who are familiar with teacher-centered learning or teaching in China or Taiwan should adjust their teaching pedagogies and strategies to acclimate to U.S. classrooms. The great emphasis Chinese teachers place on "what to teach?" in a teacher-centered classroom should shift to "how my students learn?" in a U.S. student-centered classroom.

Foreign language education in K-12 Chinese classrooms mostly fall into a strategy of preparing students to take standardized tests with little or no attention to real-life meaningful communications (Een,1985; Ting 1987). In U.S. classrooms, students cannot be motivated if Chinese language learning is not associated with their lives, needs, interests, and learning styles. Meanwhile, Chinese teachers need to be prepared to face the hurdles of having more responsibilities in classroom management, inclusion of students with disabilities, and communication with parents, which often are not concerns to most Chinese teachers teaching in their home country. Lacking knowledge and skills with teaching pedagogies, classroom management and special education could greatly hinder the teaching process and students' ability to achieve the learning goals set forth in the classroom.

It is interesting to note that the cultural perceptions Chinese teachers hold about the roles of the teacher, students, and parents greatly determine their expectations for the students and parents. Many new Chinese teachers expect their students to respect them at the beginning of the class because they perceive themselves as the "authority" of the classroom and expect students to be more disciplined and work harder completing their homework (Chen, 1988). However, teachers in the U.S. work harder to earn respect and do not simply take it for granted. American students see attending college as a personal choice rather than a privilege. Chinese teachers appear not to be satisfied with some unmotivated American students and their indifferent parents who are sometimes biased towards their child. The educational and cultural difference between China/Taiwan and the U.S. can cause native Chinese teachers to have unrealistic expectations for students and their parents (Marjorie & Melissa, 2011). Informing future native Chinese teachers of the following differences in education can help them to mentally prepare in facing these challenges and adjust their expectations. The following table summarizes information gathered from interviews with the participants in this study.

Table 2. Chinese Teachers' Perceptions of the differences between Teaching in China/Taiwan and Teaching in the U.S.

Themes	**China/Taiwan**	**U.S.**
The role of the teacher	Authority	Facilitator
The role of the students	Passively receive information from the teacher	Engage in hands-on learning activities
The role of parents	• Attribute lack of effort as the major cause of low performance	• Attribute poor performance to ability, effort, training at home,

	• Emphasize high academic achievement	training at school, and luck • Emphasize over-all development
Teaching pedagogies	• Teacher-centered • Textbook-oriented lecture • Teach students to perform well on standardized tests	• Student-centered • Create hands-on learning experiences • Teach for real-life communication purposes
Classroom management	None/few	Many
Extracurricular activities	None/few	Many

From the interviews I conducted with the participants, I know that teachers are aware of the differences between teaching in China/ Taiwan and teaching in the United States. Since starting to teach in U.S. classrooms, they have gradually modified some of their teaching beliefs and pedagogies which were not working well with American students in the K-12 classrooms. Many teachers in the interviews reported that both teacher certification programs in the U.S. and in-service professional development prepared them to be more qualified Chinese foreign language teachers; however, not all of their individual needs and challenges they encountered have been addressed in their professional development training.

Chapter 6 Limitations

For this research, the number of participants in the study was limited. The degree of generality of the findings may suffer from this limitation. While interviews and surveys were used as two major data collection approaches to answer the research questions and saw the emergence of six themes, they were still limited. The results can only be generalized with caution to Chinese teachers who are teaching Chinese as a foreign language with similar demographic backgrounds. Future research should use a larger sample size which could be used to get a more accurate determination of experiences and should be directed towards studying the Chinese teachers' adaptation and assimilation experiences from more diverse school settings. Furthermore, an examination of teachers from other cultures and countries would provide insights as regards if these challenges are also faced and shared by other foreign teachers who teach U.S. students.

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Appendices

Appendix A

IRB Approved Form

IRB# 20110611759 EX
Date Approved: 06/15/2011
Valid Until: 04/30/2012

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participants of the Chinese Institute,

You are being invited to participate in a research project that is associated with the UNL Summer Chinese Institute. If you are a native Chinese speaker teaching K-12 in US schools and have had teaching experience in China before starting to teach Chinese in American schools you are eligible to participate.

A large percentage of Chinese foreign language instructors are native speakers of Chinese. However, their teaching beliefs, styles, pedagogy, classroom management are different from American schools. There are challenges for teachers of Chinese to adapt their teaching practices to the environment in United States. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native speakers in US classrooms. The research will identify common challenges of teachers with previous teaching experience in mainland China and/or Taiwan and offer possible solutions to overcome them. The results of the study will provide a great service to the Chinese teaching profession in the United States and will benefit future Chinese teachers through a better understanding of how to adapt more effectively to the US teaching environment.

This research study involves the collection of information via a 10-minute survey all completed online and a 30-minute interview of five questions if you choose to participate. The survey will be administered using Survey Monkey. This is a secured site. No IP addresses will be collected and data will be encrypted while in transit. The interview will take place in a quiet room of Kauffman Hall. The interview with the participants will be audio taped. These audiotapes will be transcribed by the primary investigator. The data will be analyzed and used to identify themes related to the research. Audio tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet, and will be destroyed upon completion of the data analysis process. The investigators for this study will be the only people with access to the data collected from the survey and interview. Your identity and teaching location will be kept confidential. Identities for all participants will be protected by reporting aggregate data from surveys and using pseudonyms when reporting qualitative data, which minimizes the risk to participants. To ensure confidentiality, records will be kept in locked storage and destroyed upon completion of the study. No one will know whether you participated in this study. Nothing you say in the interview will in any way influence your present or future life.

The benefits of participating in this research could be helping identify common challenges that native Chinese teachers face and possible insights gained from this study that can inform professional development for teachers of Chinese. There are no known risks to participants because participating in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw or choose to not release their data at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the instructors of the program, and your school. The decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which participants are otherwise entitled.

IRB# 20110611759 EX
Date Approved: 06/15/2011
Valid Until: 04/30/2012

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education

If you agree to participate, you must sign a copy of this document. You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to release your data for use in this study. You may contact the investigators at any time using the contact information listed at the bottom of this form. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject that have not been answered by the investigators or to report any concerns about this study, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, telephone (402) 472-6965.

There will not be any compensation for participating in this study. You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented.

Please also check the following box if you agree or not agree to be audio-taped during the interview.

☐ Yes, I am willing to be audio-taped during the interview.

☐ No, I am not willing to be audio-taped during the interview.

Signature of Participant:

_______________________________________ _______________________

Signature of Research Participant *Date*

Hui Xu, Principal Investigator, Graduate Student at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, (402)-805-7718.
Aleidine J. Moeller, Edith S. Greer Professor at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, (402) 472-2024.

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participants of the Chinese Institute,

You are being invited to participate in a research that is associated with the UNL Summer Chinese Institute. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms. The research will identify common challenges of teachers with previous teaching experience in mainland China and/or Taiwan and offer possible solutions to overcome them. The results of the study will provide a great service to the Chinese teaching profession in the United States and will benefit future Chinese teachers through a better understanding of how to adapt more effectively to the US teaching environment.

This research study involves the collection of information via a short survey and a 30-minute interview of five questions if you choose to participate. The investigators for this study will be the only people with access to the data collected from the survey and interview. Your identity and teaching location will be kept confidential. Identities for all participants will be protected by reporting aggregate data from surveys and using pseudonyms when reporting qualitative data, which minimizes the risk to participants. To ensure confidentiality, records will be kept in locked storage and destroyed upon completion of the study. No one will know whether you participated in this study. Nothing you say in the interview will in any way influence your present or future life.

If you agree to participate, you must sign a copy of this document. You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to release your data for use in this study. You may contact the investigators at any time using the contact information listed at the bottom of this form. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject that have not been answered by the investigators or to report any concerns about this study, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, telephone (402) 472-6965.

There will not be any compensation for participating in this study. You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented.

Signature of Participant:

____   __________________________

Signature of Research Participant   *Date*

Hui Xu, Principal Investigator, Graduate Student at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, (402)-805-7718.

Aleidine J. Moeller, Edith S. Greer Professor at University of Nebraska-Lincoln,

(402) 472-2024.

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Interviewer: ___________

Date: ______________

Time: ______________

Place: ______________

1. Please tell me a little about yourself and describe your experiences as a teacher of Chinese.

2. What do you think are the major differences between teaching Chinese in China/Taiwan and the US?

3. What were your major challenges in the teaching non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms? Please be as specific and detailed as possible.

4. Were there any specific experiences which helped you to successfully work through the challenges you encountered while teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speakers in US?

5. Can you describe a teaching scenario that actually occurred in your classroom that illustrates the greatest challenge you faced in teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speakers of Chinese?

Appendix D

A Script about Informing Potential Participants

Dear Participants of the Chinese Institute,

You are being invited to participate in a research project that is associated with the UNL Summer Chinese Institute. The purpose of this research is to explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms. The research will identify common challenges of teachers with previous teaching experience in mainland China and/or Taiwan and offer possible solutions to overcome them. The results of the study will provide a great service to the Chinese teaching profession in the United States and will benefit future Chinese teachers through a better understanding of how to adapt more effectively to the US teaching environment. If you are a native Chinese speaker teaching K-12 in US schools and have had teaching experience in China before starting to teach Chinese in American schools you are eligible to participate.

This research study involves the collection of information via a 10-minute survey completed online and a 30-minute audio-taped interview of five questions if you choose to participate. There will not be any compensation for participating in this study. You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate. You will later receive an informed consent form, your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will also need to check the box on the form if you agree to be audio-taped during the interview. You can also choose to not participate by not signing the consent form.

The eligible participants who give me consent to participate in the research project will receive a link to participate in the online survey on the Survey Monkey site and will be reached through email about the time, date, and location for the interviews.

Appendix E

A Reminder Message for Participants

Dear Participants of the Chinese Institute,

You have received a copy of “Informed Consent Form” to participate in a research project helping explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms.

Please note that since the purpose of this research is to explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms, the eligible participants will be **Native** Chinese speakers teaching K-12 in US schools and have had teaching experience in China before starting to teach Chinese in American schools.

If you are a native Chinese speaker teaching K-12 in US schools and have had teaching experience in China before starting to teach Chinese in American schools you are eligible to participate.

Thank you again for considering participating in this research project! If you have any questions, please email me at unlhelenxu@gmail.com or call (402)-805-7718 at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Hui Xu Principal Investigator

Teaching, Learning and Teacher Ed

Henzlik Hall 110c

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Cell: (402)-805-7718

Office: (402)-472-5313

Appendix F

A Sample Page for Data Collection Transcripts

A: 江老师，我很感谢你能来和我面谈，首先，你能介绍一下你自己吗？

B: 我从很年轻的时候，教学就一直是我热爱的事业。我自从 1997 年来美国后，就一直从事中文教学。我在美国周末的中文学校，公立高中，和大学都教过中文，这些经历让我对中文不是母语的孩子教授中文和对不同孩子的有不同的学习能力，以及他们不同的学习模式都有了很深刻的体会和认识。

A: 你觉得比起在台湾教书，在美国教非中文母语的孩子，有哪些主要的不同和挑战？

B: 我原来在台湾的时候是教科学的，我把我在台湾的教学方法运用到美国的孩子上， 发现并没有起到我原先想到的作用，比如刚开始在美国教中文的时候，我开始像教台湾学生那样教美国孩子, 没有很多活动，他们的学习兴趣和动力就不大。我深刻的体会到，在美国教中文一个很大的挑战就是要很努力的去想有很多的有意思的活动，去引起学生学习的兴趣。在台湾的时候，以老师为中心的教学，主要老师讲，学生听的模式在美国是完全没有办法行的通。如果在美国教室里，老师在上面讲 50 分钟，学生早就没有兴趣听了， 但如果我通过很多不同的活动和小组的活动，美国学生就会比较源于参与。我有了深刻想学基本外语教学方法和教学理论的

强烈愿望， 因为我觉得在美国教中文，以学生的兴趣和需要为中心为考量，教学法的转变无疑对我来说是个很大 的挑战。

Appendix G

English Translation of Direct Interpretation

A: Ms. Jiang, I am so glad you agreed to participate in my interview. First of all, can you tell me about yourself?

B: Teaching has always been my passion since I was a child. I have taught Chinese for many years since I moved back to US in 1997. Teaching at Chinese Sunday school, public high schools, and colleges has helped me to better understand students' learning abilities and different learning styles in teaching students who are non-native Chinese speakers in the United States.

A: What do you think are the major differences between teaching Chinese in China/Taiwan and the US?

I used to teach science in Taiwan. With a background in science education, I applied my science teaching experiences and theories to teach my students in American classrooms; however, I found out that things did not work as I expected. When I first got started to teach Chinese to American students, I used the approach I was taught and the way I taught students in Taiwan featured teacher-centered content knowledge delivery which is lacking task-based instructional activities. My American students gradually lost their interest and were not motivated to learn that much. This kind of teacher-centered way of teaching worked on highly motivated Taiwanese students but it would never work on American students. American students will never pay attention to a 50 minutes long teacher-centered lecture. If I change my teaching methods into student-centered featuring a variety of innovative cooperative group activities, American students tend to be willing to participate more. Therefore, I have a strong desire to learn the fundamental American teaching theories and methods in foreign language education because I realized that changing the traditional way of teaching into the student-centered way of teaching, which caters to students' interests and needs is my biggest challenge in the transition of teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speakers in American classrooms.

Appendix H

Member Check Letter

February 2, 2012

Dear Participants:

Thank you very much for sharing your experiences with me in the fall semester, 2011. Your support will be crucial to the success of my research in helping explore the challenges native Chinese teachers face and their adaptation to teaching Chinese as a foreign language to US students who are non-native Chinese speakers in US classrooms.

Now I am in the process of analyzing the interview data I collected from you. Since the interviews with you were conducted in Chinese, I have translated all the interviews into English while working on the transcription. In order to minimize the researcher's bias during translation and interpretation so as to increase the credibility of the research findings, I would like to do some member check on the interview data.

Enclosed are two versions of one piece of our conversation during the interviews, with one in Chinese and the other in English as well as six themes in my research. Please take time to check to see whether the English translation expressed what you said and what you really meant and how accurate is the six themes emerged from my data collection. Your help with this matter is highly appreciated.

Thank you again for your cooperation!

Best Regards,

Sincerely

Hui Xu

Appendix I

Survey Questionnaire for Participants

I. General information about the participants:

(A)Gender: Male ◯ Female ◯

(B)Years of teaching Chinese in US: ________________

Years of teaching Chinese in China/Taiwan: _______________

(C)Name of the school and district in which you teach, and what is the estimated population of your school and school district?

School name and population size: ____

District name and population size: ____

(D)How many classes of Chinese do you teach, what levels of Chinese do you teach, what grades do you teach, and how many students are in your classes?

Grade(s) taught:_____________________ Level(s) taught:______________________

Number of class(es)taught:_____________ Number of students in classes:____________

(E)Do you currently hold a teaching license? Yes ◯ No ◯

Are you currently working on your teaching license requirement? Yes ◯ No ◯

(F) Do you have an education degree in US? Yes ◯ No ◯

II. Comparing your previous teaching experience in China/Taiwan to the US, select three topics from the list below that you think are the most challenging issues you face in teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speaking students in US. Insert the

number (of the issue you selected) on the blanks below and briefly describe a classroom scenario that illustrates, or serves as an example of this challenge.

(A)Number________

Scenario____

____

____

____

(B)Number________

Scenario____

____

____

____

____

(C)Number________

Scenario____

____

____

____

____

1. My level of English language proficiency
2. Student Behavior
3. Teaching pedagogy
4. Teaching beliefs and styles
5. Teaching culture
6. Technology implementation
7. Enhancing student motivation
8. Working with families
9. Knowing my students and their needs
10. Managing student homework
11. Classroom management
12. Administrative responsibilities
13. Teaching language structures
14. Other___________________________________

III. Which of the following adaptations do you think were the most helpful in teaching Chinese to non-native Chinese speaking students in US? Please select your answers (no more than three) and record the corresponding item numbers in order starting from the most useful strategy to the least useful strategy.

Most helpful: (   ), (   ), (   ).

1. I worked to improve my English-speaking proficiency.
2. I learned American teaching pedagogy that worked best with American students.
3. I implemented new classroom management strategies into my classroom.
4. I implemented new classroom discipline or behavioral strategies into my classroom.
5. I observed experienced teachers' classes, and followed their suggestions.
6. I got to know my students personally and individually.
7. I integrated students' interests and personalized my instruction to meet students' needs
8. I learned how to work with American parents.
9. I learned how to work with my colleagues.

If you think there are additional helpful strategies that are not listed above, please write these here:

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