Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language:
Theories and Applications

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Excerpt from Chapter 7 – *Teaching Listening and Speaking: An Interactive Approach,* by Xiaohong Wen
Excerpt from Chapter 10 – *Linking Curriculum, Assessment, and Professional Development: Challenges of a K-16 Articulated Program,* by Madeline K. Spring

PUBLICATION DATE: June 2008

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Chapter 5

Literacy Development in Chinese as a Foreign Language

Michael E. Everson
The University of Iowa

SAMPLE

If you ask a student who is currently enrolled in a Chinese language class why she decided to study Chinese, the chances are good she will say that she wanted to learn something different, or that she was fascinated by Chinese characters. Indeed, the elegant and aesthetic design of the characters have for centuries served as not simply a writing system but also an art form that has captured the imagination of those who experience it. Students quickly discover, however, that learning to read and write in Chinese is a labor-intensive endeavor, one that requires significant reserves of time, patience, discipline, and perseverance. As their teacher, you will want to understand the theory and practice behind reading and writing in Chinese so as to help your students find their way as they embark upon this challenging journey.

This chapter is designed to help you take your first steps by learning what it is we think we know about reading and writing in Chinese as a foreign language, as well as understanding some pedagogical principles that will help your students progress. Towards this end, this chapter takes a "Big Issues" approach as its organizing principle and presents these issues in a way that blends theory, research, and practice. That is, you will be introduced to aspects of the reading process that are foundational for you to consider as you seek to build a supportive environment for your students to develop strong literacy skills in Chinese, as well as understand some of the pitfalls and challenges they will experience along the way. These "big issues" are not the only issues related to reading and writing in Chinese, but they encompass the most important theoretical and practical questions that you'll encounter on a daily basis with your students.

Reading

The act of reading is a highly complex process, and one that has always fascinated psychologists and educators. Unlike speech, which a child can acquire through normal interaction with others, reading is a skill that must be learned through instruction. I am reminded of the bumper sticker that I often see on cars that pass me on the highway: "If you can read this, thank a teacher." Yet, reading in their first language (L1) is not a skill that is learned equally well by all children, leading psychologists to be interested in all the factors responsible for variability in children's reading performance. Consequently, how well children are, or are not, learning to read is a major indicator of how well our educational system is faring, for reading is a critical skill to develop if one is to function meaningfully in a modern society.

Reading in a second language (L2) has also received a great deal of interest from researchers in the past few decades (see Swaffar, Arens, and Byrnes 1991; Day and Bamford 1998; Kern 2000; Bernhardt 1991, 2000; Koda 2005; and Birch 2007, among others). This should not be surprising given the number of immigrants who routinely take up residence in the United States, or the fact that citizens who grow up speaking languages other than English in their homes (typically referred to in our profession as "heritage language learners") are often interested in preserving their native language in both oral and written forms. These needs are aligned with those of policymakers who believe that heritage language speakers should maintain their language as part of the overall language capacity of our nation (Brecht and Walton 1993). In addition to research endeavors into L2 reading, both public and private entities are seeking to initiate longer sequences of foreign language instruction in American mainstream education. While the greatest portion of formal foreign language learning in America has traditionally taken place in our high schools, the ambition of producing K–12 and even K–16 foreign language sequences has received a great deal of attention of late by foreign language educators and government funding agencies. Notable are initiatives such as the National Security Education Program's (NSEP) Flagship programs, designed to take language learners to superior levels of language proficiency in Chinese and other less commonly taught languages, levels virtually unreachable in traditional university language programs. It should be noted that The NSEP Flagship programs are also of interest to reading specialists because the majority of the languages that are taught in this program do not employ the Roman alphabet. For example, the Oregon Flagship program in Chinese is implementing a K–16 language learning model (Falsgraf and Spring 2007; Spring, this volume) that provides a coherent and logical sequence between grades to insure continuity in the development of language proficiency. With programs like this in place, we will not only be able to understand the reading process as it develops in students along different points of the K–16 trajectory, but also have the additional benefit of seeing bilingual reading development in students who are studying, from a young age, languages employing

writing systems that are distinctly different from the Roman alphabet used in English.

Charting the Way

To help us understand the L2 reading process, Bernhardt (1991) has put forth a model derived from research data based on the experiences of intermediate-level college learners of French, German, and Spanish. The model highlights the following important components that will give you a more comprehensive understanding of the elements in play as your students learn to read in Chinese. The components of the Bernhardt model are both text-based and extratext based, developed from data derived from research studies (for an updated summary of studies, see Bernhardt 2000). The primary data source has been error types that readers made in their recall protocols, comprehension measures completed by research subjects in their native language describing all they can remember about an L2 text they have just read. The text-based components of Bernhardt's model are: 1) word recognition, or how a learner misinterprets the semantic meaning of a word; 2) phonemic/graphemic decoding, or how a learner misinterprets a word that sounds or is visually similar to another word; and 3) syntactic feature recognition, whereby a learner fails to recognize the proper syntactic connection between words, even though the learner has correctly identified the meaning of words individually. The extratext based, or conceptually based, factors include: 1) intratextual perception, which includes how readers reconcile the different portions of the text, therefore providing insight into how readers organize discourse; 2) metacognition, which deals with the extent to which readers reflect on what they are reading, and gives insight into whether they are monitoring their comprehension as to what the text is really about; and 3) prior knowledge, which refers to readers' world, cultural, and domain/topical knowledge or personal experiences that help or hinder their ability to interpret the text. In addition to these factors, Bernhardt added the reader's first-language reading ability as a significant contributor to L2 reading comprehension. This model has been very helpful in elucidating important reading processes, but has been based on data taken from French, German, and Spanish, a shortcoming that Bernhardt recognizes because languages employing non-alphabetic scripts have not been represented. Yet, this model, along with the theory derived from L1 reading, can give us insights into the CFL developmental reading experience and help guide us in developing CFL reading pedagogy. Let us, then, use the components of the Bernhardt model as a guide or a type of map to navigate the makeup of the Chinese classroom to better understand not only what some of our learners' problems will be, but why these problems are happening. To do this, we'll formulate a series of "issues" that this model predicts will occur, and give guidance to you as a teacher about some of the steps that are available to you to deal with these issues.

Issue #1: Students Coming from an Alphabetic Reading Background

If your students grew up speaking (and reading) English as their native language, their initial literacy development involved learning to read in an alphabetic system. This developmental process is highly complex, and many theorists believe that the process actually starts before a child's introduction to the printed word, that is, when he or she acquires language and determines at some level that words and syllables are composed of even smaller units of sound, or phonemes. Studies have, in fact, found a relationship between a child's awareness of sounds and his or her later reading ability (Goswami and Bryant 1990). Shu and Anderson (1999) have also stated that learning to read involves "becoming aware of the basic units of spoken language, the basic units of the writing system, and the mapping between the two." An advantage of reading in alphabetic systems is that beginning readers can often sound out the pronunciation of unfamiliar words, thereby enabling them to access meaning through the use of so-called grapheme-phoneme conversion rules, or applying sounds to letters and letter clusters to obtain the pronunciation of the word. Chinese characters, however, are not alphabetic, but logographic in nature. That is, they represent words or morphemes, and not phonemes, and only represent the pronunciation of the characters in highly irregular ways, if at all. (For more on this topic, see Yun Xiao's "Teaching Chinese Orthography and Discourse: Knowledge and Pedgagogy," this volume.)

What this means is that native English speakers cannot apply their ability to read in alphabetic systems to their study of Chinese characters in the same way as they would when learning Spanish, French, or German. Because these languages employ alphabetic writing systems, many of the principles students already know for reading alphabets in English can apply in learning to read in these second languages. Students can, for instance, immediately apply approximate pronunciation to new words they encounter in these languages, understand words in these languages that either look or sound the same as their English equivalents (termed "cognates"), and even understand that words in these languages embedded in longer sections of print are demarcated by spaces between them.

Learners of Chinese, however, are hampered on a number of fronts. First, students learn Chinese through the use of romanization, a "helping language" which uses the Roman alphabet to represent Chinese sounds, with diacritical markings used to represent the tones. The primary romanization system used in Chinese as a foreign language classrooms today is *pinyin*, the system used in China to help children initially learn the pronunciation of Chinese characters. Unfortunately, *pinyin* violates many principles of English orthography such as having an initial "q" represent a "ch-" sound yet never being followed by the letter "u" as it must in English, or an initial "c" in *pinyin* representing an aspirated "ts" sound, violations which make it even more difficult for students to correctly master the Chinese

sound system (Bassetti 2007). Students learn quickly that this difficulty in discerning the pronunciation of characters makes them difficult to memorize quickly and effortlessly. Researchers also believe that native Chinese readers may have developed processes whereby they process print in a more holistic and visual manner, whereas native English speakers, due to the fact that they have grown up learning to read with an alphabetic system, will be more accustomed to reading in alphabets where individual letters and letter clusters represent the sounds of the spoken language.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE TEACHER

Given this situation, teachers should be patient and realize that learners who come from an alphabetic reading background will not be able to transfer all their alphabetic reading strategies to learning Chinese, especially those involving the complex process of word recognition. That is, because the Chinese writing system is qualitatively different from English, the time it takes your students to gain proficiency in Chinese reading will be longer. Indeed, the federal government has categorized foreign languages according to the time it takes for native English speakers to learn them, with languages such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Arabic being classified as Category IV languages, or those that require learners to spend up to three times more time to reach an equivalent proficiency in languages such as Spanish. As a teacher, then, you must expect your students to learn at a slower rate.

The same will apply to learning to write in Chinese. It is important to remember that native Chinese learners have spent countless hours practicing the writing of Chinese — much more time than learners of Chinese will ever be able to devote in an American classroom setting. Therefore, expecting your students to be able to master Chinese writing quickly, especially writing Chinese characters from memory, will be unrealistic. Since learning to write characters is a long and involved process, it will be important for you to gauge your expectations and the expectations of your curriculum when you begin to demand from your students that a certain amount of Chinese characters be memorized by heart. As you gain experience teaching in your school, you will begin to get a feel for the amount of time your students need to study in order to progress in learning the language according to your expectations. In developing their curricula, Chinese teachers have come to understand that requiring their students to memorize how to write excessive amounts of characters by heart is an unreasonable expectation. Consequently, many teachers choose a strategy whereby certain characters must be written by memory, while others are allowed to be mastered for recognition only. These types of pedagogical trade-offs also enter the picture when the teacher must decide on a strategy for the students to learn both simplified and/or traditional character forms. Students whose parents come from Hong Kong or Taiwan, for example, may wish to learn traditional characters at some point during their study, so the teacher might prepare modules to explain how traditional characters are formed, and what they have in common with their simplified counterparts.

Another important aspect that you will need to become more comfortable with is your students' use of *pinyin*. It's very common for native Chinese teachers to dislike *pinyin*, as they view it as "not being Chinese." Certainly, this is true, but it is important to remember that for a significant amount of time in your students' language learning careers, *pinyin* is their lifeline to spoken vocabulary acquisition and eventual reading development. This again comes from the fact that their native language background is based on an alphabetic system, and until they gain more familiarity with the workings of the Chinese character system, as well as develop a larger inventory of Chinese characters, they will rely on *pinyin* to a significant extent to help them remember and pronounce Chinese characters. Again, it is important to stress that if you wish to develop your students' spoken language proficiency at a rapid rate, you should do this in *pinyin*, as an over reliance on their learning characters when your goal is to improve their spoken language will result in slower development of the spoken language.

Issue #2: Becoming "Aware" of Chinese Orthography

If students are coming to Chinese from alphabetic backgrounds in their L1 reading experience, what strategies do they perform in learning a script that is not alphabetic in nature? This would come under the component of "metacognition" in the Bernhardt model, the idea that readers make decisions about their own learning and how best to carry out the many processes involved in the act of reading. For example, research indicates that beginning adult learners use a number of strategies to memorize characters, including rote memorization, creating idiosyncratic stories about how characters look or are pronounced, and using the character's semantic and phonetic elements for memorization purposes, though initially it seems that the latter strategy is not beneficial in the long run (McGinnis 1999). Adult learners finishing one year of Chinese also seem to prefer a strategy of learning the meaning and pronunciation of Chinese characters together (Everson 1998), indicating that the retrieval of meaning for these learners is not exclusively a visual process. When tested among beginning learners with more intensive and longer learning experiences, Ke (1998) documented that learners preferred a strategy of writing characters as two-character compounds rather than as single characters. Likewise, he discovered a relationship between learners' valuing and understanding of Chinese character components and their ability to recognize and produce characters. Findings substantiating this relationship were also noted in a study of learners finishing one year of Chinese who were generally able to guess the meaning of unfamiliar characters based on the meaning of the character's semantic radical (Jackson, Everson, and Ke 2003). Highly focused research on radical awareness, defined as an understanding of the role of radicals in forming Chinese characters and the ability to use this knowledge consciously in learning characters, was also found to develop early in the experience of first-year learners, and advance rapidly during the first year of study (Shen and Ke 2007). While continuing to

Chapter 7

Teaching Listening and Speaking

An Interactive Approach

Xiaohong Wen

University of Texas at Houston

Listening and speaking are intertwined in the mode of interpersonal communication. The listener and speaker spontaneously convey ideas based on what each hears, request clarifications when there is doubt, and negotiate meanings to reach consensus or to reserve differences. Communication is interactive and bi-directional: When A sends a message, B immediately comprehends it in the context and interprets it according to his/her perspective. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's National Standards (ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, 1999) conceptualize communication into three modes: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. When learners are engaged in conversation, they are in the interpersonal communicative mode to interpret others' speech and to present their own viewpoints. Under the framework of Communicative Language Teaching, these two skills are practiced in the form of conversation, through interpersonal activities such as dialogues, interviews, discussions, role plays, and debates.

From the perspective of psycholinguistics, listening and speaking are two different processes. Listening is a decoding process that requires comprehension strategies. Speaking is a productive skill that maps concepts and ideas onto correct linguistic forms and appropriate pragmatic functions. Listening is a fundamental source of learning. The development of the listening skill precedes and empowers the speaking skill. Speaking derives from listening, and in turn, enhances the ability of comprehension.

The present article will examine three processing theories: the model of working memory, schema theory, and the input-output model of second language acquisition (SLA) and use. It will discuss the implications of these theories and research findings to the teaching of listening and speaking in the context of Chinese as a foreign language (CFL). It will also present task-based instruction as an effective model that integrates listening and speaking in a highly communicative approach. It will provide pedagogical examples for curriculum design and instructional implementation.

1. The relationship between pronunciation and speech processing: the model of working memory.

The theory of working memory was posited by Baddeley (1986). Working memory is a system that stores information very briefly and allows us to manipulate the information while various mental tasks are performed. We can keep information circulating in working memory by rehearsing it. Baddeley, Gathercole and Papagno (1998) have proposed that phonology and pronunciation are fundamental to the process of listening comprehension. When hearing a phone message such as Sample 1: "大姑于六月9号下午三点乘西北公司179号航班抵虹桥机场，她想知道你能不能去接她", we have to remember the information in the first part of the sentence in order to process the second part. What affects our memory and speed of processing is the phonological store, a mechanism that helps us with working memory (figure 1). The working memory model (Gathercole and Baddeley 1993) states that information we hear in phonological form fades away in seconds. In order to retain the information, one repeats the sound of the word or the phrase silently or aloud, a subvocal rehearsal process (Baddeley 1986). The phonological repetition recycles the sound of words through the articulatory loop back to the phonological store. In other words, the articulatory loop, or phonological loop, is specialized for the retention of verbal information, especially when the words are new and not familiar to us. It mediates and stores unfamiliar sound forms while more permanent memory representations are being constructed.

1.1. IMPLICATIONS OF THE MODEL OF WORKING MEMORY TO CFL LISTENING AND SPEAKING INSTRUCTION.

The model of working memory has two important implications to the teaching of listening and speaking. First, the level of fluency of pronunciation is vital to speech processing and comprehension. Working memory and the listening process are closely interrelated to pronunciation and language use. As Cook (2001) commented, how much one can remember depends on how fast one can repeat, and thus, how fast the information circles round the articulatory loop. Cook posits that "Pronunciation should be taken more seriously, not just for its own sake, but as the
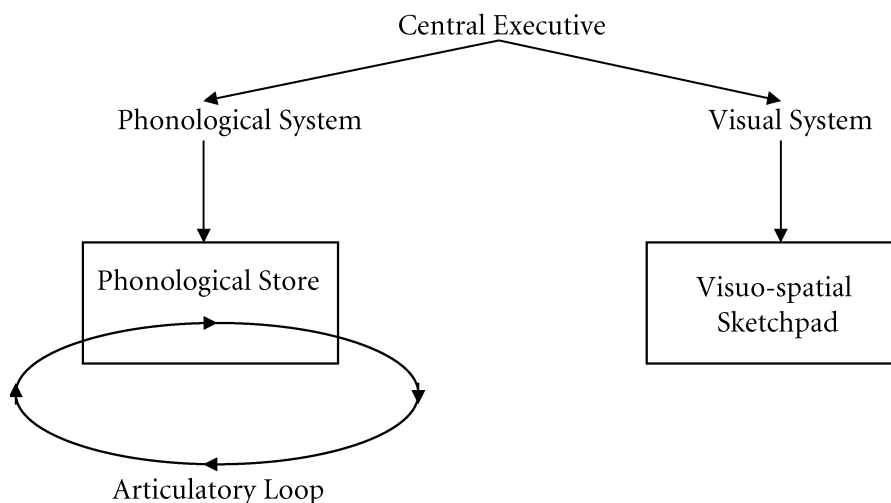
Central Executive

Phonological System   Visual System

Phonological Store   Visuo-spatial Sketchpad

Articulatory Loop

Figure 1. Baddeley's model of working memory (simplified), cited in Cook (2001, p. 84)

basis for speaking and comprehending" (p. 86). Helping learners build a strong foundation in pronunciation at the beginning level fundamentally benefits them in the long run.

Methods to train learners' pronunciation may combine listening and speaking, with listening as the focus (以听带说，听说结合). First comes accuracy in listening, and then correct pronunciation. For example, learners are asked to focus on listening to and practicing the stress and length of the vowel, rhythm, and intonation in varied phonological environments. Instruction can also combine listening and speaking in sentences where grammar plays a role in stress, as proposed by 胡波 (2004). For example, in simple subject-verb sentences, the verb is frequently stressed (as in sentences 1–2 below); when the verb has an object, the object is stressed (sentences 3–4); when a complement is present, the complement is often stressed (sentences 5–6); in questions, interrogative words are often stressed (sentence 7–8).

1. 你<u>说</u>吧！
2. 你<u>喜欢</u>就<u>拿上</u>。
3. 他说出了<u>她的名字</u>。
4. 我不用<u>手机</u>。
5. 张老师解释得很<u>清楚</u>。
6. 他说得<u>有理</u>，做得<u>对</u>。
7. <u>谁</u>在说话？
8. 你<u>怎么什么</u>都没带来？

The second implication of the model is that teaching should take into consideration memory and processing limitations. Short words and familiar information

are easier to process. The sounds of short words are repeated faster, and thus, circulated more quickly and easily back to the phonological store. Familiar information is retrieved directly from memory, saves the capacity of working memory, and consequently speeds up language processing. Different sentence structures require different capacities of memory processing. Passive sentences, for example, take longer to understand than active sentences (Baddeley, 1986). Listening materials should have good control of new words and grammar structures. It is suggested that the material should contain approximately 10% new words and 5% new grammar structures for learners at the elementary and intermediate level. The content of the material should be familiar to learners. Otherwise, a brief introduction is needed before listening. Furthermore, questions in the listening exercise should be immediate and of moderate length. For instance, referring to the information presented in Sample 1, a question such as "大姑几月几号几点乘哪一个航空公司的几号航班抵虹桥机场？" is inappropriate for learners at the elementary level because it is over-loaded with information, and thus requires a large capacity of working memory.

2. The relationship between background knowledge and comprehension: schema theory.

We receive information by listening. The process of listening comprehension, however, is by no means a passive and a receptive skill. Scholars (Clarke and Silberstein 1977, Bransford and Johnson 1982, Carrell 1984) have proposed schema theory, describing comprehension as an interactive process in which listeners actively use both linguistic knowledge and their own knowledge of the world to interact with the content of the input[1], and create new meanings based on their interpretations. What listeners contribute to the process from their memories and experiences is much more than the original input itself, as Clarke and Silberstein (1977) commented:

> Research has shown that reading is only incidentally visual. More information is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page. That is, readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign it membership to an appropriate group of concepts already stored in their memories. (p.136)

Although the topic that Clarke and Silberstein are discussing is reading, schema theory is equally valid and applicable to listening. In the listening process, three steps seem to occur: We first receive the message, then comprehend it in context, and interpret it in each of our own ways. For example, in response to a mother's

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[1]Input in this article refers to any language to which the learner is exposed.

statement "饭做好了!", everyone in the family might interpret it differently. What the father hears is "Set up the table and get ready to eat!"; the elder brother might think "The food is finally ready; let me go down to the dining room!"; the sister might think "What dishes are they? I hope they are my favorites." The interpretation from the younger brother is different from them all: "There is no chance to go to McDonald's; the food is ready and we are going to eat at home." They all share one thing in common. Everyone actively interacts with the input. They receive the same message but interpret it differently, and create varied meanings based on their concerns and perspectives.

The above example has shown that, as listeners, we selectively associate information in the input to the most relevant knowledge from our memory, compare the input with our existing linguistic and world knowledge, and interpret it based on our own experience. The process is highly interactive and mostly subconscious, and happens in a fraction of a second.

In the process, the listener interacts with the input at different linguistic levels and interprets it based on all possible background knowledge. A listener must understand not only the semantics of a sentence, but also its pragmatic function; not only word meaning, but also the usage in the context. For example, the sentence "有火吗?", although in a question form, is a request. There would be no communication if a person takes the question "有火吗?" as a real "yes" or "no" interrogation. Furthermore, the "light, 火" is definitely referring to a match or cigarette lighter only. In communication, the intent of the speaker is frequently indirect and imbedded. Listeners need to rely on the linguistic and/or non-linguistic context to infer the meaning. For example, when hearing the sentence "麻烦你很不好意思", we do not know if it is an apology, a request for help, or an expression of thankfulness. It is only in the context and based on one's experience that meaning becomes clear.

It is important to note that schemata may be culture specific and vary from one culture to another. For example, when a CFL learner who grows up in the western culture hears the word "婚礼", he / she would activate the schema of "white bridal gowns, fresh white roses, vows, pink flower pedals showering the bride and groom". The learner may become confused and misinterpret the text that describes the wedding with "red bridal dresses, red banners, red signs of double happiness, fireworks, and a big feast with people getting drunk." The misinterpretation is not caused by linguistic elements such as new vocabulary and grammar, but by the lack of target cultural knowledge. Therefore, one of the tasks of second language education is to build up the learner's culturally contextualized schemata. CFL teachers should help learners develop their cultural background knowledge through a variety of activities such as pre-reading, learning vocabularies that convey cultural connotations, making comparisons of cultural practices, and understanding the value behind them. Activities such as visual presentations, flow-charting, or diagramming to develop learners' understanding of the target culture are helpful.

2.1. IMPLICATIONS OF SCHEMA THEORY TO CFL LISTENING AND SPEAKING INSTRUCTION

Schema theory considers listening comprehension not only as a linguistic encoding process but also as a problem-solving process. Listeners use intonation cues, contextual clues, background knowledge, and cognitive skills to associate the input with one's existing experience, activate the relevant content in the mind, and retrieve the pertinent information from memory. When one piece of information is triggered, an associated group of similar categories simultaneously becomes active. Therefore, it is optimal if listeners can make connections between new information and what they already know.

This provides two significant guidelines for classroom instruction. First, teaching must make connections between new learning and what has been already acquired by students. Pre-listening activities serve this purpose. The instructor can initiate activities such as brainstorming to guess the content of the input, having a brief discussion about the title, showing a visual, or telling a brief personal story or an anecdote as a prelude to listening. If there are many new words in the material that are vital to comprehension, a short vocabulary list should be provided. If the material requires cultural understanding that is absent in the learners' repertoire, a brief introduction is in order. Take the previous example "婚礼". Pre-listening activities may include associating color and food with the Chinese wedding; post-listening activities may include a project of examining the meaning and practice of 男婚女嫁 in China. In short, it is essential to help learners acquire the necessary background information applicable to the material, and to create a context that activates learners' existing knowledge.

Post-listening activities also serve the purpose of making connections between learner's existing knowledge and new learning. In post-listening activities, students summarize the learning content and synthesize their understanding. Furthermore, post-listening activities assess the accuracy of comprehension, and combine listening and speaking skills to consolidate learners' comprehension. Post-listening activities should be diverse in form and content depending on the pedagogical purposes and the needs of learners. For example, the first post-listening activity of "你的车找到了" is to answer the listening comprehension questions in the handout. Then learners are asked to exchange their answer sheets with their partners. This gives them opportunities to discuss their uncertainties in listening. As a follow-up, each pair is required to create their own dialogue based on the input of "你的车找到了". The topic may be "你的钱包/手表/车/护照/小弟弟/小妹妹找到了". Since it is a guided composition, learners can produce theirs in a comparatively easy and rapid fashion. (Alternatively, this can be a home assignment so that no classroom time is taken.) Finally, the pair is required to present their new dialogue to the whole class. (If the class has more than 10 students, the instructor can select three pairs. The rest of the students can be selected in future sessions so all students have an opportunity to do a presentation.)

Second, the listening input should be challenging enough so that learners have ample opportunities to employ cognitive skills and learning strategies in the process. While listening, learners not only use bottom-up strategies to understand the meaning of words, but also top-down strategies to grasp the gist of the whole passage, look for internal relationships among the information in the discourse, and infer meaning based on key words. For example, the dialogue in Appendix I (刘珣等 2003) is for learners at the high-elementary level. It has a considerable number of new words. Some (e.g., 丢, 自行车, 派出所, 警察) are essential to comprehension of the whole dialogue; others (e.g., 东升, 城里, 牌子, 永久牌, 取, 拿) are minor and can be easily skipped. It also requires some cultural background, e.g. the local police station in China acts as a "lost and found" for people for such items as bicycles. Before listening, the instructor helps learners focus their attention by asking warm-up questions such as:

1. 如果你的自行车丢了，你会做什么？

Students may give different answers. One might say "告诉 police." The instructor will then write the new word "警察" on the board since it is a key word, and present a visual that shows a Chinese police station with a Chinese police officer and a bike.

2. 谁可能把你的车找到？
3. 警察会问什么问题呢？

(Please see the dialogue in Appendix I.)

During listening, learners are encouraged to first focus on main ideas. If the material is lengthy and presents a certain level of difficulty, listening can be repeated. The first pass may focus on obtaining the major information. The second pass can be more targeted to specific information and details. For example, the instructor may ask learners to "jot down all the numbers," or "jot down the time sequence and names." In the example "你的车找到了", the instructor may ask learners to "jot down the 是……的 sentences" if the purpose of the activity is to practice the "是……的" pattern. Learners are guided toward piecing information together in order to derive complete ideas, and to infer meanings in context. The task of listening instruction, therefore, is to help learners employ varied cognitive skills such as categorizing, comparing, synthesizing, hypothesizing, and testing, as well as learning strategies such as guessing, predicting, skimming, scanning, and looking for key words and clues in the context.

Table 1 summarizes the design of such a series of activities, from pre-listening through post-listening.

Table 1.   Structured activities for dialogue "你的车找到了"

Summary	

Tasks and Goals	1. Pre-listening: (In the interpersonal mode) warm-up activities to
	   a. activate learners' relevant linguistic and background knowledge,
	   b. motivate learners' interest.
	2. Listening: (In the interpretive Mode)
	   a. encourage the use of cognitive skills,
	   b. induce learners to use certain specific strategies.
	3. Post-listening: (In the interpersonal Mode)
	   a. assess/confirm listening comprehension; learners negotiate meanings and clarify ideas,
	   b. guided composition for production; creatively apply what they already know to new learning,
	   c. group presentation.

Detailed Plan	

Step 1: Pre-listening
T/S interaction Interpersonal Mode
	1. Use questions for warm-up
	   a. 如果你的自行车丢了，你会做什么？
	   b. 谁可能把你的车找到？
	   c. 警察会问什么问题呢？
	2. Write down the key new words while listening to students' answers: (e.g., 丢, 自行车, 派出所, 警察).
	3. Present a picture of a Chinese police station with a Chinese police woman or man and a bike.

Step 2: Listening
S interaction w/ input Interpretive Mode
	1. Direction: listen for main ideas such as:
	   a. who is in the story?
	   b. why do they talk?
	   c. where are they?
	Remind students to guess the meaning in context and do not get stumped on a particular word
	2. Read listening comprehension questions on our handout first and listen for the second time. Then, write answers to questions.

Step 3: Post-listening S/S interaction Interpersonal Mode	Students interact and negotiate meaning by: 1. exchanging answer sheets with their partner and discussing the differences in their answers, 2. creating a new dialogue based on the input, 3. presenting the dialogue in class, 4. writing a narrative based on the input and submitting it as homework.

Chapter 10

Linking Curriculum, Assessment, and Professional Development

Challenges of a K–16 Articulated Program

Madeline K. Spring

Arizona State University

In the United States, language learning is often sporadic and unfocused. The lack of functional language skills hampers economic growth, national security, and social stability. Recognizing this, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the federal government took a number of initiatives to remedy the situation. One of these is The Language Flagship, an initiative of the National Security Education Program. In 2006, The Language Flagship chose a partnership between the University of Oregon and Portland Public Schools to be the nation's first K–16 Flagship. The goal of this program is to produce Superior level Mandarin language users.

Most traditional language programs lead to Novice or, sometimes, Intermediate proficiency, so clearly the Oregon Chinese Flagship needed to think differently about how to structure a language program. The first radical departure from common practice was to design a program for students who begin learning the language in kindergarten and continue through the college years. Merely following traditional practices for a longer period of time, however, was not enough. This article describes the innovative curricular and instructional practices being

developed in the Oregon Chinese Language Flagship with special attention to the implications for teachers interested in adopting some of these practices.[1]

An Overview of The Language Flagship and the Oregon K–16 Chinese Flagship Program

The Language Flagship was developed to address the urgent and growing need for Americans with professional levels of competency in languages critical to national security. Targeting advanced language training in Arabic, Korean, Chinese, Persian, Hindi, Urdu, and a variety of Eurasian languages, The Language Flagship offers a partnership between the federal government and leading U.S. institutions of higher education to implement a national system of programs designed to produce advanced language competency (i.e., Interagency Language Roundtable [ILR] Level 3 and/or the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL] Superior level.)[2] Beginning in 2002, The Language Flagship has established programs that offer instruction in the United States and further instruction and professional externships at select sites abroad. Currently there are five Flagship programs in Chinese, housed at Brigham Young University, Ohio State University, the University of Mississippi, the University of Oregon, and a new Flagship Partner Program at Arizona State University. At present, only the Oregon program, which received the Flagship grant in fall 2005 and admitted its first cohort of Flagship Scholars at the University of Oregon in Fall 2006, takes as its mission providing students with an articulated K–16 curriculum. This effort is the first in the nation and will serve as a national model for future programs. The Language Flagship is an impetus for changing how languages are taught in the United States. One of the key features of this project is replicability, i.e., the ease with which a program can serve as a model for creating other programs in Chinese or other languages.[3]

The partnership between Portland Public Schools (PPS) and the University of Oregon (UO) is unique in that it offers all students, regardless of language or cultural background, an opportunity to reach advanced Mandarin proficiency necessary to communicate at a professional level in the field of their choice.

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[1]I would like to acknowledge Carl Falsgraf, Director of the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) and Project Director of the Oregon Chinese Flagship for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

[2]The ILR, which was a modification and refinement of the proficiency categories originally developed by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in the early 1950s, is often used along with ACTFL guidelines when referring to proficiency levels of foreign language learners. For a detailed description of the ILR and ACTFL proficiency guidelines, see Hadley (2001, p. 16–18). See also http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4236 and http://www.actfltraining.org/ilr_speaking_descriptors.cfm.

[3]More details about The Language Flagship and the Chinese Flagship in Oregon can be found at http://www.thelanguageflagship.org/ and http://casls.uoregon.edu/ORflagship/. For information on the other Chinese Flagship Programs, see http://chineseflagship.byu.edu/, chineseflagship.osu.edu/, http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/modern_languages/NFLP.html and http://chinaflagship.silc.asu.edu/.

This partnership brings together educators who are committed to creating innovative learning environments for students of Chinese from kindergarten through the postsecondary level. Ultimately these students will be well prepared for the challenge of interacting professionally in Chinese.

The Chinese Immersion Programs at Portland Public Schools (PPS)

Drawing on extensive experience in their Japanese and Spanish immersion programs, PPS established a Mandarin immersion program at Woodstock Elementary School in 1998.[4] The success of this program, in which students spend half of the school day learning in Chinese and the other half learning in English, is largely due to administrative and parental support coupled with the dynamic expertise of a highly talented teaching staff. The PPS Chinese Language Flagship continues for students in the sixth grade at Hosford Middle School, with two class periods a day (social studies and Mandarin language arts) devoted to instruction in Chinese. The high school components of the Chinese immersion programs are currently being developed at two sites. Chemistry and humanities courses are taught in Chinese at Franklin High School as part of their Chinese Heritage Program situated in the World Languages Institute. In 2007 Cleveland High School, which will implement a Chinese immersion curriculum in 2008–09, offered a special Chinese language development class and a China Research Residency preparation course held at Hosford.[5]

Parent involvement and community support is another significant part of the PPS Mandarin immersion program. In 2000 parents of children in the program at Woodstock formed a nonprofit organization, called Shu Ren of Portland, to support the Mandarin program through networking, advocacy, volunteerism, and fund-raising. At that time there were about 73 students in the program, all of whom had begun Chinese in kindergarten. The role of the Shu Ren organization has been important as the program has grown and as the number of teachers involved with the program has increased (currently there are four immersion teachers at the elementary school level and five teachers involved with Chinese middle and high school programs). As with all innovative K–12 initiatives, the PPS Mandarin

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[4]For more information on various models for immersion foreign language programs in K–12, see Met (1993), Lenker and Rhodes (2007), and Howard et. al (2005). An informative discussion of the pros and cons of immersion education by Fortune and Tedick (2007) can be found on the Portland Public Schools website for bilingual/immersion programs at http://inside.esl.pps.k12.or.us/.docs/pg/11940.

[5]For information on the history of the Chinese Immersion Program in Portland, see the website developed by Shu Ren of Portland, a non-profit organization made up of parents whose children are in the Mandarin Immersion Program of Portland Public Schools, http://www.shurenofportland.org/history.html. In the 2006/2007 school year, about 200 children were participating in the Woodstock program, and about 45 students were at Hosford Middle School. The high school program for these students will be launched at Cleveland High School in 2008.

Immersion program from the outset has recognized the need for administrators, teachers, and parents to work together to ensure that the students have the highest quality educational experience possible and that the objectives of the program are clearly defined and met. Shu Ren of Portland works closely with teachers on many critical issues, such as exploring ways that parents, most of whom have no background in Chinese, can support their children outside the classroom, and understanding what are reasonable expectations of language proficiency for students in various stages of the program. Their enthusiastic involvement in supporting both the academic and experiential components of the program is highly valued by the Chinese teachers and school administrators. A parental organization of this type can be a great boost to all teachers of Chinese, regardless of whether the program is immersion or not.

In addition to the Chinese immersion programs at Hosford, Cleveland, and Franklin, each school offers beginning level Mandarin classes, which students may take as electives or in some cases to fulfill foreign language requirements. Successful students in these language courses may well elect to find other paths (e.g., intensive summer programs, or language camps in China or the U.S., online language instruction, etc.) that will lead more quickly to intermediate-high or advanced-level language proficiency and thus qualify them to apply to the Flagship program at the University of Oregon or elsewhere. As administrators of the Flagship programs frequently note, students can achieve high levels of proficiency through multiple avenues; the Chinese Immersion Programs at PPS are simply one option.

The Chinese Flagship Program at the University of Oregon

The University of Oregon recruits talented high school seniors or transfer students with intermediate-high to advanced-level proficiency in Mandarin. These students, who are committed to developing superior-level Chinese fluency for use in future careers, come from a variety of backgrounds. As was noted above, participation in the PPS Chinese immersion programs is **not** a prerequisite for admission to the UO program, which is administered through the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS). Indeed students from all over the country apply to participate in this competitive, honors-level program that offers a broad range of challenging and innovative courses and learning opportunities. Student applications undergo a rigorous review process, that includes consideration of academic performance and potential, proficiency level in Mandarin, and other factors that indicate a strong commitment to personal and educational growth.[6] Top candidates are awarded generous scholarships.

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[6]Language proficiency level is determined by multiple measures, including Standards-based Measure of Proficiency (STAMP) and online assessment using abased on benchmarks consistent with the ACTFL Performance Guidelines, and individual interviews.

Students can choose their major from over a hundred different programs at the University of Oregon. During their first and second years at the university, they take two Flagship courses each term, the nature of which may vary, depending on the student's proficiency level in Mandarin. Generally speaking, most students take one content class and one Chinese Flagship Language Strategies class. However, some students with higher level language skills may be recommended to take two content courses, whereas students who need to concentrate specifically on intensive language development, will be required to take a combination of Flagship and regular Chinese courses offered through the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures. The content classes, which usually satisfy general education requirements in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences, are regular university courses taught entirely in Chinese by native or near-native speakers. Some of the courses offered so far in the program are Mind and Brain: Psychology of the East, Modern Chinese History, Sustainable Development in China, and The City in Modern Chinese Literature and Film. There are two levels of Language Strategies courses, each of which provides explicit instruction in the vocabulary, discourse structures, and strategic approaches to the material presented in the content courses. Each course is specifically designed to improve students' ability to read and write in various prose styles (i.e., expository, instructional, descriptive, and argumentative). Individualized and interest-based projects allow students to focus on issues that affect their area of studies and boost their translation, reading, and researching strategies skills.[7]

During their freshman and sophomore years, Flagship students live and take some of their classes in the University of Oregon's International House. An on-site Chinese Flagship program assistant works with Flagship staff to coordinate structured study groups, social and cultural activities, guest lectures, and dinners with faculty and graduate students who do research in China-related fields. This enriched residence hall experience fosters a sense of community and also offers opportunities for students and faculty to interact in Chinese beyond the classroom.

In their junior year Flagship students travel to China, where they enroll for two semesters in regular Nanjing University classes in subjects that match their interests and major fields of study. Students can apply language skills and expertise through the various volunteer and internship opportunities available in Nanjing and in a subsequent summer internship program run through the Qingdao Flagship Center. Using the information collected in China during their junior year, students return to the UO campus in their senior year to participate in a capstone class that results in a final project and/or senior thesis, written and presented formally in Chinese. Students' language proficiency at that time is also assessed through multiple assessment measures, including the *Hanyu shuiping kaoshi*, the Defense Language Proficiency Test, and an ACTFL-Oral Proficiency Interview

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[7]For more details about these and other Flagship courses offered at UO, see http://casls.uoregon.edu/uoflagship/curriculum3.php.

(OPI) administered by external examiners. In addition to language assessment, personalized career counseling and introductions to prospective employers is an integral part of each student's senior year.

Special Challenges for Teachers in the Oregon K–16 Program

As is apparent in the preceding overview of the program, the Oregon Language Flagship is quite different from traditional Chinese language programs. Pedagogical approaches and decisions at every step of the way present new challenges to teachers, administrators, and, ultimately, to students.

Three key challenges face the Oregon Chinese Language Flagship in its current early stages. These same challenges will face **all** teachers trying to enhance student performance through improved articulation, more effective curriculum, and innovative instructional practices, and thus are not limited to a program that adopts the Language Flagship model.

Challenge #1. To create a framework for curricular articulation linked to demonstrable language proficiency as determined via multiple assessment measures.

Challenge #2. To develop age-appropriate teaching strategies for students at all levels.

Challenge #3. To provide multiple opportunities for experiential learning that occurs beyond the classroom environment.

As educators and pioneers in the field of Chinese pedagogy, Flagship teachers are developing innovative approaches to content-based language instruction that will have a positive influence on the field. These issues will likely be common to almost any program aiming at high proficiency levels through intensive and sustained exposure to and instruction in a second language.

Challenge #1. To create a framework for curricular articulation linked to demonstrable language proficiency as determined via multiple assessment measures.

The well-noted need for articulation in language programs is by no means unique to the Oregon Flagship, nor is it particular to the field of Chinese pedagogy (e.g., The College Board 1996; Swaffar 1990; McGinnis 1999; Spring 2005). The recent surge in interest in developing AP® Chinese (see Chi, this volume) and in creating and sustaining a range of other programs in Chinese on the K–12 level (e.g., immersion, Foreign Language in Elementary Schools [FLES] programs, etc.)