

THE EVALUATION OF A CHINESE-LANGUAGE TEACHER-CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
IN AN EAST-COAST STATE

Concordia University – Portland

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Doctorate of Education Program

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Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation was to evaluate the effectiveness of a Chinese-language teacher-certification program offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD). Since 2000, more and more students have chosen Chinese as their second language and Chinese-language programs have been growing rapidly in American K–12 schools. However, lack of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers hinders the development of Chinese language programs. It requires educational researchers to find an effective means to train potential Chinese-language teachers and help them establish a standards-based and student-centered classroom. Qualitative data were collected from stakeholder participants related to this program to answer three research questions. Through questionnaires and phone interviews, three faculty members, nine current students at the time of study, and 10 alumni provided their perspectives on program strength, program challenges, and suggestions for improvements. The ACTFL Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (ACTFL, 2013) and Vygotsky’s constructivism theory (Vygotsky, 1978) were frameworks for identifying the components of the effectiveness of this program. Results showed that the Chinese-language teacher-certification program of the CCLTCD was a successful program to prepare potential Chinese-language teachers for American K–12 schools, while its courses and network opportunities addressed potential Chinese-language teachers’ needs and helped them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom. Suggestions were provided to improve this program and potential Chinese-language teacher education programs. Future research is recommended to follow up on this program’s graduates, which may add more insight to Chinese-language teaching and Chinese-language teacher preparation.

Keywords: program evaluation, higher education, Chinese-language teachers,
Chinese-language teacher-certification program

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and my motherland, China.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

Chinese-language programs have increased rapidly in the United States since the year of 2000, thanks to China's fast-growing economic development and increasing exchange in foreign trade, technology, education, and culture (Ke & Li, 2011; Li, 2008; Wen, 2011). Historically, Chinese-language learning has been restricted to universities, or to heritage schools in an informal way; recently, American students have had the opportunity to study Chinese language from kindergarten through high school (Everson, 2008). "Recent North American census data reveal that 'Chinese' (all dialects) is now the most widely spoken home language after English and Spanish in the USA" (Duff, 2008, p. 7). Current U.S. government policy, the increasing population of Asian-heritage students, and other needs bring opportunities for developing Chinese-language programs. Meanwhile, Chinese-language teachers face many challenges. According to Wen (2011), the challenges include: (a) multiple backgrounds of learners in socio-ethnic, cultural, and motivational diversity; (b) enrollment retention and sustainment of Chinese education development; (c) teaching training; and (d) K-16 articulation across different academic institutions.

Based on the statistics from College Board for 2007 to 2015, the number of students who take the Advanced Placement (AP) Chinese Language and Culture Exam has been increasing since 2007.

Table 1

AP Chinese Language and Culture Student Score (2007–2015)

Year	Total Group Student Number	Total Group Score Mean	Standard Group Student Number	Standard Group Score Mean
2007	3,261	4.7	363	3.93
2008	4,236	4.76	568	4.14
2009	5,100	4.69	759	3.97
2010	6,388	4.61	1,153	3.81
2011	7,970	4.51	1,346	3.56
2012	9,357	4.48	1,743	3.43
2013	10,121	4.46	1,961	3.39
2014	10,728	4.43	1,850	3.28
2015	11,633	4.36	2,444	3.23

(Source: College Board)

Total Group consists of all students who take the Exam, which includes the Standard Group and the Non-Standard Group. The Standard Group students generally receive most of their foreign language training in U.S. schools, and they do not regularly speak or hear the foreign language of the examination, or they have not lived for one month or more in a country where the language is spoken. As shown in Table 1, the number of Total Group students increased by more 200% between 2007 and 2015, while the number of students in the Standard Group increased by more than 500% in the same time period. The significant increase in students who enroll in Chinese language learning requires a supply of eligible teachers for these

programs. Table 1 also shows that with the increase of students who take the AP Chinese Language and Culture Exam, the mean score is decreasing for both Total Group students and Standard Group students. There might be many reasons for the decline in grades; however, the quality of Chinese-language teachers might be the major issue.

The key to the growth of a Chinese-language program is its teachers (Orton, 2011; Steward & Wang, 2005; Wen, 2011). After investigating results of the 1982 Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation initiative to expand teaching of Chinese in high schools, Moore, Walton, and Lambert (1992) found that “the quality of [*sic*] teacher is viewed not only as a safeguard against the demise of a program but as an essential ingredient of success” (p. 25). Teachers of Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) are responsible for their schools’ curriculum mapping, choosing teaching materials, classroom instruction, and student assessments. Therefore, CFL teachers’ professional growth leads to student enrollment, retention, and growth of Chinese-language programs. In order to meet the growing need for CFL teachers in terms of quantity and, more importantly, quality, a system needs to be built to recruit, train, certify, and support more and better teachers and provide schools with a teaching force (Asian Society, 2010).

Background of the Problem

Asian Society (2010) explained the three types of Chinese-language teachers in U.S. as “classrooms-guest teachers, heritage speakers, and native English speakers-each bring their particular strengths and weaknesses and pose very different challenges in terms of training, certification routes, and needs for professional support” (p. 19). Therefore, training programs should be tailored to meet the needs of all different types of teachers. The current candidate Chinese teachers’ pool derives from the following programs and network.

Chinese Guest Teacher Programs. The purpose of the Chinese Guest Teacher Programs is to help U.S. schools develop Chinese-language and culture study programs and to promote international exchange between the United States and mainland China or the United States and Taiwan. These programs include the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban), the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program of the U.S. Department of Education, and the College Board. According to the College Board, since 2007, the Chinese Guest Teacher Program has brought more than 1,000 Chinese language and culture teachers to classrooms across the U.S. In its own way, the government of Taiwan has also initiated and sponsored programs for certification of Chinese-language teachers (Ke & Li, 2011).

Chinese guest teachers usually have at least three years of teaching experience, hold a teaching license to teach in China, and go through a rigorous selection and training process before arriving at the host schools (College Board, 2016). They enter and remain in the United States through a J-1 visa (the exchange visitor non-immigrant visa), which stipulates that the maximum length of stay in the U.S. for any individual guest teacher is three years. After three years, guest teachers must return to China (College Board, 2016). Although Hanban and the College Board provide ongoing support to the guest teachers by offering professional guidance, resources, and professional development workshops, Chinese guests teachers “lack knowledge of American society and culture” (Asian Society, 2010, p. 20).

Heritage teachers. Heritage teachers refer to educated native Chinese speakers who reside in the United States and work for community-based heritage Chinese schools, which are after-school or weekend schools. Liu (2006) examined the results of a questionnaire given to 92 teachers in community-based Chinese schools (CCSs) in Southern California, and found that these teachers are highly motivated to promote Chinese language and culture. Compared to guest

teachers, heritage teachers are familiar with American society and culture. However, few heritage teachers have teaching credentials. Liu, Musica, Koscak, Vinogradova, and Lopez (2011) pointed out that while heritage teachers might be proficient in the target language, they do not necessarily have the knowledge of the structure of the language or teaching methodology and assessment.

Through a series of training programs, heritage teachers can acquire a standard teaching certification. For example, the STARTALK program offers teachers of critical languages creative and engaging summer experiences that strive to exemplify best practices in language education and in language teacher development (“About STARTALK,” 2017). Former President Bush signed the National Security Language Initiatives (NSLI) into law in 2006, and STARTALK is one of the newest programs. Its mission is

To increase the number of U.S. citizens learning, speaking, and teaching critical need foreign languages. STARTALK offers students (K–16) and teachers of these languages creative and engaging summer experiences that strive to exemplify best practices in language education and in language teacher development (“STARTALK’s mission,” 2017).

Native English speakers. These CFL teacher candidates include college graduates who have learned Chinese as a second language and people who have used languages in other professions, former diplomats, military personnel, returning Peace Corps volunteers, etc. (Asian Society, 2010). This pool is not large. Although native English speakers understand the dynamics of American classrooms, they may not have depth in the Chinese language and culture.

Statement of the Problem

Ingold and Wang (2010) stated, “The key to transforming world language education in the United States is a sufficient number of effective world language teachers” (p.1). Lack of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers hinders the development of Chinese language programs in most schools (Orton, 2011). It is crucial to expand and enhance the supply of Chinese-language teachers. Therefore, it requires educational researchers to find the effective path to train potential Chinese-language teachers and help them establish a standards-based and student-centered classroom. This study focused on a Chinese-language teacher-certification program and evaluated its strengths and challenges through the critical lens of Vygotsky’s constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and the American Council on the Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (ACTFL, 2013).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD) as an opportunity for its development and improvement. The results from this study may be used to make recommendations to the educational leaders at the study school regarding whether their program needs to be modified. Colleges in other states may benefit from this research result if they want to build similar programs for training Chinese-language educators.

I conducted a qualitative analysis of stakeholders’ perceptions of the teacher-certification program. Since most of the participants would be potential Chinese-language classroom teachers, they may benefit from their participation by gaining more knowledge about the standards for

Chinese-language teachers. They would also obtain knowledge regarding building a student-centered classroom.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, stakeholders included current students at the time of study, alumni, and faculty members of the study's site. Data were collected and analyzed in order to answer three research questions:

RQ1. From the view of stakeholders, how does the Chinese-language Teacher Certification Program offered by the Center for Chinese Language teacher-certification and Development (CCLTCD) address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standard-based and student-centered classroom?

RQ2. What do the stakeholders consider to be strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification Program offered by the CCLTCD?

RQ3. What do the stakeholders recommend for improving the quality of the Chinese-language Teacher-certification Program offered by CCLTCD based on Vygotsky's Constructivism theory?

Rationale and Significance of the Study

I have taught Chinese language and literature in various American K–12 schools and a heritage school for more than 10 years. Participating in relevant professional development plays an important role in teachers' growth. The CCLTCD was founded in September, 2009.

Throughout years of the Chinese education program, there has been a steady enrollment of students, producing 102 graduates from 2009 to 2016. The CCLTCD would benefit from an evaluation study as I determined the strengths and challenges of this program and the educational

leaders in the CCLTCD may use my research result as an opportunity for development and improvement.

After reviewing my preferred research design, I established a rationale for this design. I selected program evaluation as the methodology. Posavac (2010) defined program evaluation as, a methodology to learn the depth and extent of need for a human service and whether the service is likely to be used, whether the service is sufficiently intensive to meet the unmet needs identified, and the degree to which the service is offered as planned and actually does help people in need at a reasonable cost without unacceptable side effects. (pp. 2–3)

One purpose of evaluation is to help others gain a thorough understanding of an organization through evaluation results from expert opinion and qualitative evaluation (Patton, 2008; Schwant, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). This type of study provides the opportunity to produce results that may improve a process or evaluate a program in a situation-specific manner (Creswell, 2008). Program evaluation is different from self-evaluation. The goal of this study was to determine whether the Chinese-language Teacher Certification Program offered by the CCLTCD addressed a set of standard-driven best practices in support of CCLTCD’s mission statement. Another purpose of this study was to produce results that may be used to make recommendations to the educational leaders at the study school regarding their program. Also, this study may generalize findings so that colleges in other states may benefit from my study’s results if they want to build similar programs for training Chinese-language educators of American K–12 students.

Research Design

I collected and analyzed qualitative data, using the research design of program evaluation. The study participants included three faculty members, nine current students at the

time of study, and 10 alumni. They were invited to one-on-one interviews with me. I used study questionnaires and interview techniques as the sources of data collection. Responses from the interviews and questionnaires were organized based on the research questions: strengths, challenges, and improvement through the lens of Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and the ACTFL program standards (ACTFL, 2013). Responses were compared among stakeholders' groups.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope

Through the research questionnaires and one-on-one interviews, I collected data to answer the research questions. One assumption was that the Chinese-language teacher-certification program of the CCLTCD at the university is a successful program to prepare potential Chinese-language teachers for teaching in American K–12 schools. The courses and training were developed not only to prepare these pre-service teachers for establishing a standards-based and student-centered instruction, but also to meet the different needs from these pre-service teachers from different linguistic, cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds.

There were four limitations of this qualitative research. These limitations may affect the transferability of the results of this study. First, this evaluation examined this program in a very specific context. Although the program was evaluated against its mission, goals, and organization structures, the focus addressed development in curriculum and training courses to help pre-service CFL teachers become familiarized with a standards-based and student-centered classroom. The second limitation of this study was whether participants responded honestly. If the participants did not provide honest responses, the qualitative data might lead to an inaccurate evaluation. The third limitation of this study was the sample size. Due to some stakeholders declining to participate in the study, it may be a challenge to collect all perspectives from

stakeholders. The fourth limitation was researcher bias, which might affect the accuracy and validity of research. Research bias was unavoidable but controllable. I will mention my reflexivity in Chapter 3 in detail. These limitations may affect the transferability of the results of this study.

Definition of Terms

There are some key terms used throughout this dissertation. The following definitions are applicable to this research. These terms are defined here in order to provide uniformity.

Chinese Immersion Schools: Chinese immersion programs are becoming popular in K–8 charter and private schools, whereas those in public schools tend to K–5 (Weise, 2013).

Confucius Institutes: In order to promote Chinese language and culture in foreign countries, China started to establish non-public institutions in 2004 (“About Confucius Institutes,” 2017).

Hanban: It is the abbreviation in Chinese for Beijing-based Office of the Chinese Language Council International. Established in 1987, it is also called Confucius Institute Headquarters. Since then, it has been committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide (“Hanban,” 2017).

Heritage school: Also called an American Chinese School, is a non-profit informal school. Usually a heritage school is offered on weekends. The administrators and most teachers are volunteers. Most students are born in the United States and their parents are immigrants (Liu, 2010).

Summary

This chapter provided the current situation and major issues in Chinese language programs in American K–12 schools. To meet the demand for Chinese-language teachers, many

schools brought a number of international teachers on board. These teachers lack knowledge of American culture of education, including standards-based and student-centered instruction (Asia Society, 2010; College Board, 2016).

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher-certification program. I used questionnaires and phone interviews with the study's participants to gather data from stakeholders including current students, alumni, and faculty members. Data collection and instrumentation were described in detail in Chapter 3. In Chapter 2, I presented the conceptual framework that supports my study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

The recent rise in Chinese language education in the U.S. has increased the demand for Chinese-language programs and teachers for American K–12 schools. The lack of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers has become the major issue in Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) education in the United States (Orton, 2011). In order to obtain an overview of the studies on Chinese-language teacher preparation programs, I reviewed the literature through education databases, such as ProQuest and Eric, from 2007 to 2017. Key words that were used to identify related literature included: Chinese-language teachers, teaching Chinese as second language, Chinese-language teacher training, and Chinese-language teacher preparation program. In this literature review, I addressed current research on Chinese-language teachers' professional development and provided this study's conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework

This study was rooted in several theoretical conceptualizations that help frame the inquiry: the ACTFL program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013), Confucian Philosophy of Education (Ames & Rosemont, 1998), and Vygotsky's Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978).

American educational philosophy versus Chinese educational philosophy. There is a significant difference between Chinese and American styles of teaching and learning (Asian Society, 2010). Teachers from different educational backgrounds may have diverse beliefs about themselves as teachers and their students as learners (Moloney & Xu, 2015). Pedagogy in Chinese schools and universities is typically teacher-oriented (Asian Society, 2010). The role of teachers in China is to transfer their knowledge to their students. Teachers have absolute

authority in their classroom. Therefore, in a teacher-centered classroom, research and projects are rarely used at education levels before college, and students are usually given standardized answers to exercise in order to achieve high scores on tests (Gao, 2010).

Chinese-language teachers' beliefs set the foundation of their classroom practices. In addition, Chinese-language teachers who adopt different educational philosophies will have different approaches in their classrooms. In the United States, most Chinese as Foreign Language (CFL) teachers graduated from institutions in China (Moloney & Xu, 2015). Thus, they tend to focus on teaching Chinese characters and grammar rather than on communication skills. This approach is different from American pedagogical values, which emphasize student-centered instruction and "learning by doing" (Asian Society, 2010). CFL teachers educated through traditional pedagogy may experience problems with learners of a Western educational background due to different beliefs, such as teacher-centered instruction.

Respect for teachers also takes on different connotations in Chinese and American contexts: respect for teachers in the American context is based more on equality and cooperation, whereas respect for teachers in the Chinese context focuses more on hierarchical deference, structure, order, and unconditional obedience (Gao, 2010; Liu, 2012; Nguyen, 2008 as cited in Lau, Gu, & Hu, 2015). Teachers in cross-cultural teaching contexts, such as heritage CFL teachers, may encounter greater tension in earning legitimate teacher authority than teachers who are teaching in their own cultural contexts (Lau et al., 2015).

Confucian philosophy of education. *The Analects of Confucius* gathered the teachings or aphorisms of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BC; Ames & Rosemont, 1998). Confucius discussed the morality of government and the individual, social relationships, teaching, and learning. His disciples combined his teaching into *the Analects of Confucius*. The

philosophical movement of Confucianism sprang from the study of these writings (Ames & Rosemont, 1998).

According to some researchers, Confucian education is often associated with rote-memorization that is characterized by sheer repetition of facts with little or no understanding of the content learned. Aoki (2008) provided a typical view of Confucian education, in which a student is encouraged to emulate a good teacher, rather than engage in debate, as in a Western educational setting.

Based on Tan's (2015) research, Confucius highlighted the need for students to take ownership of their own learning, engage in higher order thinking, and reflectively apply the lessons learned in their lives. Most Asian countries are influenced by Confucian educational philosophy (Han & Scull, 2010). Han and Scull (2010) pointed out that Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) countries share the following key philosophical tenets and schooling practices: rote-memorization; transmission of knowledge via teacher-centeredness; infrequent use of interactive processes; a top-down method; and a bias towards obedience. Students do not ask questions and interrupt the flow of instruction; they often talk only when asked. Students have more hours of homework and attend cram schools after school. The Organisation [sic] for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) uses the Programme [sic] for International Student Assessment (PISA) to measure global students' skills. PISA assessments focus on reading, mathematics, science, and problem-solving. About 510,000 15-year-old students from 34 OECD member countries and 31 partner countries and economies participated in PISA 2012, representing more than 80% of the world economy.

PISA not only ascertained whether students could reproduce what they have learned, but also examined how well they apply their knowledge in unfamiliar settings (Organisation [sic] for

Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012). Based on OECD's (2012) data, Shanghai-China, Singapore, Hong Kong-China, Chinese Taipei, and Korea were the top five performers in mathematics. Shanghai-China, Hong Kong-China, Singapore, Japan, and Korea were the five highest-performing countries and economies in reading in PISA 2012. Shanghai-China, Hong Kong-China, Singapore, Japan, and Finland were the top five performers in science. The top performers overall were all CHC societies (Shanghai-China, Korea, Hong Kong-China, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Macao-China and Singapore; Tan, 2015, as cited in OECD, 2012). The fundamental difference between Western educational philosophy and Confucian philosophy of education is that in the Confucian heritage culture, teaching is based more on mastery than on discovery (Sun, 2013).

Vygotsky's constructivism. Vygotsky studied the importance of a learner's social interactions in learning situations and defined the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as the distance between a student's individual problem solving skill and the level that he or she can achieve when supported by the teacher or in collaboration with other students (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky argued that learning is most effective when learners collaborate with one another in a supportive learning environment under the careful guidance of a teacher (Kellouch & Carjuzaa, 2009). Learning is a meaningful authentic activity for learners whose role and responsibility are to be active, questioning, self-directed, creative and innovative, and goals include the embedding of learning in realistic contexts and in social experience (Moloney & Xu, 2015).

Based on Kao's (2014) study, although the acquisition of the foreign and the native languages belongs to one genetic process of speech development, they differ in the process of concept formation. Understanding of one's native language comes naturally, while learning a

foreign language requires a more structured process (Kao, 2014). Wang (2011) also pointed out that learner-centeredness is one of the most important principles of constructivist foreign language teaching. In a constructivist classroom, the teacher is a facilitator, who provides students with experiences that allow them to hypothesize, predict, manipulate objects, pose questions, research, investigate, imagine, and invent (Wang, 2011). In the constructivist-based teaching, learners actively construct their own comprehension instead of passively absorb or copy the learning of others (Temiz & Topcu, 2013). Constructivist approaches in teaching foreign language include: proficiency-oriented approaches, target language input, and integrating technology in instruction and assessment.

Proficiency-oriented approaches. Pedagogy for modern languages has moved away from grammar translation to a focus on communicative skills and tasks (Willis & Willis, 2007; Moloney & Xu, 2015). Most traditional approaches focus on linguistic knowledge and structural patterns. Proficiency has been highly advocated by foreign language professionals at all levels as the organizing principle around which to design instruction (Ruiz-Funes, 2002). Through meaningful tasks and activities that involve real communication in the target language, students become active learners and discoverers, and contributors of knowledge and information (Hu, 2010). In other words, learners should have opportunities to use the target language for communicative purpose and to learn the language through using it (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983 as cited in Hu, 2010).

Target language input. Using the target language (TL) is important in a foreign-language classroom. The main rationale for advocating maximal use of TL is that for most students, the classroom is the only place where they have exposure to the language (Littlewood & Yu, 2011).

Language authenticity is stressed. Foreign-language teachers are encouraged to provide students access to current, authentic materials, for example newspapers, travel information, editorials, etc.

Computer-assisted foreign language teaching. Recent years have seen a boom in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) for foreign language learning and teaching (Duff, 2008; Yang, 2010). Technological and pedagogical developments allow FL teachers to integrate computer technology into classroom practice. Since the entire AP Chinese Language and Culture exam is administered on a computer, students are recommended to practice typing and try to use Microsoft Input Method Editors (IME) for Chinese input as frequently as possible in order to sharpen their skills (Xu, Qu, Gu, Chang, & Kang, 2010). Students can have pen pals through the internet, and engage in interesting, up-to-date activities on YouTube and digital tasks and texts. Ye (2013) also mentioned that the use of computer-assisted writing can lessen the burden of the laborious writing of characters.

ACTFL's program standards. Teacher development in the 21st century benefits from new learning tools and methods (Duff, 2008). The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in the United States identified five goals as Foreign Language (FL) standards: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Everson (2009) mentioned these five components could be applied to Chinese language education and teacher development. In addition, ACTFL's Program Standards (ACTFL, 2013) have become an established measure of what determines an effective and innovative model of foreign language teacher education (Huhn, 2012). ACTFL program standards consist of six areas (See Appendix C):

Standard 1: Language, Linguistics, Comparisons

Standard 2: Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts

Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices

Standard 4: Integration of Standards into Curriculum and Instruction

Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures

Standard 6: Professionalism

These six standards can be extended and applied to Chinese-language teacher candidates.

Under Standard 1, Chinese-language teacher candidates should demonstrate a high level of proficiency in Chinese language, know the linguistic elements of the Chinese language system, and identify the similarities and differences between Chinese language and English. Under Standard 2, Chinese-language teacher candidates should demonstrate understanding of the connections among the perspectives of Chinese culture and its practice and products; they should also demonstrate understanding of literary and cultural texts and traditions. Furthermore, they should integrate other disciplines into Chinese language instruction. Standard 3 requests Chinese-language teacher candidates to demonstrate an understanding of language acquisition at various developmental levels and develop instructional practices that reflect language outcomes and learner diversity. Under Standard 4, Chinese-language teacher candidates should demonstrate an understanding of standards and integrate standards into curricular planning, language instruction, and adaptation of instructional resources. Standard 5 requires Chinese-language teacher candidates to demonstrate knowledge of multiple ways of assessment, and the ability to adjust instruction based on the results of student assessments. Under Standard 6, Chinese-language teacher candidates should engage in professional development opportunities and strengthen their linguistic and cultural competence and promote reflection on practice.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

The language-teaching profession has made significant progress in articulating the goals of language study and reorienting the curriculum to reflect a stronger focus on proficiency (Hu, 2010). Therefore, communicative language teaching has had a substantial effect on classroom instruction and assessment. Classroom teachers emphasize the performance-to-proficiency instructional approach and performance-based assessment at all levels, as well as building interculturality, the dynamic process of active participation in communication guided by knowledge and understanding of the products, practices, and perspectives of cultures (Houten, 2015).

In general, a successful experience as a classroom FL teacher was associated with qualities including: being well prepared, mastery in the target language, and ability to connect to students. Teachers' subject knowledge is recognized as an essential component of effective teaching. In the context of a foreign language, teachers' subject knowledge includes language proficiency. Duff (2008) revealed that the current approaches to teaching and to the development of teachers are representing long traditions of teaching that may no longer reflect the goals or needs of students in contemporary, globalized societies.

Sun's (2012) case study of an immigrant Chinese-language teacher illustrated how profoundly an immigrant teacher's identity and cultural heritage can shape personal practical knowledge and teaching practice. The primary data for this case study were the researcher's interviews with a CFL teacher. Video-recorded classroom observations, field notes, and other relevant documents served as supporting sources (Sun, 2012). Sun found that these immigrant teachers face various challenges, both linguistic and cultural, in living and teaching. Furthermore, he suggested that a cross-cultural study of teacher knowledge creates a better

understanding of CFL teachers' needs to help them make a smooth transition to their new cultural contexts.

Ferro's (2014) mixed-methods study collected qualitative and quantitative data from 71 Chinese-language teachers from across the United States. Additionally, there were 17 teachers who participated in telephone interviews and four teachers who took part in seven classroom observations. Ferro's analysis revealed the participants were aware of the cultural differences in the classrooms between China and the United States. The differences led to four commonly shared challenges: classroom management, student motivation, use of the target language, and teacher-student relations.

Lau (2013) conducted a researcher-teacher collaborative project to explore Chinese-language teachers' perception and implementation of instruction based on self-regulated learning (SRL). The participants were 31 teachers and 1,121 high school sophomores. In order to collect quantitative data, the researcher administered pre- and post- questionnaires, which included a 22-item inventory to measure to what extent teachers and students perceive that the reading instruction in their Chinese language classes is consistent with the principles of SRL. Student and teacher versions of the inventory had identical content but different wording. Two sets of interviews with teachers were conducted before and near the end of the project. The first set of interview questions focused on teachers' beliefs and the second set focused on changes of teachers' instructional practices. Classroom observations were also conducted to check the consistency between what was reported in questionnaires and interviews and actual practices. The findings of Lau's (2013) study implied that professional development can greatly promote instructional shifts and improve student learning since aspirations for professional development can motivate change.

Based on Lai, Gu, and Hu's (2015) study, in order to prepare teachers for cross-cultural teaching, the training of any pedagogical approaches needed to focus not only on the fundamentals of the approaches, but more importantly on culturally appropriate implementation strategies, such as culturally responsive classroom and time management techniques, culturally effective written or oral communication strategies, and so on. By interviewing 18 pre-service Chinese-language teachers on their understanding of legitimate teacher authority throughout teaching practicum, Lai et al.'s (2015) study reported on how a group of pre-service immigrant teachers from mainland China, facing their challenges, developed understanding of legitimate teacher authority in their cross-cultural teaching contexts during teaching practicum. In this study, the participants' concerns over losing control of the class during student-centered activities resulted in some of them reverting back to relying primarily on didactic teaching. Lai et al. (2015) warned of throwing pre-service teachers into cross-cultural teaching practicum without preparing them well for the different cultural connotations of discipline and learning and for the culturally appropriate strategies. Therefore, these heritage CFL teachers need considerable on-the-job support and guidance (Asian Society, 2010).

Educating Chinese-language teachers is a long-term endeavor. On one hand, there is increasing demand for sufficient candidates; on the other hand, these candidates need to develop their capacity to practice as accomplished teachers (Orton, 2011). The teaching of the Chinese language is extraordinarily demanding in the United States and the level of interest in establishing Chinese-language programs in K–12 schools is rising rapidly (Steward & Wang, 2005).

Synthesis of Research Findings

As is true with any language-teaching professionals, to become a CFL teacher requires specialized, rigorous training and ongoing professional development (Steward & Wang, 2005). Steward and Wang (2005) pointed out that the major roadblock to building Chinese-language programs in the United States is the shortage of qualified CFL teachers. The solution they provided is to take both short- and long-term approaches to create a supply of qualified CFL teachers.

Steward and Wang's (2005) short-term solutions included collaboration between states and universities to create expedited paths to teacher certifications for Chinese speakers in the United States; introduction of programs to invite teachers from China as visiting faculty; and increased use of technology and multimedia to provide access for more students to the limited number of full-time Chinese-language teachers. For a long-term solution, they recommended investment in teacher preparation programs to expand Chinese-language education to the level of other languages.

According to Ke, Wen, and Kottenbeutel (2001), more research projects that deal with the teacher development aspect of CFL are needed, as research in this area indicates that in Chinese language programs, the teacher is the key element in determining the success or failure of a program. Therefore, research into the effectiveness of teacher-training programs is of great importance in understanding how to build successful Chinese language programs (Ke et al., 2001).

A key recommendation has been that there need to be focused efforts in improving pedagogy for Chinese language and in educating Chinese-language teachers (Orton, 2011). CFL teachers' development programs should focus not only on scholarly knowledge, such as,

pedagogical and linguistic strategies but also should focus on cultural adjustment and teaching beliefs transition, experiential and collaborative learning, observation, and so on, consistent with constructivist approaches to teaching and learning (Duff, 2008; Lai et al., 2015).

The mismatch between the world-language teacher supply system and the demand for world-language teachers has not generated much concern in the public discourse. If we are serious about producing linguistically and culturally competent global workers and professionals, we must transform the world-language teacher supply system for the 21st century (Ingold & Wang, 2010).

Steward and Wang (2005) pointed out that there were no comprehensive, up-to-date surveys of Chinese-language students, teachers, and programs. Since different groups of prospective teachers have different needs in terms of teacher preparation, the professional development should be designed to meet their needs.

Critique of Previous Research

Asian Society (2010) provided a list of areas where professional development for CFL teachers is particularly needed (a) effective pedagogical methods, (b) linguistic and cultural proficiency, (c) use of technology, (d) classroom management, and (e) information on best practices. However, it is not known which areas are most needed by CFL teachers. If we can determine which of these skill sets needs the most development among current and prospective CFL teachers, then the teachers can be provided specially tailored professional development programs in pedagogy, methodology, Chinese linguistic, and literature. In this way, it can solve the problem of the shortage of CFL teachers and prepare students in these programs to become highly qualified teachers in the field.

According to the Ohio Department of Education, teachers in Ohio begin their careers with four-year Resident Educator licenses that are non-renewable. During this time, they must complete all four years of the Ohio Resident Educator Program and successfully pass the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) to qualify for a 5-year professional educator license. Three of the 4 years should include a system of support and mentoring for new teachers (ODE, 2016). Little research has been conducted to study these CFL teachers' transitions and challenges.

Therefore, there has not been enough research on professional development for Chinese-language teachers in the United States. Most research has targeted Chinese guest teachers and heritage teachers. Few research studies have mentioned the third type of Chinese-language teacher: native English speakers. As a result, there is a gap in the literature that addresses the needs from all three groups of pre-service CFL teachers. In this study, I discovered what the overall experiences and challenges are for CFL teachers and the basic training required for pre-service CFL teachers and what training they expect to do their work better.

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter presented a review of the literature on the topics related to foreign language teacher education, especially CFL teacher education. The discussion of the literature provided the conceptual framework that would guide this study: Confucian educational philosophy, Vygotsky's constructivism, ACTFL's program standards, and foreign language teaching theories. Chinese-language teachers in the United States come from a variety of backgrounds. They might be natives of China or born in America. Their different origins mean that they are accustomed to different philosophies of teaching.

This study aimed to evaluate a Chinese-language teacher-certification program through the lens of Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and the ACTFL's program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013). The study shed light on the transitions that CFL teachers are undergoing, identified the reasons for those transitions, and investigated what was needed for future professional development for CFL teachers to succeed in teaching. Chapter 3 provided details of the methods to recruit participants, to collect, and to analyze data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Language education and teacher development in recent years have presented new challenges and opportunities for Chinese-language teachers (Duff, 2008). In Chapter 1, I mentioned that Chinese-language programs are increasing rapidly in the United States and the significant issue in the development of Chinese-language programs is lack of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers. In some states, prospective teachers cannot find suitable teacher training programs that enable them to become certified to teach in K–12 public schools. In order to provide solutions, some states provide Chinese-language teacher-certification programs in colleges and universities. However, lack of communication between higher education institutions and K–12 schools has prevented the development of effective teacher preparation programs (Asia Society, 2010).

In order to work toward a solution to foster improvement in building Chinese-language teacher-preparation programs at my school, and perhaps even in the state, I conducted a program evaluation study to evaluate a Chinese-language teacher-certification program in an east-coast state. According to the grant report, the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD) at this university began operating the first Chinese-language teacher-certification program in its state in September 2009. Chinese Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) awarded a three-year \$440,000 matching grant to the College of Education (COE) to establish the center (CCLTCD, 2014). In my research study, the areas that I focused on were the strengths, challenges, and suggestions for improvement of a Chinese-language teacher-certification program at this university. I collected and analyzed the data through the use of questionnaires and one-on-one interviews with faculty members, current students, and alumni.

Colleges in other states may benefit from my research result if they want to build similar programs for training Chinese-language educators. I expected my findings also may help more potential Chinese-language teachers find their way to become certified.

Research Questions

In this study, stakeholders include faculty members, current students, and alumni. Data were collected and analyzed in order to answer three research questions:

RQ1. From the view of stakeholders, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program, offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD), address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom?

RQ2. What do the stakeholders consider to be strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program?

RQ3. What do the stakeholders recommend for improving the quality of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013)?

These research questions were considered through the lens of the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2013) in the United States. The ACTFL identified five goals as foreign languages (FL) standards: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (ACTFL, 2013). Everson (2009) mentioned that these five components could be applied to Chinese language education and teacher development. The research questions also focused on how successfully this program has trained the students to

lead standards-based and learner-centered classrooms based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and ACTFL's program standards (ACTFL, 2013).

Purpose and Design of the Study

Questionnaires and interviews are often used to gather data from program participants (Posavac, 2011). The program evaluation process would be an effective methodology for the evaluation of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program offered by the CCLTCD. The purpose of the study was to determine the strengths and challenges of this program as an opportunity for its development and improvement. Participants had an opportunity to interpret the mission and goals of the CCLTCD and to provide their perspectives of how well the program achieves those goals. Participants' responses answered questions about the CCLTCD's published standards and its implementation of those standards. From the view of the stakeholders, how well did the standards of the CCLTCD as they were written demonstrate an intention to train Chinese-language teachers in constructivist classroom philosophy? What CCLTCD standards did stakeholders find to be both appropriately written and well-implemented to produce Chinese-language teachers who would be able to establish a student-centered classroom? What standards did stakeholders believe should be amended to better train Chinese-language teachers to create a student-centered classroom? In what areas did stakeholders believe the CCLTCD could improve through better implementation of its standards?

The results from this study may be used to make recommendations to the educational leaders at the study school regarding whether their program needs to be modified. Colleges in other states may use my research result as a reference when they are trying to build or develop similar Chinese-language educators' training programs.

Participants were recruited from faculty members, current students, and alumni of the CCLTCD's Chinese-language Teacher-certification program. Current students at the time of study were those who have been enrolled in the program for at least one year. Alumni participants were chosen from the CCLTCD graduate database. Participants were notified that their participation would be voluntary and that they would not be compensated for participation. I explained the purpose of my study and the procedure clearly to them.

Participants completed a questionnaire (Appendix D). In this questionnaire, participants provided information such as their role in the program, gender, age, ethnicity, how long the stakeholder had served or had been enrolled in the program, and whether the stakeholder had experience in teaching Chinese language in the United States. The questionnaire allowed me to identify the role of participants in the program. Using questionnaires and one-on-one interviews to collect data, I found out whether stakeholders had different views of the program based on their different roles. Since most of the participants understood the Chinese language, the questionnaire was designed in both English and Chinese. Participants could answer the questions in English or Chinese as they preferred.

Prior to my interviews with each participant, through email I sent them CCLTCD's mission statement, the goals for the CCLTCD (Appendix B), and a list of standards for Chinese language teachers by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2013) (see Appendix C).

The mission statement for the CCLTCD is below:

The mission of the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development is to set a national and international standard of excellence for Chinese language teacher preparation, certification, and further development.

The goals for the CCLTCD were (a) to increase the number of state-certified Chinese language teachers; (b) to enhance teacher preparation and further development of greater numbers of excellent teachers in Chinese language and culture; (c) to create new materials as needed for Chinese language teacher preparation, certification, and development; (d) to expose the University campus and the community to Chinese language teaching and learning through events, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars.

Before I began one-on-one interviews, I reminded the participants to consider the ACTFL's standards, the mission statement, and the goals for the center when they answered the interview questions. In this way, participants would be able to provide their perspectives about this program based on their experience and knowledge of Chinese-language teachers' standards.

Research Population and Sampling Method

Program evaluation almost always involves a team, takes time to see results, involves many different stakeholders, and is often constrained by budget and political influences (Bamberger, Rugh, & Mabry, 2006). This study included individuals who had different backgrounds and could provide varied insights into the research of this program. The group from which I recruited the participants included 45 college students, alumni, and faculty members. Voluntary stakeholder participants were recruited through emails, and telephone calls. I sent potential participants a note by email to briefly introduce myself and the purpose of the study. I also answered all questions raised by potential participants by way of email. Potential participants received a formal invitation, an informed consent form, and a questionnaire by email. Twenty-two participants returned the informed consent form to express their willingness to participate in the study. This study included three faculty members, nine current students, and 10 alumni. Four participants were male, and 18 participants were female.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

I recruited voluntary stakeholder participants through emails and telephone calls. The program coordinator from the CCLTCD helped me locate students and alumni. I sent them a note by email to briefly introduce myself and the purpose of my study. Once they accepted my invitation, I sent the potential participants an informed consent form. In the meantime, I followed up with phone calls to potential participants to make sure that they understood the procedure.

I emailed the research questionnaire to participants. In this questionnaire, participants provided their demographic information, such as gender, age, ethnicity, their role in the program, how long the stakeholder had served or had been enrolled in the program, and whether the stakeholder had experience in teaching Chinese language in United States. The questionnaire allowed me to identify the role of participants in the program. In the email, I also provided the interview schedule for participants to choose a convenient time.

Prior to the interview, I also sent participants the CCLTCD's mission statement, the goals for the CCLTCD, and a list of standards for Chinese language teachers by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2016). Each participant needed to complete the participant questionnaire, read the ACTFL's standards for Chinese language teachers, the CCLTCD's mission statement and goals, and complete an informed consent form before the one-on-one interview session started.

Based on the schedule, I called each participant, one by one, to conduct the interviews. The interview questions reflected the research questions in this study. I reminded the participants to consider the standards, the mission statement, and the goals for the center when they answered the research questions. In this way, participants were able to provide their perspectives about this program based on their experience and knowledge of Chinese language teachers' standards. I

created a relaxed atmosphere to encourage the participants to share their perspectives. Each interview session lasted around 30 minutes. Based on their language preference, I talked with participants in either English or Chinese. I used a recorder as well as wrote notes. I utilized video or phone conferences so that I could maintain good contacts with interviewees. Video and phone conferences also had the advantage of flexibility, since I did not have to fly to each interviewee's location. In order to obtain the validity of this study's data, I sent the transcripts to the participants for checking. After the participants' approval, I noted their responses in this study.

I also collected data from other resources. For example, archival data were collected from the CCLTCD office on topics such as student enrollment, professional development programs, Hanban grant report, self-evaluations, etc. Lesson plans and assessments, designed by the current students at the time of this study and alumni, were collected to evaluate these participants' abilities related to instruction and assessment. These secondary data sources were used to determine the program features and support this study.

There can be a tendency to expand the scope of research to include items that might yield interesting data that is not central to the research questions (Bamberger, Rugh, & Mabry, 2006). Therefore, it was critical to ensure that I collected only essential information. All data collection instruments were carefully scrutinized to ensure that the information is relevant and essential to the purpose of the evaluation.

Data Analysis Procedures

This project was a one-time evaluation while the program was implemented. Qualitative data and interviews with stakeholders were collected to summarize their perceptions of the program. While transcribing the data, I generated initial codes and looked for common themes.

Through the thematic analysis, responses from the interviews and questionnaires would be organized based on the research questions: strengths, challenges, and improvement through the lens of Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013). Responses also were compared among stakeholders' groups: faculty members, current students at the time of study, and alumni.

Limitation of the Research Design

There were some limitations to the qualitative research approach of this study. One factor was whether participants responded honestly. For example, faculty members might want to expand this program so that they would consider the program to be successful. If the participants did not provide honest responses, the qualitative data might lead to an inaccurate evaluation. The second limitation was a limitation on the data collected through interviews. During the phone interview process, two alumni reflected that they could not recall some of their experiences since they graduated three years ago. One participant seemed impatient with answering the questions. One alumna whose teaching job was not pleasant seemed less willing to share her perspectives than alumni who held satisfactory jobs.

A third limitation of this study was the sample size. Due to some stakeholders declining to participate in the study, it was a challenge to collect all perspectives from stakeholders. Since the majority of current students and alumni enrolled in this program were female, there were only four male participants in this study. These limitations may affect the transferability of the results of this study.

Expected Findings

Through one-on-one interviews, I collected data to answer the research questions (See Appendix E). My expected finding was, according to participants' responses, that the Chinese-language teacher-certification program of the CCLTCD at the university was a successful program to prepare potential Chinese-language teachers for American K–12 schools. The training was developed in diverse ways because of these potential Chinese-language teachers' different linguistic, cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds. Approaches to teacher development were not only based on the content knowledge but also focus on collaborative learning, observation, student teaching, and so on, consistent with constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. The participants' valuable experience could be of benefit to other states' Chinese-language teacher-preparation programs. It may be expected that the CCLTCD accomplished its mission of contributing to the development of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers, while the courses and workshops that the CCLTCD offered may address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom. The CCLTCD may share its knowledge of best practices in Chinese language teaching and its methodology in instituting a successful Chinese-language teacher-preparation program.

Ethical Issues

Researcher's position. McDowell (1992) mentioned that researchers must take account of their own position in relation to the research participants and research setting. Researchers' personal attachment to an interest provides the passion and dedication for conducting good research; however, personal attachment can also carry bias and opinion, which can affect the accuracy and validity of research (Machi & McEvoy, 2012; McGuire, 2014). Bias can be defined as "Distortion of research data that renders the data suspect or invalid; may occur due to

characteristics of the research, the respondent, or the research design itself' (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2011, as cited in McGuire, 2014, p. 1).

Machi and McEvoy (2012) pointed out that researcher bias is unavoidable but must be controlled. They suggested that researchers identify and bring their personal views forward. Therefore, researchers can commit to being open-minded and preserve their neutral position during research.

Like Machi and McEvoy (2012), McGuire (2014) also mentioned that the researcher can include a reflexivity section in his paper. McGuire provided a list of four suggestions. First, discuss the researcher's personal and professional background; second, address negative case sampling; third, list propositions in the Researcher Bias section; fourth, convey possible personal interpretations.

Therefore, I provided my reflexivity section based on McGuire's (2014) suggestion here. My personal experience as a Chinese-language teacher showed that heritage teachers might lack training before they become classroom teachers. This is my personal opinion, or bias. Since there are different types of Chinese-language teachers in U.S. classrooms, teachers might have different situations in the areas of professional development, certification routes, and needs for professional support. I had to minimize the negative effects of my bias during my research and stay objective. My personal practices in teaching Chinese as a foreign language might bring bias into my research work; therefore, I had to withhold my own opinion. During the study, I kept the tone of my report objective and academic.

Ethical issues in the study. Before my research started, I informed the participants fully about my study's purpose, methods, and intended possible uses of the research. Participants took part in my study voluntarily and were asked to sign a consent form. I kept participants'

information and their responses confidential. Any name or identifying information were kept securely via electronic encryption or locked inside the file cabinet at my office. When I reviewed the data, none had the participants' names or identifying information. I used a code only I knew to analyze the data. All information participants provided was kept private at all times during this study. And then all study documents will be destroyed 3 years after the conclusion of this study per Concordia University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

During the research, the questionnaire and interview questions did not have a negative impact on the participants because the questions focused on their perspectives of the CCLTCD's program. No sensitive data were used. However, prior to any data collection, Concordia University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained.

Chapter 3 Summary

In this chapter, I introduced this study's research design and approach, along with the data collection and analysis. The purpose of this study was to investigate the strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program as an opportunity for its development and improvement. My program evaluation study used qualitative methodology. Questionnaires and one-on-one interviews were used to collect data. Archival data from the CCLTCD office and documents related to instruction and assessment designed by current students at the time of study and alumni, such as lesson plans, were also collected to determine the program features and support the program evaluation.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program, offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD), as an opportunity for its further development and improvement. One of the program's requirements is for pre-service teachers to gain their knowledge and improve their planning, instruction, and assessment skills before completing this program. The results from this study may be used to make recommendations to the educational leaders at the study school regarding whether their program needs to be modified. Colleges in other states may use this research result as a reference when they may develop similar Chinese-language educators' training programs.

The national standards for learning languages are the five "C" goal areas: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (ACTFL, 2016). All language educators need to align their instruction and assessment with standards. ACTFL's revised Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers are used to review foreign language teacher preparation programs and to determine whether those programs merit national recognition status. Foreign language teacher preparation programs must provide evidence that their candidates are able to demonstrate achievement of these standards (Huhn, 2012). Another conceptual framework for this study is Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory. Learner-centeredness is one of the most important principles of constructivist foreign language teaching (Wang, 2011).

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a Chinese-language teacher education program, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory, and the American

Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013). The methodology for this study was program evaluation. Questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data from program stakeholders. Data were collected and analyzed in order to answer three research questions:

RQ1. From the view of stakeholders, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program, offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD), address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom?

RQ2. What do the stakeholders consider to be strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program?

RQ3. What do the stakeholders recommend for improving the quality of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013)?

The research questions also focused on if and how successfully this program has trained pre-service teachers to lead standards-based and learner-centered classrooms and enabled these candidates to acquire the requested knowledge, skills, and dispositions presented in ACTFL's standards. As Temiz and Topcu (2013) stated:

Pre-service teachers should learn how to instruct successfully with respect to constructivism in their classes before they graduate. In other words, pre-service teachers are expected to improve their knowledge and skills to instruct effectively while completing the compulsory courses in their education programs. (p. 1435)

This chapter includes a description of participants, including demographic information. The chapter also contains an analysis of the data and the findings of the study. As an outside researcher and a Chinese-language classroom teacher, my motivation to evaluate this program was to understand the current status of a Chinese-language teacher training program. In this study I discovered what the overall experiences and challenges were for CFL teachers and the basic training required for pre-service CFL teachers to do their work more effectively.

Description of the Sample

Data were collected between December of 2016 and February of 2017 through the recruitment of voluntary stakeholder participants, which included faculty members, current students, and alumni. I collected data through the use of emails and telephone conferences. Current students were defined as those who have been enrolled in the program for at least one year. The program coordinator from the CCLTCD helped me locate students. Alumni participants were chosen from the CCLTCD graduate database. Participants were notified that their participation was voluntary and that they would not be compensated for participation. I contacted 45 potential participants by email and received 22 completed questionnaires and informed-consent forms. The questionnaire allowed me to identify the role of participants in the program, how long each stakeholder served or was enrolled in the program, and participants' years of teaching experience. The questionnaire also provided demographic information such as gender, age, and ethnicity. After I received these participants' responses, I emailed them to schedule interview time. Later, based on each participant's schedule, I called each participant to conduct the interviews. Prior to my interviews with each participant through email, I sent them CCLTCD's mission statement, the goals for the CCLTCD (Appendix B), and a list of standards for preparing foreign-language teachers by ACTFL (Appendix C).

According to the participants' responses to the questionnaires, this study included three faculty members, nine current students, and 10 alumni. Four participants were male, and 18 participants were female. At the time of this study, the current students were all second-year graduate students in the CCLTCD program in the age group 20–29. Alumni identified themselves as Chinese-language teachers, working in K–12 American schools, which included private schools, public schools, and charter schools. Four alumni were in age group 30–39, and the other alumni were in age group 20–29. Faculty members described themselves as a part of the program for more than 5 years. They were in age groups 30–39, 50–59, and 60–69.

Participants also identified their ethnicity. Across all participants, three of the research participants identified themselves as Caucasian, and 19 identified themselves as Asian. Two Caucasian students stated they had studied Chinese in college and also had experience teaching English to Chinese students in China. In addition, among all of the current students and alumni participants, only two studied majors other than education in their undergraduate years.

Research Methodology and Analysis

This study was a one-time evaluation while the program was implemented. Qualitative data and interviews with stakeholders were collected to summarize their perceptions of the program. I prepared the Permission to Conduct Study (Appendix F) and emailed it to the program director of my study site. Two weeks later, I received the program director's approval to conduct this study.

Voluntary stakeholder participants were recruited through emails and telephone calls. Participants' contact information was provided through the program coordinator. I sent potential participants a note by email to briefly introduce myself and the purpose of the study. I also answered all questions raised by potential participants by way of email. Participants' questions

included whether the interview was face-to-face and how long this study would last. I explained to them that the interview would be conducted through telephone calls for 30 minutes and I would study this topic for about one year.

After two weeks, I sent potential participants a formal invitation, an informed consent form, and a questionnaire. Participants returned the informed consent form to express their willingness to participate in the study. They also completed the participant questionnaires as requested. I then scheduled a suitable time to interview them. Before the interview, all participants were encouraged to read the ACTFL's (2013) program standards for the preparation of foreign language teachers, and the CCLTCD's (2009) mission statement and goals.

Each interview session was scheduled to last 30 minutes. At times, participants were very enthusiastic to share their opinions. Sometimes my research conversation extended beyond 30 minutes; however, participants expressed that they enjoyed talking with me. Only one participant seemed impatient and did not expand on the answers; however, I asked all interview questions. The interview was recorded in two ways. In addition to taping the conversation, I took notes during each interview. Since most of the participants could communicate well in Chinese, we conducted these interviews in Chinese. Only one participant preferred to speak in English. After the interview, I reviewed my notes and highlighted my findings.

Before the data could be analyzed, I checked my interview notes with taped conversations for accuracy, and then translated my interview notes into English and typed them on the computer. The interview transcripts were coded into three groups: faculty members (from participant #1 to participant #3), current students (from participant #4 to participant #12), and alumni (from participant #13 to participant #22). After reading the data, I coded significant features in a systematic fashion across the entire data set and gathered all data relevant to each

potential theme. The codes were then used to categorize and organize the data. Through the thematic analysis, responses from the interviews and questionnaires were categorized into three parts, based on the research questions: strengths, challenges, and improvement through the lens of Vygotsky's constructivism and ACTFL's standards. Responses were also compared among stakeholder groups: faculty members, current students, and alumni. For example, codes such as "program leadership," "faculty support," "cross-cultural adaptation," and "curriculum design" were grouped into the category of "current students' perceptions of strengths." Codes "program leadership," "network opportunities," and "job opportunities" were grouped into the category of "faculty members' perceptions of strengths." Codes "program leadership," "observation and student teaching," and "meeting diverse pre-service teachers' needs" were grouped into the category of "alumni's perceptions of strengths."

Next, selected categories, codes, and linked quotations were indexed into a number of matrices arranged by theme (e.g., "Program Strengths," "Program Challenges", and "Suggestions for program improvements"). In order to establish the validity of this study's data, I sent the transcripts to the participants for checking. After the participants' approval, I noted their responses in this study.

Summary of the Findings

Qualitative data collected from interviews with faculty members, current students, and alumni revealed several common threads. My analysis of research participants' responses consisted of coding the research findings by research questions. The findings in this chapter were organized into three themes: program strengths, program challenges, and suggestions for program improvement.

Under strengths, one of the common threads was the importance of the program leadership. The previous program director set the goals and mission, and the current program director employed a new strategy in recruiting students, cultivating the current students, and connecting the alumni with the program. Also, all stakeholder groups agreed that the program prepared pre-service teachers well for the job market for Chinese-language teachers. The program's curriculum design and supportive faculty helped pre-service teachers meet their needs and helped international pre-service teachers adapt to American culture. Finally, student observation and student teaching were considered as strengths by alumni and current students. Mentor teachers had a significant impact on these pre-service teachers by providing them with opportunities to make connection between constructivist theory and practice, where they make meaning of their learning.

As for challenges, faculty members considered recruiting suitable students for the program the biggest challenge. At the time of this study, they are targeting international students, especially students from China, instead of recruiting local students. For the current students who were from mainland China, their main issue was their lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting. Their whole educational experience had been in the Confucian context that is common in China. It took a while for them to transform their Confucian context teaching philosophy to the constructivist teaching belief prevalent in the United States. In addition, these current students from China faced the challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities since they were studying abroad for the first time. Alumni mentioned securing job opportunities as one of their challenges. The pre-service teachers, who were native English speakers, faced employers' discrimination; and international students faced the challenge of obtaining work permits.

In terms of suggestions, faculty members considered hiring an academic advisor or a counselor for students in this program and creating more new materials for Chinese-language teacher preparation, certification, and development. The current students preferred to attend more traditional face-to-face courses instead of online courses, so they would have more opportunities to interact with their instructors and peers. Alumni suggested that the center provide more Chinese language pedagogy courses in order to encourage and motivate students.

Presentation of the Data and Results

Presentation of data and results were organized into three categories: program strengths, program challenges, and suggestions for improvement, based on the perceptions from three stakeholder groups: faculty members, current students, and alumni. Each stakeholder group had its unique experiences in the program.

CCLTCD program strengths. Based on their experience in the program, three stakeholder groups shared their perceptions about program strengths.

Faculty's perceptions of strengths. I interviewed three faculty members, who had each been working for the center for more than five years. In addition to teaching the related courses, two faculty members were involved in administrative work in the program office and supporting the center's daily operation. They perceived program leadership and networking opportunities as strengths of the program.

Program leadership. All three faculty members agreed that the current program director has a long vision for this program and works toward the goal of increasing the number of certified Chinese-language teachers. She was hired to replace the previous leader when the program faced the challenge of recruiting students. According to the faculty members interviewed, her Chinese background, work experience of teaching Chinese language in

American schools, and familiarity with the American education system made her stand out among all candidates for the position of program director.

- Participant #1 shared,
The program director has paid great attention to what local schools demand and graduates' work opportunities. I am very impressed that the program director has a good relationship with students and alumni. She travels to a lot of local schools to collect information and pass information to students. Under her leadership, the program prepares students well for job interviews, and students are able to find jobs.
- Participant #2 stated, "The program meets diverse community's needs. The program director is very involved in promoting the program, not only in the local area, but also state-wide and nation-wide."
- Participant #3 shared,
In 2009, Hanban generously funded CCLTCD 440,000 US dollars to start its program. The center hired several well-known language experts to form a leadership core and identify the center's organizational structures, basic operational procedures, mission, and goals. The successor center leader follows the framework and continues to develop the program.

Network opportunities. The center provides a number of opportunities for students to enhance their teaching skills, adapt to the different cultures, and secure jobs. The network opportunities were identified as workshops and conferences. Students attended not only the workshops organized by the center, but also international and national conferences sponsored by the College Board, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and other organizations. The center's professional-development workshops invited well-known

language experts, college professors, as well as veteran classroom teachers. These opportunities met ACTFL program standard 6 for the preparation of foreign language teachers:

professionalism. These pre-service Chinese-language teachers engage in professional-development opportunities that strengthen their own linguistic and cultural competence and promote reflection on practice. In addition, the center's career development workshops broadened students' vision, helped them compose resumes, and prepare for job interviews.

- Participant #1 shared,

Students are encouraged to attend the center's own workshops. These workshops are free for them. They are also encouraged to attend big conferences, such as the ACTFL's Annual Convention and World Language Expos. These opportunities greatly helped students grow as a professional language teacher.

- Participant #2 commented,

The center also invited alumni to share their experiences online. These alumni are willing to provide more information from the teaching field and guide current students. The current students can learn from the alumni, and avoid some mistakes that may happen in their future classroom practice.

- Participant #3 mentioned one impact of network opportunities, "We are very proud of our program. With the networking opportunities our students can graduate and find jobs smoothly. The program graduation rate is 100%, and the graduate employment rate is also 100%."

Job opportunities. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a way for international students to acquire experience in the field. CPT allows international students to have a paid job while attending school (Hernandez, 2014). The international students from this program opt for CPT so

that they can work as Chinese-language tutors to gain experience before they become classroom teachers. Another way for international students to acquire experience in the field is Optional Practical Training (OPT). OPT allows for international students to gain a year of real-world experience working in their field of study after graduating. Since most students in this program were international students, the center helped them obtain both CPT and OPT opportunities. The staff in the center also prepared the students for writing their resumes, attending career fairs, and interviewing for positions.

Current students' perceptions of strengths. Nine current students identified themselves as second-year, full-time students enrolled in the program. All of them described themselves in the age group 20–29. Eight students received their undergraduate degrees in China and only two students had teaching experience before they enrolled in this program. One student, a native English speaker, received an undergraduate degree in the United States and had volunteer teaching experience in a heritage Chinese school. Their undergraduate majors included English literature, Chinese language, and administration management. They all described their experiences with the center's Chinese-language teacher preparation program as rewarding. Current students listed four strengths ranging from program leadership, faculty support, curriculum, and their experience in cross-cultural adaptation.

Program leadership. All nine current students agreed that the program leadership was a strength. The program director helped students resolve academic issues, evaluated their teaching performance, helped them build resumes and teaching portfolios, and supported them in their job search.

Participant #5 mentioned, “The program director works hard to promote this program. She has a strong connection with local schools. In addition, she helps us in career planning. She is a great leader who makes sure everyone in the program making progress.”

Faculty support. Eight current students considered faculty members as outstanding, professional, and dedicated to this program. Seven current students shared that faculty members were friendly and knowledgeable. Six current students mentioned that the faculty members provided students with practical learning opportunities. All current students appreciated faculty members’ pedagogical approach in delivering lessons. All courses but one were delivered in English. The course, Content Area Reading, was delivered in Chinese.

- Participant #4 recalled the first year she enrolled in the program, I was from China and English is my second language. I had difficulty in communication so that I was very shy to participate in discussion. Sometimes I struggled with understanding my professors’ lectures. With great patience, my professors paid attention to my communication problem. They always designed activities to let me be a part of the class. In addition, they frequently checked my comprehension and shared the class slides with me. Gradually I became more engaged in class discussions, and felt more confident in the classroom. If I had questions, I would ask my professors right away.
- Participant #6 also shared her first-year experience, stating, “At the beginning, I was not used to the classroom atmosphere. I seldom participated in discussion. However, my professors encouraged me to express my opinion. I have gratitude for my professors and this transformational experience.”

Curriculum design. Students have three options to choose a path in this program: master’s degree with certification, master’s degree without certification, or certification only.

Nine current students at the time of study chose the path of master's degree with certification. All students agreed that this program's curriculum helped them demonstrate language proficiency, understand linguistics, and identify language comparisons, which met ACTFL program standard 1 for the preparation of foreign-language teachers. The course, Content Area Reading, was taught in the Chinese language. The rest of the courses were delivered in English. All students mentioned the curriculum challenged their assumptions toward Chinese-language teaching and shed new light on learning and teaching.

- Participant #8, a native English speaker, mentioned,
I am impressed by the curriculum design. My Chinese level is not as good as my peers' abilities, so that I took two courses related to Chinese linguistics in order to improve my Chinese language skills. My professors and my peers are very supportive. There are great resources for learning Chinese language.
- Participant #9 shared,
The curriculum is current and intensive. In a short time, we learned a lot related to teaching philosophy, pedagogy for Chinese-language teaching, and educational psychology. Before I enrolled in this program, I had no idea what common core and five Cs mean.

Cross-cultural adaption. Students were from China and were familiar with Chinese-style classrooms, which followed a Confucian philosophy of education. Their strengths are their mastery of Chinese language and familiarity with Chinese culture, while their weakness lies in unfamiliarity with the U.S. schools. These pre-service teachers started their cross-cultural adaption from studying different courses. During their second year, they had opportunities to

observe American K–12 classrooms and developed a better understanding of diverse American classrooms.

All study participants agreed that this program helped them with cultural adjustment, and transition of their teaching styles from a Confucian context to a constructivist context. They also emphasized that they gained knowledge of the U.S. educational system and became familiar with constructivist approaches to teaching and learning through this program. They felt that they grew more professional and competent before they started their careers in the educational field.

- Participant #5 mentioned,

The courses we took helped us get to know the diversity of American classrooms and develop a student-centered mindset. In China, a classroom teacher is considered a subject-matter expert and a role model. Students need to show unconditional obedience towards their teachers. In American classrooms, the relationship between teachers and students is based on equality and collaboration. This program has changed my teaching philosophy fundamentally.

Alumni's perceptions of strengths. Alumni participants included 10 program graduates. All of them were currently teaching Chinese language in K–12 American schools. Six of them had teaching experience before they enrolled in this program. Four of them were in the age group 30–39. Six of them were in the age group 20–29. Two of them chose the certification-only path in the program because they had master's degrees before. All alumni participants considered that the program's strengths were program leadership, observation and student teaching, and meeting diverse pre-service teachers' needs.

Program leadership. All alumni agreed that the program has a strong leadership. Even after they graduated from the program, the program leaders kept contacting them frequently. Some alumni returned to school and provided program students real-life career mentorship.

- Participant #13 mentioned,

I was invited back to the center and had a presentation to current program students. I shared my job-seeking and teaching experience and answered questions from the current students. I enjoyed it very much. I think it is a great way to keep alumni connected to the program. I am grateful that the program leaders gave me such a good opportunity.

Observation and student teaching. CCLTCD develops a very close cooperation with state-wide K-12 schools. My study institution is located on the east coast, close to several metropolitan cities. Therefore, it is not difficult to locate observation and student-teaching opportunities for this program's students. In the last year of this program, all program students enroll in practicum courses, such as "Teaching Internship," in order to obtain constructivist teaching experience in an actual classroom. Instead of "translation and grammar" drills and teacher-directed lectures, these pre-service teachers learn to improve their instruction by conducting meaningful communication and using Chinese language at least 90% of the time in the classroom as ACTFL recommended (ACTFL, 2017). They obtain a variety of strategies to facilitate comprehension and make meaning clear. During the first semester of the last year in the program, each student is assigned to one type of school, for example, a middle school, to observe his or her mentor teacher's class. Then, during the second semester each student goes to another type of school, such as an elementary school, to conduct student teaching with a different mentor. Observing mentor teachers' classrooms not only allows the students to further understand the American education system, but also helps them understand the multi-faceted and

complex nature of Chinese teaching. During the period of observation and student teaching, every student has two mentors who provide ongoing instructional support for different grade levels. Mentors help these pre-service teachers grow and practice the profession of teaching. Study participants consistently shared comments about the valuable experiences they had with their mentors during observation and student teaching. These experiences included getting to know the school and classroom setting to plan lessons accordingly, delivering differentiated lessons, and using assessment models appropriately. Students were provided with opportunities to make the connection between constructivist theory and practice, so that they felt well-prepared for their future jobs.

Another example of the support that the program provides is when the director travels to the different local schools to evaluate these pre-service teachers' instruction. Observation and student teaching are under the supervision of the program director. Both mentors and the program director often identify areas where these pre-service teachers have shown improvement and where these pre-service teachers need to improve. Through observation and student teaching, these pre-service teachers apply language acquisition theories and learn how to create a supportive classroom and develop instructional practices for diverse learners, which met ACTFL program standards 3 and 4 for the preparation of foreign-language teachers.

- Participant #13 mentioned,

The first time when I was in an immersion classroom, I felt totally lost and I didn't know how to communicate with the kindergarten students, using 100% Chinese language. I began my classroom experience by observing experienced teachers. Through the observation, I understood the importance of setting up a learning Chinese-language environment. I collected the information on classroom management. Later, under the

guidance of my mentor, I learned how to prepare a lesson, how to give a lesson, and how to measure the students' growth. And very soon, I could take responsibility in the classroom. Student teaching allowed me to practice the instructional strategies that I have learned in my education courses.

- In addition, participant #15 shared,

I had work experience as a substitute teacher. I think that the best part of this program is observation. I went to an elementary school and a high school, and observed two Chinese-language teachers' classes. These teachers are so talented and knowledgeable. I gained a lot from observing these veteran teachers. During my student teaching, my mentor kept providing me feedback to help me grow professionally.

Meeting diverse pre-service teachers' needs. The pre-service teachers' backgrounds in this program were different from each other. The program director not only conducted interviews with each candidate before he or she enrolled in the program, but also scheduled the courses based on their experiences. Pre-service teachers who are native English speakers were advised to take one or two Chinese language courses to sharpen their Chinese linguistic proficiency.

- Participants #15 and #16, both native English speakers, mentioned that the program offered them opportunities to understand language-acquisition theories and cultural concepts.

- Participant # 19, without any experience in teaching, stated,

The course design was very reasonable, covering both theory and practice. Through learning in this program, I was transformed from a novice to a well-prepared classroom teacher. Professors taught me how to adapt second language acquisition research, methodologies, strategies, and technologies to help all Chinese language learners reach

their full second language potential. I also became familiar with the different settings of American schools, such as urban schools, charter schools, suburban schools, and immersion schools. I adjusted my teaching beliefs through observing my mentor's classes and teaching internship. The most important was that I understood how students learn and develop and I looked for the most appropriate but challenging ways to provide students Chinese language learning experience. To have a student-centered classroom has become my goal since I enrolled in this program.

- Participant #22, who was an international student, shared, “My English skill was not as good as other students; therefore, my enrollment was a special case. I added one undergraduate English course to enhance my English skills in the first year.”

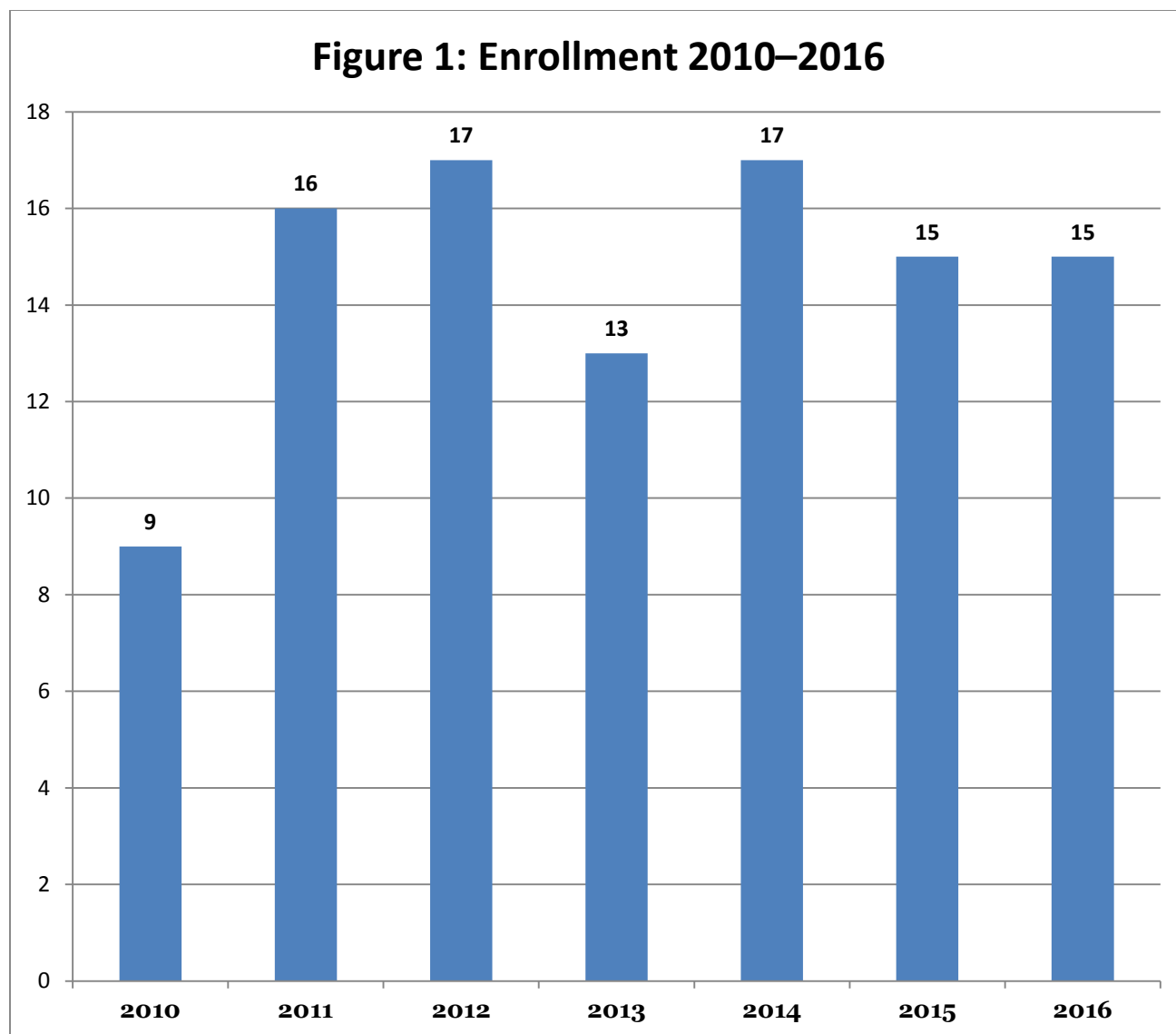
In addition, all alumni participants mentioned that the center offered them quite a few professional-development opportunities to experience the teaching field before they became classroom teachers. When they were still pre-service teachers, they attended school workshops and national conferences for Chinese-language teachers. These professional-development events were informative in helping them align their teaching to national standards. Furthermore, interacting with veteran teachers in the field also enhanced these pre-service teachers' effectiveness in instruction and assessment.

CCLTCD program challenges. Based on their experience in this program, three stakeholder groups shared their perceptions of program challenges.

Faculty's perceptions of challenges. Based on the goals for the center, faculty members considered recruiting suitable students for the program as the most significant challenge.

Although the archival data from the center reports that I later reviewed indicated that student enrollment has been stable for years (Figure 1), the faculty members mentioned that it is still

challenging to locate suitable potential students. They mentioned that the pre-service teachers who were in age group 30–39 and had previous teaching experience were generally more consistent and conscientious in fulfilling academic tasks. According to all of the faculty members interviewed, this group of pre-service teachers worked harder and demonstrated more responsibility than those in age group 20–29. Faculty members noticed that some students from age group 20–29 had trouble balancing their academic life and social life. When the deadline for turning in assignments was approaching, some students from age group 20–29 would copy each other's work. Participant #2 stressed that academic integrity should be one of the most important characteristics for a teacher.



Adapted from the CCLTCD Report on April, 2015 and interviews with faculty members.

- Participant #3, a faculty member, shared,

At the beginning of this program, with the funds from Hanban, we did not have pressure in enrollment. We could offer a lot of free workshops for students. In recent years, it is getting harder to recruit students. Instead of recruiting local students, we target international students, especially students from China. Those overseas students are from growing Chinese middle-class families and they always pay full tuition.

Current students' perceptions of challenges. For the current students who were from mainland China, their main issue was their lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting. Their whole educational experience had been in the Confucian context that is common in China. It took a while for them to transform their Confucian context teaching philosophy to the constructivist teaching belief prevalent in the United States. In addition, these current students from China faced the challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities since they were studying abroad for the first time.

International students' transition. Since eight current students were from mainland China, their main challenge was cross-cultural adaption. Furthermore, the concepts of students' privacy, rights and responsibilities, and student-centered pedagogy were difficult for these China-educated language teachers to understand and accept. Another challenge these pre-service teachers faced was, during their own learning phase, since they were studying abroad for the first time, they found it was difficult in finding a good place to live and finishing their coursework on time. Although they met the English language requirement when they enrolled in this program, they still had difficulty in English academic listening and writing.

- Participant #11, mentioned, "I was struggling with writing a long paper in English before the deadline. Since my undergraduate major was not education, I had to spend more time on digesting the reading materials and professors' notes."
- Participant #12 shared the same way,
It was very stressful when we started the teaching internship. I traveled to the elementary school and stayed there for a whole day. At night, I rushed back to the campus to take a course. Sometimes I had to stay up very late to finish my assignments. I struggled with time management all the time.

- Furthermore, participant #10, shared her stories during these years in the program, At the beginning, I struggled with a lot of new concepts which we discussed in the courses. For example, in an American school, teachers are requested to respect students' privacy, such as students' test scores. Teachers seldom scold students in the public even when students misbehave or fail a test. The parent-teacher conferences are always confidential too. I grew up in China, where individual students' test scores were usually posted in public. Another challenge for me is to find an inexpensive but safe place to stay. It is always a daunting task since I am not familiar with the surroundings. I have moved three times since I arrived here. Safety is my big concern.

Alumni's perceptions of challenges. Alumni considered securing job opportunities as one of their challenges. The pre-service teachers who were native English speakers, mentioned that they faced employers' apparent discrimination; and international students faced the challenge of obtaining work permits. Three alumni also mentioned taking substitute instructors' lesson as painful experiences. Moreover, two alumni thought some courses was repetitious and impractical.

Faculty. Some faculty members were absent from their classes frequently due to conferences or other schedule conflicts. They had their assistants to substitute for them in the classroom. Since these substitutes lacked teaching experience, students found their lessons to be less effective than lectures by faculty members.

- Participant #14 mentioned, Sometimes when faculty members were too busy, they would let their doctoral students teach the class. For me, it was a painful experience, since most of these doctoral students

had no teaching experiences. They only knew how to teach theories, which were very boring. I prefer more practical lessons, so I can be more engaged in the classroom.

Curriculum. The alumni from China, though they were already fluent in speaking Chinese, felt that they were inadequately trained in the pedagogical skills necessary to teach Chinese effectively. There were no specific courses to teach these pre-service teachers how to teach the specifics of tone or Chinese characters. Pronunciation and character learning often have the most difficult process for students learning Chinese (Wu, 2009). Participants #17 and #20 stated that the presentation of theories in some courses was repetitious and impractical. Chinese-language pedagogy was underdeveloped so that the alumni found it a challenge to present Chinese language and culture for their English-speaking students when they started teaching.

Job opportunities. The alumni who were from China faced the reality that if they wished to remain in the United States to teach after graduation, they needed to obtain work visas. In the interviews, all of them expressed interest in teaching in immersion programs, which usually are for K–6 students. The reason for their interest is not only the increasing employment opportunities in immersion programs, but also because the stability of these jobs means that the employers are more likely to sponsor teachers for work visas. Usually, international students apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) in order to stay in the U.S. legally. OPT allows for international students to gain a year of real-world experience working in their field of study after graduating (Hernandez, 2014).

These alumni provided their thoughts frankly that because of visa concerns, they would choose to teach in an immersion program instead of in a high school classroom even if they preferred to teach at the high school level. In order to obtain permission to work in the U. S. legally, they have to be practical, and consider which job would help them secure a work permit.

- Participant #21, who is an immersion classroom teacher now, shared her experience, Since most of my classmates enrolled in the CCLTCD program were from mainland China, we need our employers to sponsor our work visa, which is H-1B visa. When you work in an immersion program, the employer is more likely continue to hire you since the Chinese immersion program keeps growing.

On the contrary, for the pre-service teachers who were American citizens, they did not need to worry about work permission. Therefore, they could choose any kind of school in which they were interested. However, for these pre-service teachers, they mentioned that they faced the challenge of the employers' discrimination. When they applied for teaching Chinese in K-12 schools, the employers always considered the native Chinese speakers first. The employers thought that these native English speakers understood the dynamics of American classrooms; however, they lacked depth of knowledge in Chinese language and culture. Therefore, they might encounter a harder time finding employment.

- Participant #15, a native English speaker, shared his job-seeking experience, I studied Chinese language in college, and then went to China for further education. Right now I am working for a public high school. When I was looking for employment, I encountered the discrimination. A couple of times when I had the phone interview with the employers, I was asked to state my ethnicity. I think, they should not ask this kind of question. I am a Caucasian and I have my advantages in teaching Chinese language. Compared to Chinese-language teachers who are native speakers, I know American school culture better, how American students study Chinese, and what kind of difficulties American students will go through in learning Chinese. However, from my job-seeking experience, I can tell the employers prefer to hire native Chinese speakers.

Suggestions for CCLTCD program improvements. The stakeholder participants provided a few suggestions, based on their different experiences within the CCLTCD program.

Faculty's suggestions. Based on the goals for the center, faculty members considered that the program has been effective in increasing the number of certified Chinese-language teachers, enhancing teacher preparation, and exposing the community to Chinese-language teaching and learning through events, workshops, and seminars. However, they thought the program should have created more new materials needed for Chinese-language teacher preparation, certification, and development. New materials include new textbooks about pedagogical tools, lesson designs, classroom activities for different age groups, and assessment tools for different language levels.

Two faculty participants suggested hiring an academic advisor or a counselor for students in this program. The program director was responsible for recruiting students, academic advising, career mentoring, and teaching reading content.

Participant #1 commented,

With more and more international students enrolled in this program, it would be better to add a new administration position. The new staff would reduce the current work load of the program director and support international students in their transition to a new environment.

Current students' suggestions. The program provided online courses throughout the year. Although online courses provide students with flexibility to work on the coursework during winter break or summer break, seven out of nine current students still prefer to attend face-to-face courses, which can provide them more hands-on activities. Participant #7 stated,

The tuition of online courses is the same as face-to-face courses. I prefer to go to the classroom and interact with my professors and classmates in person. Traditional classroom atmosphere enhances the possibility to build good relationships with them. I am more engaged in course content in a traditional classroom.

Alumni's suggestions. Alumni provided some suggestions on curriculum improvements.

Curriculum improvements. Alumni suggested that the center should provide students with more opportunities to improve their learning experiences. Curriculum should be more practical and updated. Participants #17 and #20 shared their opinions that the theories in some courses were repetitious; therefore, they thought that refining the course selection was necessary.

Another finding was that alumni stated that current curriculum emphasized practice more than theory. Pre-service teachers from this program had taken only generic language-methods courses, not one targeted to Chinese. Therefore, they had few opportunities to learn how to teach specific Chinese linguistic features. Chinese language has four very disconcerting aspects for the English-speaking learner to master-tones, the system of particles and verb complements, the large number of homophones, and reading and writing characters (Orton, 2011). Alumni suggested that it would be a good idea for these pre-service teachers to learn more innovative pedagogical tools in order to encourage and motivate their future students. Alumni also mentioned that the order of the courses should be clear.

- As participant #19 shared,

I am a native Chinese speaker and I used to teach Chinese the way I was taught Chinese when I was a young student back in China. However, it was not appropriate to teaching American students Chinese the same way. Therefore, Chinese-language pedagogy should

be introduced in details, for example, how to introduce Chinese characters to American students and how to teach American students Chinese-character writing.

- Participant #18 mentioned,

It would be more helpful if the advisor had explained to me why I should take this course first and that course afterwards. For example, I chose course A and then course B. Later I found, it would be easier for me to handle these two courses if I chose course B ahead of course A.

Alumni also mentioned that examples or scenarios in the courses always targeted immersion programs. Although most of the program graduates will go to teach Chinese in immersion schools, some graduates still work in regular high schools. These alumni suggested that the curriculum should target both environments.

Chapter 4 Summary

In this study, I recruited 22 voluntary stakeholder participants, including faculty members, current students, and alumni. Each participant completed a questionnaire and an informed-consent form before the interview session. Twenty-one interviews were conducted in Chinese, and then the interview notes were translated into English. The interview transcripts were separated into the three stakeholder groups (faculty members, current students, and alumni) and transcripts in each set were coded together first. Through the thematic analysis, responses from the interviews and questionnaires were organized into three parts, based on the research questions: program strengths, program challenges, and suggestions for improvement through the lens of Vygotsky's constructivism (1978) and ACTFL's standards (2013).

As for program strengths, one of the common threads was the importance of the program leadership. Also, all stakeholder groups agreed that the program prepared pre-service teachers

well for the job market. The reasonable curriculum design and supportive faculty helped pre-service teachers meet their needs and adapted to different cultures. Finally, student observation and student teaching were considered as strengths by alumni and current students to make the connection between constructivist theory and practice.

In term of challenges, faculty members considered recruiting suitable students for the program the most significant challenge. The current students who were from mainland China considered that their main issue was their lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting. In addition, during their own learning phase, they faced the challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities since they were studying abroad for the first time.

The stakeholders' suggestions included (a) hiring an academic advisor or a counselor for students in this program; (b) creating more new materials for Chinese-language teacher preparation, certification, and development; (c) offering more traditional face-to-face courses instead of online courses; and (d) providing more Chinese language pedagogy courses.

In Chapter 5, these findings will be discussed more thoroughly and deeply: how the results relate to the community of practice and how the results relate to the literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program in an east-coast state. Questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data from program stakeholders: faculty members, current students, and alumni. Data were collected and analyzed in order to answer three research questions:

RQ1. From the view of stakeholders, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program, offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD), address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom?

RQ2. What do the stakeholders consider to be strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program?

RQ3. What do the stakeholders recommend for improving the quality of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013)?

The research questions also focused on if and how successfully this program has trained pre-service teachers to lead standards-based and learner-centered classrooms, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards (ACTFL, 2013) for preparing of foreign language teachers.

This chapter includes four sections. First, I will present the results of this study derived from Chapter 4, which were organized into three categories: program strengths, program

challenges, and suggestions for improvement. Second, I will discuss the findings of this study which were organized by the three research questions. Furthermore, my personal insight and interpretation of the findings will be provided to connect the results with the community of practice and literature. The final section describes limitations of this study and opportunities for future research.

Summary of the Results

Qualitative research is an approach to inquiry that begins with assumptions, an interpretive/theoretical lens, and the study of research problems exploring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013). The research design of this study was program evaluation. Participants in this study included three groups of stakeholders: faculty members, current students, and alumni, all of whom have unique experiences. In the qualitative research process, the participants' meanings can provide a variety of perspectives on a topic (Creswell, 2013). Data from questionnaires and interviews with participants were collected to answer three research questions. I will present the common themes within and across participant groups.

Under strengths, one of the common threads was the importance of the program leadership. Also, all stakeholder groups agreed that the program prepared pre-service teachers well for the job market for Chinese-language teachers since the graduate employment rate was 100%, based on the interviews with the faculty members. The program's curriculum design and supportive faculty helped pre-service teachers meet their needs and helped international pre-service teachers adapt to American culture. Finally, student observation and student teaching were considered as strengths by alumni and current students. Mentor teachers had a significant impact on these pre-service teachers by providing them with opportunities to make the

connection between constructivist theory and practice, where they make meaning of their learning. The practical classroom experience that they gained included using Chinese language at least 90% of the time in the classroom, selecting appropriate authentic texts, and incorporating technology in the instruction and assessment.

As for challenges, faculty members considered recruiting suitable students for the program the most significant challenge. At the time of this study, they were targeting international students, especially students from China, instead of recruiting domestic students. For the current students who were from mainland China, their main issue was their lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting. In addition, these current students from China faced the challenges of limited English competency, time management, and balance between studying and leisure activities since they were studying abroad for the first time. Alumni mentioned securing job opportunities as one of their challenges. The pre-service teachers, who were native English speakers, faced employers' discrimination; and international students faced the challenge of obtaining work permits.

In terms of suggestions, faculty members considered hiring an academic advisor or a counselor for students in this program and creating more new materials for Chinese-language teacher preparation, certification, and development. The current students preferred to attend more traditional face-to-face courses instead of online courses, so they would have more opportunities to interact with their instructors and peers. Alumni suggested that the center provide more Chinese language pedagogy courses in order to encourage and motivate their students. And the order of the courses should be clear so that students will not experience unnecessary repetition.

Discussion of the Results

Discussion in this section will relate the findings to the three research questions, and Interpretation will be given to these findings. Since the results from this study can be used to make recommendations for other institutions to build similar Chinese-language teachers training programs, I will also address the issue of how teacher preparation programs should be designed most effectively to prepare pre-service Chinese-language teachers equipped to teach in a standards-based and student-centered classroom.

Program addresses needs. Research Question 1: From the view of stakeholders, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program, offered by the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD), address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom?

The findings of this study showed that 22 of 22 participants agreed this program has addressed the pre-service teachers' needs and has trained them to lead standards-based and student-centered classrooms. All study participants agreed that this program helped these pre-service teachers with cultural adjustment, and transition of their teaching styles from a Confucian context to a constructivist context. Students were recruited domestically and internationally with different educational backgrounds. Based on their unique experience, these teacher candidates received guidance on which elective courses to select. International students took some English courses to improve their English-language proficiency and sharpen their written and oral communication skills, while native English speakers took more Chinese-related courses to improve their linguistic and cultural competency. Both stakeholder groups, current students and alumni, mentioned that they benefited from the courses "Content Area Reading" and "Methods,"

which were taught by knowledgeable and supportive faculty members. This intensive curriculum enhanced their understanding of American school settings, American students' development, and national standards in teaching foreign languages.

Besides learning educational theories and methods, all pre-service teachers were required to take a two-semester "teaching internship." They obtained first-hand experience through observing veteran teachers' classrooms and student teaching. Mentor teachers guided them step by step in lesson planning, instruction, and assessment. In addition, the program director followed them to different schools and evaluated their performance. During this teaching internship, these pre-service teachers received a clear picture of what a standards-based and student-centered classroom looks like. They started to learn how to apply constructivist theory into a Chinese learning classroom in order to establish a student-centered learning environment instead of teacher-dominated model. They were trained to use more meaningful tasks and activities that would involve their students in authentic communication in Chinese, such as exchanging email with pen pals in China and talking with Chinese guest teachers. They also learned how to design performance assessment tasks based on national standards.

Program strengths and challenges. Research Question 2: What do the stakeholders consider to be strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program?

Participants mentioned these areas as program strengths: (a) program leadership; (b) curriculum design; (c) faculty quality; (d) observation and student teaching. The previous program director set the goals and mission, and the current program director employed a new strategy in recruiting students, cultivating the current students, and connecting the alumni with the program. All current students and alumni mentioned that the program director helped them

resolve academic issues, evaluated their teaching performance, helped them build resumes and teaching portfolios, and supported them in their job search.

Courses offered by experienced and supportive faculty members were considered another crucial element of this program. The students enrolled in this program had different educational backgrounds and work experience. Based on their needs, they could choose different elective courses. International teacher candidates mentioned that patient faculty members guided them through the rigorous curriculum and encouraged them to participate in classroom discussion. These teacher candidates with limited English competency at the beginning of enrollment all became more and more confident with their English communication skills and teaching strategies through studying in this program.

Participants also pointed out these areas as program challenges: (a) enrollment; (b) international students' transition; (c) job opportunities. As for challenges, faculty members considered recruiting suitable students for the program the most significant challenge. At the time of this study, they targeted international students, especially students from China, instead of recruiting domestic students, as international students usually pay full tuition. Faculty members explained their concept of "suitable" teacher candidates includes multiple demographics: ages, education background, length of experiences in education and so on. They defined the best candidates as those with the talent and drive to complete the program. During interviews, faculty members further mentioned that teacher candidates in the age group 30–39 with working experience were generally more successful upon enrollment in the program. The strengths of the candidate teachers along with the cultural resources that they brought in the form of competencies, skills, attitudes, divergent knowledge, and alternative ways of thinking to American schools should be considered as a resource rather than a deficit (Cho, 2010; Luxon &

Peelo, 2009). At the time of this study, for the current students who were from mainland China, their significant issue was their lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting. In addition, during their own learning phase, they faced the challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities, since they were studying abroad for the first time. The pre-service teachers who were domestic students and native English speakers did not experience difficult phases in the transition to this program compared to international students. They faced the challenges of demonstrating a high level of language proficiency and understanding Chinese culture better.

Although faculty members interviewed shared that the program graduate employment rate was 100%, both current students at the time of the study and alumni expressed concern about job opportunities. The pre-service teachers who were native English speakers face employers' discrimination; and international students face the challenge of obtaining work permits. It was not too difficult to find a job due to a great demand for Chinese-language teachers; however, some pre-service teachers who were from China prefer to teach in high school, because of their visa status, they would rather choose to teach in K–3 immersion schools. International students are a positive work force for the United States (Jischke, as cited in Dixon, 2014). Under the current policy, if schools for which these Chinese-language teachers work do not sponsor them to obtain work visas, they would have to enroll a new program to study or return their home country (Er, 2017).

Suggestions for program improvements. Research Question 3. What do the stakeholders recommend for improving the quality of the Chinese-language teacher-certification program, based on Vygotsky's constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) theory, and the American

Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages program standards (ACTFL, 2013) for preparing of foreign language teachers?

In terms of suggestions, faculty members mentioned that the CCLTCD should hire an academic advisor or a counselor for students in this program and create more new materials for Chinese-language teacher preparation, certification, and development. Based on the interview with faculty members, at the time of this study, the program targeted recruiting international students, especially students from China; therefore, the number of international students enrolled in this program has increased significantly. Faculty members suggested that more student services were needed to ensure international students succeed academically, such as a writing center, English tutors, career guidance, and so on. The current students preferred to attend more traditional face-to-face courses instead of online courses, so they would have more opportunities to interact with their instructors and peers. Alumni suggested that the curriculum should target teaching Chinese in both immersion schools and non-immersion schools and a systematic sequence of courses should be established. Alumni also suggested that that the center provide more Chinese-language pedagogy courses in order to encourage and motivate American students.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

The results of this study related to the literature is discussed in this section. The discussion will focus on two areas of how the results relate to the literature and also how they relate to the community. The implications of these practical and academic connections will be expanded and discussed in greater specificity in the next section.

Vygotsky argued that learning is most effective when learners collaborate with one another in a supportive learning environment under the careful guidance of a teacher (Vygotsky,

1978, as cited in Kellouch & Carjuzaa, 2009). Current students and alumni mentioned that the program's courses provided them theoretical foundation of Vygotsky's constructivism, and teaching internship further proved that it was crucial to implement the constructivism theory in their teaching classrooms.

Before the interview, all participants were encouraged to read the CCLTCD's (2009) mission statement and goals (See Appendix B). Based on the interviews with all participants, evidence showed that the program has reached the following goals: (a) to increase the number of state-certified Chinese-language teachers; (b) to enhance teacher preparation and further development of greater numbers of excellent teachers in Chinese language and culture; and (c) to expose the university campus and the community to Chinese language teaching and learning through events, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars. Therefore, the evidence collected in this study showed that this Chinese-language teacher-certification program offered by the CCLTCD was effective in the preparation, licensure, and professional development of Chinese-language teachers. However, study participants mentioned that more work should be done to create new materials needed for Chinese language teacher preparation, certification, and development.

All participants were also encouraged to read the ACTFL program standards for preparing of foreign language teachers (ACTFL, 2013), which have become an established measure of what determines an effective and innovative model of foreign language teacher education (Huhn, 2012). ACTFL program standards consist of six areas (See Appendix C):

Standard 1: Language, Linguistics, Comparisons

Standard 2: Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts

Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices

Standard 4: Integration of Standards into Curriculum and Instruction

Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures

Standard 6: Professionalism

Based on interviews, there was evidence, presented in Chapter 4, to show this Chinese-language teacher-certification program had met Standards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. All pre-service teachers who participated in this study agreed that this program's curriculum and professional-development workshops helped them demonstrate language proficiency, understand linguistics and culture, and identify language comparisons, which met ACTFL Program Standards 1 and 2 for the preparation of foreign-language teachers. Moreover, through two-semester observation and student teaching, these pre-service teachers apply language acquisition theories and learn how to create a supportive classroom and develop instructional practices and assessments based on standards for diverse learners, which met ACTFL Program Standards 3 and 4 for the preparation of foreign-language teachers. In addition, through lesson plans and samples of formative and summative assessments that participants shared with me, participants demonstrated the integration of culture and content from other disciplines into Chinese language lessons, and the knowledge of assessment models. The evidence collected in this study showed that the program followed ACTFL Program Standard 5. Lastly, the center provides a number of opportunities, such as workshops organized by the center and international conferences, for students to enhance their teaching skills, adapt to the different cultures, connect to the Chinese-teaching field, and secure job opportunities. These opportunities met ACTFL Program Standard 6 for the preparation of foreign language teachers: professionalism.

Limitations

Throughout this study, there were limitations. The first limitation was the sample size. Some stakeholders declined to participate in the study. I contacted 45 potential participants by

email, and received 22 completed questionnaires and informed-consent forms. This study was based on the interviews with these 22 participants and other documents from the CCLTCD. There were three faculty members who participated in this study and four male participants. The rather small and specific sample size may not generalize the perspectives of all stakeholders who were related to this program. The second limitation is that sample only came from one state. The third limitation is the fact that the sample did not fully represent equal numbers from different genders. Males might have different opinions on the same experience.

Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

Since the year of 2000, Chinese-language programs in K–12 schools have been increasing rapidly in the United States and the significant issue in the development of Chinese-language programs is lack of highly qualified Chinese-language teachers (Ke & Li, 2011; Li, 2008; Orton, 2011; Wen, 2011). This study was intended to evaluate the effectiveness of a Chinese-language teacher education program offered by the CCLTCD. Furthermore, this study result may be used by other colleges as a reference to build or develop similar Chinese-language educators' training programs.

A clear vision and long-term commitment are vital for the success of a Chinese-language teacher education program, so the program leadership is crucial. The methods courses, offered by experienced and supportive faculty members, provided pre-service Chinese-language teachers with theoretical knowledge in creating a standards-based and a student-centered classroom. Pre-service teachers benefited from the topics covered in methods courses, such as classroom management, target language input, communicative language teaching, Chinese-language pedagogical tools, and the incorporation of technology into lesson planning and instructional delivery. Moreover, teaching internships provided these pre-service teachers with opportunities

to become familiar with different classroom settings, such as different grade levels and immersion and non-immersion classrooms.

According to Ingold and Wang (2010), an effective world language teacher should possess these competencies: language proficiency, linguistic competency, cultural knowledge, knowledge of second language acquisition and learner development, and pedagogical skills appropriate to the setting in which they will be teaching. All of the pre-service teachers who participated in this study stated that this program had successfully trained them to possess these competencies. An increased selectivity in recruiting candidates for the Chinese-language teacher education program will help the students who enroll succeed in the rigorous training program. In the long run, these candidates with strong pedagogical content knowledge and ability to differentiate instruction based on students' learning needs will be more effective Chinese-language teachers.

These international students face challenges of language and cultural barriers, and academic culture adjustment. A system of support, which includes program director, counselors, and experienced student advisors, is recommended to address any questions and concerns from program students. At the beginning of the program, the orientation meeting should provide students with more information regarding safety issues, housing recommendations, and a campus student-support system. A writing center with writing experts should be available for these international students as they progress through courses and the whole program. Then, this program's students would understand how to reach out for academic support and how to reduce the stress of the transition process.

Since these pre-service teachers are entering the K–12 American schools to teach Chinese, their English-language proficiency needs to improve. The study participants mentioned

they were timid in participating in the classroom discussion due to lack of communication skills. My suggestions for the program to improve these pre-service teachers' English skills in a short time include encouraging them: (a) to participate in more activities inside and outside of the classroom; (b) to become tutors for native English speakers; and (c) to volunteer in college events.

With the development of Chinese-language programs in the United States, the program should also look for more domestic students instead of international students. Students enrolled in high school or college Chinese classes should be strongly encouraged to consider a career as a Chinese-language teacher (Dretzke & Jordan, 2010). Under the current policy, one obvious advantage that these domestic students have is that they already have permission to work in the United States. Unlike international students, they can choose their preferred schools to work without worrying whether they can get sponsorship from their employers. Based on interviews, international students would likely choose to work in immersion schools (K–6) and teach elementary students, since these schools usually are willing to offer sponsorship for work permits.

For these pre-service teachers who are native English speakers, Chinese language and culture courses should be developed to enhance their Chinese-language proficiency in all areas of communication and broaden their knowledge of the diverse cultures in the Chinese-speaking world. Ongoing assessments are needed to examine these pre-service teachers' level of language proficiency and culture acquisition in order to help them be successful in continuing learning rather than staying on a plateau. They also should have opportunities to participate in a study-abroad program in the Chinese-speaking world or intensive immersion program in a Chinese-speaking community.

Duff (2008) mentioned that native Chinese teachers should not import first language Chinese literacy education to an American second language classroom, because it won't work. According to the findings of the study, my suggestions in curriculum improvement include: (a) offering traditional face-to-face courses instead of online courses; (b) having faculty members deliver all instruction instead of sometimes relying on teacher assistant substitutes; (c) offering more courses with updated research results and current instructional approaches; (d) building a sequence of courses systematically so that students will not experience unnecessary repetition; (e) offering Chinese pedagogical courses.

Career prospects are a major concern for international students studying at U.S. higher education institutions (Loo, 2016). The pre-service Chinese-language teachers who participated in this study mentioned that they have benefited from two short-term work authorization options, the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Program and The Optional Practical Training (OPT) Program. The CPT Program enables them to seek work or internships related to Chinese teaching during coursework, while the OPT Program allows them to stay in the United States while they pursue part-or full-time work related to Chinese-language education for 12 months immediately after the end of program. The longer-term work authorization for international students is the H1-B visa, which is a temporary, three-year work permit with employer sponsorship (Loo, 2016). If these pre-service teachers' employers do not offer them sponsorship to obtain H1-B visas beyond OPT, they have to enroll in a new program of study or return to their home country (Er, 2017). For better retention and recruitment, I suggest that strategies in helping these international students should include: (a) supporting them in preparing for resume-writing, career fairs, and job interviews; (b) establishing a network of employers who are willing to hire

international students and know how to process immigration requirements; and (c) preparing them to go to teach in immersion schools first as the first step in their profession.

Although the pre-service teachers who are native English speakers do not have the challenge of work permits, they do face employers' discrimination. In the experience of the native English speakers who participated in this study, employers were interested in hiring native Chinese speakers as Chinese-language teachers. The native English speakers had to submit their job application to many schools, but only got a few interview opportunities. Most likely, they would be hired when there was no native Chinese speaker applying. Besides licensure and workshop certifications, these native English speakers can demonstrate their language, linguistic, and cultural competency by evidence, such as living in a Chinese-speaking community for one semester or majoring in Chinese Literature. These teacher candidates need to prove their abilities in order to reduce the prejudice against them in job markets.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a Chinese-language teacher education program. Although there were areas that need to improve, evidence showed that the Chinese-language teacher-certification program of the CCLTCD at the study university in an east-coast state was a successful program to prepare potential Chinese-language teachers for American K–12 schools; however, there are some recommendations for further research in the future.

This program's graduates were working for different kinds of schools across the nation. According to their questionnaires, the alumni that I interviewed at the time of the study taught at five different kinds of schools: (a) public elementary immersion schools; (b) public elementary non-immersion schools; (c) private elementary schools; (d) public middle schools (including junior highs school and senior high schools), and (e) private middle schools. It would be a new

opportunity for researchers to follow these graduates to see how long they will teach Chinese at K–12 American schools. According to the faculty members interviewed, the program graduate employment rate was 100% at the time of this study; however, after five years, what is the job status of these graduates? Are they still teaching Chinese at K–12 American schools? What is the retention rate in the profession of teaching Chinese? How do they perform in the classroom? Are immigration laws preventing them from continuing their jobs in the United States? Further research is needed to follow up on the graduates from this program to examine how novice teachers gain expertise in the profession. I recommend these topics for future research, which may add more insight to Chinese-language teaching and Chinese-language teacher preparation. As for the research design, besides the qualitative data, future research may collect quantitative data to explore the job-readiness of the program graduates. Participants receive teacher-competency surveys twice, at the time when they enroll in this program and before they graduate. Participants will conduct self-evaluation to examine to what degree they have obtained the skills through this program in areas of language proficiency, cultural competency, linguistic ability, classroom management, educational theories and so on.

Conclusion

This study was designed for the purpose of evaluating the Chinese-language teacher-certification program offered by the CCLTCD. Evidence showed that CCTCD's program successfully addressed potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and helped them develop a standards-based and student-centered classroom. Participants mentioned these areas as program strengths: (a) program leadership, (b) curriculum design, (c) faculty quality, and (d) observation and student teaching. Participants also pointed out these areas as program challenges: (a) enrollment, (b) international students' transition, and (c) job opportunities. However, the

suggestions for improvement for the program were: (a) student service advisors, (b) more practical courses, and (c) more Chinese language pedagogy courses.

As a newly emerging field, the research on Chinese-language teacher preparation and development programs in higher education is very limited (Wang, Moloney, & Li, 2013). A literature search through education databases, such as ProQuest and Eric, revealed no existing analysis of the effectiveness of Chinese-language teacher preparation programs in the United States. Key words that were used to identify related literature included: Chinese-language teachers, teaching Chinese as second language, Chinese-language teacher training, and Chinese-language teacher preparation program. Therefore, although the study was limited in a sample size of 22 participants, it was meaningful and significant in filling the gap of research in Chinese-language teacher preparation programs. I discovered what the overall experiences and challenges were for pre-service Chinese-language teachers and the basic training required for them and what training they would find useful to do their work better. Moreover, this study also targeted the third type of Chinese-language teachers, native English speakers, and provided insights in how to prepare them to be successful in their Chinese-language teaching careers. A literature search through education database revealed, in the past, most research has targeted Chinese guest teachers and heritage teachers and few research studies have mentioned the third type of Chinese-language teacher, native English speakers who have studied Chinese in high school and college in the United States. Suggestions for pre-service Chinese-language teachers to secure job opportunities and remain in the profession were mentioned. Future research is recommended to follow up on this program's graduates, which may add more insight to Chinese-language teaching and Chinese-language teacher preparation.

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Appendix A: Initial Recruitment Email/ Invitation Letter

Dear friend,

My name is Ning Zhang. I am a doctoral candidate at Concordia University-Portland working on my dissertation research. I am also a full time Chinese-language classroom teacher working in [Researcher's school site] in Ohio. I am writing to you to invite you to participate in my dissertation study.

The purpose of my study will be to determine the strengths and challenges of the Chinese-language teacher certification program at this university as an opportunity of development and improvement. The results from this study can be used to make recommendations to the educational leaders at the study school regarding whether their program needs to be modified. Colleges in other states, including Ohio where I am teaching now, can benefit from my research result if they want to build similar programs for training Chinese-language educators. I hope that colleges in other states will use the information to build and improve their Chinese-language teacher preparation program.

If you choose to participant, you will be asked to complete a participant questionnaire and an informed consent form before the interview session. To complete a participant questionnaire will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. I will email you the interview schedule and you can pick a time as your convenience. During the interview, I will ask your opinion towards the Chinese-language teacher certification program. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and will be audio-recorded. Your participation is completely voluntary and your identity will remain confidential.

If you would like to participant in this study, please reply to this email. If you have any questions, please contact me at [Researcher's email redacted]. You may also contact my

dissertation chair, Dr. Barbara Weschke at [Dissertation chair's email redacted]. Thank you in advance for your support.

Best regards,

Ning Zhang

[Researcher's email redacted]

[Researcher's phone number redacted]

Appendix B: The CCLTCD Mission Statement and Goals

The mission statement for the CCLTCD is as below:

The mission of the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development is to set a national and international standard of excellence for Chinese language teacher preparation, certification, and further development.

(<http://www.education.umd.edu/TLPL/programs/CCLTCD/>)

The goals for the CCLTCD are

1. To increase the number of state-certified Chinese language teachers;
2. To enhance teacher preparation and further development of greater numbers of excellent teachers in Chinese language and culture;
3. To create new materials as needed for Chinese language teacher preparation, certification, and development;
4. To expose the university campus and the community to Chinese language teaching and learning through events, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars.

Appendix C:

ACTFL Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers

Standard 1: Language, Linguistic, and Comparison

Demonstrating language proficiency

Understanding linguistics

Identifying language comparisons

Standard 2: Cultures, Literatures, and Cross-Disciplinary Concepts

Demonstrating cultural understandings

Demonstrating understanding of literary and cultural texts and traditions integrating other disciplines in instruction

Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices

Understanding language acquisition theories and creating a supportive classroom

Developing instructional practices that reflect language outcomes and learner diversity

Standard 4: Integration of Standards into Curriculum and Instruction

Understanding and integrating standards in planning integrating standards in instruction

Selecting and designing instructional materials

Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures

Knowing assessment models and using them appropriately

Reflecting an assessment

Reporting assessment results

Standard 6: Professionalism

Engaging in professional development

Knowing the value of foreign language learning

Appendix D: Participant Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my project of evaluation the Chinese-language teacher certification program of the Center for Chinese Language Teacher Certification and Development (CCLTCD). Colleges in other states, including Ohio where I am teaching now, can benefit from the research result if they want to build similar programs for training Chinese-language educators. This questionnaire will help me identify your role in this program evaluation. I am collecting demographic information to understand the demographic make-up of this program's faculty, students, and other stakeholder groups. Your name and identifying information will not be disclosed in my project. **Please note that you are under no obligation to participate in this study.**

1. What is your role in the CCLTCD Chinese-language teacher certification program? (Please choose all the answers that apply to you)
 - a. Faculty
 - b. Current student
 - c. Alumni

2. How long have you been a part of the CCLTCD Chinese-language teacher certification program? (Current students: how many years are you in this program? Alumni: how many years have you been in this program? Administrators and faculty: how many years are you employed with this program? External stakeholders: how many years are you affiliated with this program?)
 - a. 1–2 years
 - b. 3–4 years
 - c. 4–5 years

d. More than 5 years

3. Demographic Information: gender (check one)

a. Female

b. Male

4. Demographic Information: I am (check one)

a. Asian/Pacific Islander

b. African American

c. Native American

d. White/Caucasian

e. Hispanic

The following questions are only for students and alumni:

5. Students and alumni, choose one answer that best fits.

a. I am a native or heritage speaker of Chinese

b. I am a native English speaker

6. Students and alumni: Did you receive any financial aid in order to enroll this program?

a. Yes

b. No

7. Students and alumni: are you currently employed in any Chinese-language teaching workforce or any job related in Chinese-language teaching (for example, Chinese material publishers, etc.)?

a. Yes

b. No

8. Students and alumni: If you answered “yes” on question 7, please indicate your job title and a one-sentence description of your job (for example, ages or grades of children you work with, your role in your job, etc.).

Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Thank you for your time in sharing your perspective about the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program. The following questions will be discussed. Please allow me to audio record as well as to take notes during today's interview. Please note that I will keep your identity confidential. Please also note that you are under no obligation to participate in this study.

1. Please tell me your name and describe your affiliation with CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program.
2. What were your first impressions of CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program?
3. How would you describe your experience with the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program? Why?
4. From your point of view, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program offered by the CCLTCD address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standard-based and student-centered classroom?
5. What are the program's strength? What are the program's challenges?

For current students and alumni: Does this program help you enhance your Chinese-language ability and skills? Does this program help you develop instructional practices to build a student-centered classroom? Does this program guide you to know assessment models and use them appropriately?

For administrators and faculty members: How does this program meet all students' needs? How do you choose the workshop presenter?

For alumni's employer: Does alumni make contributes in your school? Does alumni show confidence in building a student-centered classroom?

6. What suggestions would you like to provide to improve the program?
7. Is there anything you would like to add or that we did not discuss?

Appendix F: Permission to Conduct Study

November 8, 2016
Mrs. XXX
Director of CCLTCD
2311 XXX Building

University of XXX

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Mrs. XXX:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your institution. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Leadership Program at Concordia University in Portland, OR, and am in the process of writing my dissertation.

I hope that the school administration will allow me to recruit students and faculty members from the school to complete a 2-page questionnaire (copy enclosed). Interested students and faculty members who volunteer to participate will be given a consent form to be signed and returned to me at the beginning of the process.

If approval is granted, I will interview student participants and faculty members. The interview should take no longer than 30 minutes. The interview results will be pooled for the project and individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential. No costs will be incurred by either your center or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time. You may contact me at my email address: [Researcher’s email redacted].

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form and email it back to me.

Sincerely,
Ning Zhang

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Barbara Weschke, Research Advisor, Concordia University Portland

Approved by:

Print your name and title here	Signature	Date

Appendix G: Interview Data Table

Based on the interviews, the following table summarizes each participant’s background, opinion of needs addressed by the program, perspective of program strengths, program challenges, and suggestions for improvement.

Participant Interview Date	Background	Background (If having teaching experience before enrollment)	Needs Addressed	Strengths	Challenges	Suggestions
#1 12/3/2016	Faculty member, focus on administration management and academic support, Age group 30–39	N/A	Students have opportunity of observation and student teaching; OPT and CPT allow student to work in the field	Program leadership; Network opportunities included workshop and attending conferences; Job opportunities	Recruit new students	Add a new administrator’s position; Need to create more new materials
#2 1/16/2017	Faculty member, focus on classroom management instruction, Age group 60–69	N/A	Curriculum focus on both theory and practice	Program leadership; Network opportunities to connect alumni with current students; Job opportunities	Recruit suitable student	Build more materials on Chinese-language pedagogy
#3 2/14/2017	Faculty member, focus on administration management and content reading area instruction, Age group 50–59	N/A	Curriculum focus on immersion program	Program leadership; Network opportunities to help students find job; Job opportunities	Recruit new students	Hire an administrative assistant; Need to create more new materials
#4 12/3/2016	Current student Age group 20–29	No	The intensive courses helped understand American education; Friendly faculty members support in communication	Program leadership; Faculty are very friendly and dedicated to the program; Program offers a lot of volunteer teaching opportunities; Curriculum are very useful	Lack of familiarity with American schools’ discipline and setting; Challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities	Prefer to have face-to-face traditional courses

#5 12/2/2016	Current student Age group 20–29	No	Courses helped us get to know the diversity of American classrooms and develop a student-centered mindset	Program leadership; Curriculum cover a lot of knowledge; Faculty are very friendly and dedicated to the program	Lack of familiarity with American schools' discipline and setting; Challenges of time management and balance between studying and leisure activities	No online courses;
#6 1/6/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	Yes	Attend workshops and conferences to learn more Chinese teaching pedagogy; Faculty members are role models; Faculty members collect our feedback and guide us	Program leadership; Faculty encourage me to discuss more in the class; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons; Curriculum design	30-page seminar paper seems too long; there is no course to guide how to write the seminar paper	High expectation on seminar paper is needed
#7 1/16/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	Yes	Course schedule based on my needs	Program leadership; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons;	Cross-cultural adaption;	More engaged in course content in a traditional classroom
#8 1/17/2017	Current student Age group 20–29 Native English Speaker	No	Offer Chinese-language courses to meet my needs; Curriculum help me demonstrate language proficiency, understand linguistic, and identify language comparison	Program leadership; Curriculum design; Supportive faculty; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons;	Cross-cultural adaption	More Chinese-language courses; No online courses.
#9 1/17/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	No	Course schedule based on my needs	Program leadership; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons; Curriculum is current and intensive	Struggled with time management	Curriculum focuses on immersion program too much; courses should include methods of teaching Chinese language in non-immersion classroom

#10 1/18/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	No	Course schedule based on my needs;	Program leadership; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons; PD opportunities	Struggled with time management	Prefer to have face-to-face traditional courses
#11 1/19/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	No	Course schedule based on my needs;	Program leadership; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons; PD opportunities	Struggling with writing a long paper in English before the deadline	No online courses
#12 1/20/2017	Current student Age group 20–29	No	Course schedule based on my needs;	Program leadership; Faculty members' pedagogical approach in delivering lessons; PD opportunities	Struggled with time management all the time	Prefer to have face-to-face traditional courses
#13 12/7/2016	Alumni Age group 20–29	No	Attend workshops and conferences to learn more Chinese teaching pedagogy;	Program leadership: being invited back as a career mentor; observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.
#14 12/5/2016	Alumni Age group 30–39	Yes	Courses target students' needs.	Program leadership; observation and student teaching PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit; Very intensive courses; painful experience to have doctoral students as substitute teachers	Curriculum should be more practical and updated; Need more attention on international students.

#15 1/8/2017	Alumni Age group 30–39 Native English Speaker	Yes	Courses meet diverse students' needs; Courses offer me opportunities to understand language-acquisition theories and cultural concepts; Observe mentor teachers' teaching	Program leadership; observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	Face the challenge of the employers' discrimination	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.
#16 1/9/2017	Alumni Age group 30–39 Native English Speaker	Yes	Courses meet diverse students' needs; Observing mentor teachers' teaching is very helpful	Program leadership; observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	Some faculty members' teaching methods were outdated; Face the challenge of the employers' discrimination ; Curriculum emphasized practice more than theory	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.
#17 1/13/2017	Alumni Age group 20–29	No	Courses meet diverse students' needs;	Program leadership; observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	Theories in some courses were repetitious	Curriculum should be more practical and updated; Refining the course selection was necessary
#18 1/16/2017	Alumni Age group 20–29	No	Studying different courses helped cross-cultural adaption	Program leadership; Curriculum cover a lot of areas; PD opportunities	The order of the courses should be clear	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.
#19 1/17/2017	Alumni Age group 30–39	No	Studying different courses helped me become familiar with the different settings of American schools	Program leadership; supportive faculty members; course design was very reasonable, covering both theory and practice; PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit	Have a course emphasizing classroom behavior management;
#20 1/19/2017	Alumni Age group 20–29	No	Courses helped me with cultural adjustment, and transition of my teaching belief from a Confucian context to a constructivist context	Program leadership; Observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.

#21 1/19/2017	Alumni Age group 20– 29	No	Curriculum provided	Program leadership; Observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit	Have a course emphasizing classroom behavior management; Curriculum should be more practical and updated.
#22 1/20/2017	Alumni Age group 20– 29	No	Offer English courses to enhance English skills;	Program leadership; Observation and student teaching; PD opportunities	To find an employer who can sponsor for the work permit	Curriculum should be more practical and updated.

Appendix H: Guided Interview Data

This appendix contains selections from two interviews conducted with participants. The interviews were conducted in Chinese language. The transcription was translated into English based on notes and recorded interviews. Using a number instead of participants' name is to protect the confidentiality of the interviewees. P1 refers to participant #1 and P19 refers to participant #19. NZ is the researcher's initials.

Example #1 Transcription of Recorded Interview (Selections)

NZ: I really appreciate that you give me this opportunity to interview you. I believe that you have received my last email including the CCLTCD's mission statement, goals, and the ACTFL's program standards.

P1: You are welcome. Yes, I have read the email and the attachments.

NZ: Good! With the mission statement, goals and standards in mind, I would like to hear your opinion toward the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program. Please allow me to audio record as well as to take notes during today's interview. I will keep your identity confidential. If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know. First, please describe your affiliation with CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program.

P1: Well, I have worked for the center since 2012, and I received my doctoral degree in this college. My major tasks consist of three parts. First, I assist the program director in daily office operations. I prepare materials for courses and for promoting the program. Second, I organize workshops and seminars on campus, invite experts to give lectures, and create surveys to collect feedback. Third, I substitute teach some courses when the instructors

are on business trips. When students have teaching internships, I will travel to local K–12 schools and provide evaluation.

NZ: What were your first impressions of CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program? How about the curriculum design?

P1: Students' diversity. Students in this program consist of international students, Chinese heritage students, and native English speaker. We gave out a survey to every graduate to find out what courses they like or dislike. Since I am not in charge of this area, I am not very sure about the curriculum design.

NZ: That is okay. I can see the diversity of your students. From your point of view, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program offered by the CCLTCD address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standard-based and student-centered classroom?

P1: The program director provides opportunities for students to share their experiences. The newcomers are encouraged to make friends with students from higher levels. Students are encouraged to attend the center's own workshops. These workshops are free for them. They are also encouraged to attend big conferences, such as the ACTFL's Annual Convention and World Language Expos. The center provides \$200 for each student to attend national conferences. These opportunities greatly helped students grow as professional language teachers. A one-year teaching internship also provides students first-hand information about teaching Chinese language. Students can learn a lot from veteran teachers and become familiar with different school settings. Moreover, the international students from this program opt for CPT so that they can work as Chinese-language tutors to gain experience before they become classroom teachers. OPT allows

for international students to gain a year of real-world experience working in their field of study after graduating. Since most students in this program were international students, the center helped them obtain both CPT and OPT opportunities. The staff in the center also prepared the students for writing their resumes, attending career fairs, and interviewing for positions.

NZ: What are CPT and OPT? Sorry, I am not familiar with these. Can you explain these for me?

P1: CPT refers to Curricular Practical Training. It is a way for international students to acquire experience in the field. CPT allows international students to have a paid job while attending school. Another way for international students to acquire experience in the field is Optional Practical Training (OPT). OPT allows international students to work in their field after graduating.

NZ: Thank you. For native English speakers, how does the program address their needs? How about their Chinese-language proficiency?

P1: Before they were accepted in this program, they had to meet the language requirement, since some courses are delivered in Chinese. If they need to enhance their Chinese-language skills, they can choose the Chinese-language courses from the Department of Chinese Literature.

NZ: How do you choose the workshop presenters?

P1: It depends on what our students need. Usually we invite famous educators in the field.

NZ: From your point of view, what are the program's strengths? What are the program's challenges?

P1: Students have observation and student teaching opportunities. The program director has paid great attention to what local schools demand and graduates' work opportunities. I am very impressed that the program director has a good relationship with students and alumni. She travels to a lot of local schools to collect information and pass information to students. Sometimes, she even accompanied students for job interviews. Under her leadership, the program prepares students well for job interviews, and students are able to find jobs. Other faculty members are also very collaborative.

NZ: From your point of view, what are the program's challenges? What suggestions would you like to provide to improve the program?

P1: It was hard to say. If I have to say, I suggest hiring an administrative assistant. With more and more international students enrolled in this program, it would be better to add a new administration position. The new staff would reduce the current work load of the program director and support international students in their transition to a new environment. We should create more materials, for example, new textbooks and so on.

NZ: Thank you. Is there anything you would like to add or that we did not discuss?

P1: No. Good luck to your study.

NZ: Thank you very much for your support.

P19: You are very welcome.

Example #2 Transcription of Recorded Interview (Selections)

NZ: I really appreciate that you give me this opportunity to interview you. I believe that you have received my last email including the CCLTCD's mission statement, goals, and the ACTFL's program standards.

P19: You are welcome. Yes, I have received the email and glanced at the attachments.

NZ: That is great! With the mission statement, goals and standards in mind, I would like to hear your opinion toward the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program. Please allow me to audio record as well as to take notes during today's interview. I will keep your identity confidential. If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know. First, could you please describe your education background and describe your affiliation with CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program?

P19: Sure. I received my undergraduate degree in China. My major was administration management. I have worked in a Chinese publishing house for eight years. I came to the United States with my husband and we lived not far from the institute. I loved to volunteer in my son's school. One day, my son's teacher mentioned the CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program to me and encouraged me to enroll. Although I was not confident, I prepared well to pass the English-language test-TOEFL and meet the other requirements and became a student in this program. I graduated from this program last year. Right now, I am a kindergarten teacher in an immersion school.

NZ: That sounds like a very inspiring story. Could you describe your first impressions of CCLTCD's Chinese-language teacher preparation program and your experience in this program?

P19: My first impression, learning was very challenging. However, the program director was very supportive. She was very capable and played fairly. My English skills were not strong. She sat down with me and helped me choose the courses which I needed. I chose the easy courses first and then the difficult ones. The strategy "from easy to difficult" helped me go through the difficult time. I received straight A's in two years' study.

NZ: That is very impressive. Next, could you please share your point of view, how does the Chinese-language teacher certification program offered by the CCLTCD address potential Chinese-language teachers' needs and help them develop a standard-based and student-centered classroom?

P19: The course design was very reasonable, covering both theory and practice. Through learning in this program, I was transformed from a novice to a well-prepared classroom teacher. Professors taught me how to adapt second language acquisition research, methodologies, strategies, and technologies to help all Chinese language learners reach their full second language potential. I also became familiar with the different settings of American schools, such as urban schools, charter schools, suburban schools, and immersion schools. I adjusted my teaching beliefs through observing my mentor's classes and teaching internship. The most important thing was that I understood how students learn and develop and I looked for the most appropriate but challenging ways to provide students Chinese language learning experience. To have a student-centered classroom has become my goal since I enrolled in this program.

NZ: Besides the program leadership, supportive faculty members, and curriculum design, could you describe the program's other strengths?

P19: The center helped students look for job opportunities. Every year, graduates get a lot of information on job openings. Based on the job requirements, faculty members guided us on how to write resumes and prepare for interviews. All graduates can find employment. The study in this program has prepared me well to be a classroom teacher, so that I become more confident in my job.

NZ: It is good to know. Next, could you share with me what the program's challenges are?
What suggestions would you like to provide to improve the program?

P19: I am a native Chinese speaker and I used to teach Chinese the way I was taught Chinese when I was a young student back in China. However, it was not appropriate to teaching American students Chinese the same way. Therefore, Chinese-language pedagogy should be introduced in detail, for example, how to introduce Chinese characters to American students and how to teach American students Chinese-character writing.

Another challenge we have encountered is to teach in the United States legally. Since most of my classmates are from China, we have to face the reality after graduation, that is, to locate a sponsor in order to obtain a work permit. We have to consider which employer is more likely willing to be a sponsor. Usually we will choose to teach K-3 immersion schools. That is not because we like to teach in the early childhood education. The reason is that these immersion schools are willing to expand their Chinese-language program. Therefore, they are willing to sponsor international Chinese-language teachers to obtain work permits.

NZ: That really surprises me. Thank you for your frankness and sharing these facts with me. Is there anything you would like to add or that we did not discuss?

P19: Oh, I suggest having a course emphasizing classroom behavior management. I felt that I am still kind of weak in this area. I remembered, the faculty members mentioned the real situation might be different from the theories. If there is a specific course in this area, these pre-service teachers will definitely benefit from it.

NZ: It was my pleasure to interview you. Thank you for your time.

P19: You are very welcome.

Appendix I: Statement of Original Work

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*

Ning Zhang

Digital Signature

Ning Zhang

Name (Typed)

8/10/2017

Date