

CLT in Chinese Major's Comprehensive Chinese Course – A case study of Khon Kaen University, Thailand

Watcharapon Sirisuwilai

Eastern Language Department (Chinese Language), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand.

Abstract

Nowadays Chinese language is become one of the most important foreign language in Thailand reflexing by the growing popularity of the Chinese language. Traditional Chinese language teaching cause the lack of high communicative competence. Therefore, the study preliminarily attempt to combine the theory of Communicative Language Teaching with Comprehensive Chinese teaching so as to search for a feasible and effective instruction which conforms to the teaching features of comprehensive Chinese course in Khon Kaen University. After Pre-test and Post-test and compared by SPSS (T-Test sig (2-tailed) = 0.00<0.05), the result show that in Listening skill the difference is significant (sig. (2-tailed) = 0.01), Speaking skill the different is significant (sig. (2-tailed) = 0.00), Writing skill the different is significant (sig. (2-tailed) = 0.03), only Reading skill which the difference is no significant(sig. (2-tailed) = 0.324). As a result after a semester using Communicative Language Teaching method in comprehensive Chinese course for Chinese major student in Khon Kaen University, CLT effectively improve student Chinese language achievement and help them to improve their Chinese listening, speaking and writing skill. Moreover, this teaching method is highly recognized by students. This verified the important and necessity of communicative language teaching method to improve Chinese major student Chinese communicative competence.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, Comprehensive Chinese, Chinese Major

Introduction

Now, because of the growing of China's economic during this century, Chinese language become one of the most important foreign language for the countries around the world. In Thailand, The number of Chinese language learners are also increasing, reflexing by the number of Chinese major graduate in Thai's University in the past ten years. But a lot of learner still lack of language competence. Its affect Thai learner cannot use Chinese language to communicate effectively. A phenomenon that is usually associated with Thai learner of Chinese is that of becoming "Mute Chinese" The phrase is a calque of the Chinese phrase "哑巴汉语" (*yǎbā hànǔ* in Chinese pinyin). The phenomenon that express Thai Chinese learner who can read and understand Chinese, but cannot speak it well.

Comprehensive Chinese course is a basic Chinese language course for Chinese major students, which included Chinese four important skills: Listening, speaking, Reading, and writing. Normally Chinese comprehensive course is divided into basic, intermediate and advanced level. Chinese major student, as language learner who had learned Chinese intensively, the students should be able to interact orally each other through Chinese. But in fact, most of the students in Khon Kaen University did not perform Chinese in their language conversation. The lack of methods and innovation of instruction, and traditional teaching style in Chinese language classroom made Chinese atmosphere in classroom seem like a Chinese grammar course.

From the fact above, the researcher is interested in analyzing some problems about Comprehensive Chinese course teaching and learning and implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method to improve Chinese major students' Chinese communicative competence.

Research Methodology

The method of this research is classroom action research. Sample group, there are 35 undergraduate Chinese major students as control group. Using the implementation of CLT method and techniques instruction for 15 weeks (1 semester). The data was collected through a structured pre-test and post-test. In addition, the researcher made use of classroom observation to collect more information and students' satisfaction questionnaire for student feedback. The data is analyzed by using Means of Pre-test and Post-test, and compared T-test by SPSS program SPSS (T-Test sig (2-tailed) = 0.00<0.05) the result <0.05 were considered to be statistically significant.

Results:

1. Finding

A Pre-test were conducted on the 1st week and the post-test were conducted on the last week of instruction as a result below:

Table 1: Students' Pre-test and Post-test scores(mean)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	11.23	35	2.237	.378
	Post-test	12.46	35	1.788	.302

Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test T-test paired

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	-1.229	1.330	.225	-1.686	-.772	-5.464	34	.000

From table above, the Pre-test score mean is 11.23 and the Post-test score mean is 12.4. Students test score have improvement. And after using T-test compared, the result were 0.000. Therefore, the score for Pre-test and Post-test developmental was significant.

2. Compared by skill

Table 3: Pre-test and Post-test divided by skill

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Listening (pretest)	2.74	35	.701	.118
	Listening (Posttest)	3.09	35	.507	.086
Pair 2	Speaking (pretest)	2.51	35	.781	.132
	Speaking (Posttest)	3.14	35	.648	.110
Pair 3	Reading (pretest)	3.29	35	.622	.105
	Reading (Posttest)	3.31	35	.583	.098
Pair 4	Writing (pretest)	2.69	35	.530	.090
	Writing (Posttest)	2.91	35	.445	.075

Table 4: Pre-test and Post-test T-test paired divided by skill

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper

Pair 1	Listening (pretest) -	-.343	.539	.091	-.528	-.158	-3.762	34	.001
	Listening (Posttest)								
Pair 2	Speaking (pretest) -	-.629	.690	.117	-.865	-.392	-5.392	34	.000
	Speaking (Posttest)								
Pair 3	Reading (pretest) -	-.029	.169	.029	-.087	.029	-1.000	34	.324
	Reading (Posttest)								
Pair 4	Writing (pretest) -	-.229	.426	.072	-.375	-.082	-3.174	34	.003
	Writing (Posttest)								

In Listening skill part, student pretest score mean is 2.74 and the Post-test score mean is 3.09. Student have improvement in this part. The T-test score were 0.01, Sig. (2-tailed) <0.05, which mean that the score for Pre-test and Post-test in Listening skill part was statistically significant.

In speaking skill part, student pretest score mean is 2.51 and the Post-test score mean is 3.14. Student have much improvement in this part. The T-test scores were 0.00, Sig. (2-tailed) <0.05, which mean that the score for Pre-test and Post-test in Speaking skill part was statistically significant.

In Reading skill part, student pretest score mean is 3.29 and the Post-test score mean is 3.31. In this part there was not have too much change in the test score. The T-test score were 0.324, Sig. (2-tailed) >0.05, which mean that the score for Pre-test and Post-test in Reading skill part was not significant.

In writing skill part, student pretest score mean is 2.69 and the Post-test score mean is 2.91. For this part student have some change in the test score but not too much. The T-test scores were 0.03, Sig. (2-tailed) <0.05, which mean that the score for Pre-test and Post-test in Writing skill part was statistically significant.

Discussion

Based on the result which found by researcher along the process of instruction, we could see that students have improve their Chinese language skill trough implementing Communicative Language Teaching method and technique in Comprehensive Chinese course. From the classroom observation, student have more confident to communicate with people through the class work and after class activities that arranged by instructor. Moreover, Communicative Language Teaching method could motivate student to have a great participation to the class activities than in the past. And from the student satisfaction reflexing through the questionnaire, most of students (80%) very satisfy with this method. From the interview, student reflex that this method help them to minimize the pressure during having communication and lead them to have much effort to express their ideas in front of others.

In teaching and learning activities, without language environment some class activities have to adapt from the content in the lesson by using the resource we have. For example, group work in the class about Chinese people “take a nap (睡午觉)” the instructor not only let student discuss and interview each other in the class, and also assign them go out to interview Chinese exchange students in the campus. The activities make student start to communicate in Chinese, not only the topic they have, but starting from introduce themselves and tell the objective of activities they made. After this activities some of students have made some of Chinese friends.

Reading skill, as the result above, it was not significant in this part. After analyzed the problem, researcher found several problem that affected the result: first content of the textbook. Many chapter included the reading part but just a few lines of reading content, which not quite interesting and cannot draw students' attention. Second student still stuck in the traditional learning method which try to translate all content. Third some of reading assignments activities in textbook is quite faraway from realistic environment that student can follow and understand. For example, reading the passage and go out to interview, but the content is all about a Chinese local food in Beijing. Moreover, the lack of suitable Medias and supporting learning facilities for example Book, external reading resource also affected students reading abilities.

Otherwise, during the process researcher found some problem that need to improve in the further study. First, the lack of Chinese language environment will directly affect student language learning. Because except the class work (pair work or group work), some assignments of instruction need them to work with the real language environment, for example,

interviewing etc. Moreover, in Thai language living environment, student have less opportunities to practice outside classroom. Another, student itself. Thai student have lack of self-learning ideas so this directly affect the class activities because most of activities in this method require student to have preparation on vocabs, the instructor always waste time on vocab use. Another is the lesson and content in textbook is quite faraway from student realistic situation, so they have no chance to take what they learn in class to use frequently.

Conclusion

To improve Thai student Chinese language communicative competence and Chinese language quality, to support the communication in all areas between Thailand and China effectively, and to innovate present Chinese language teaching, Communicative language Teaching (CLT) as the method is one of the important things that should be applied during teaching and learning process. The result of this research have useful information for development of Thai's Chinese Language instructor to applying the method in teaching to be able to improve student language competence and communicative achievement in the future.

References

- [1] Dedi Efrizal. 2012. Improving Students' Speaking through Communicative Language Teaching Method at Mts Ja-alhaq, Sentot Ali Basa Islamic Boarding School of Bengkulu, Indonesia. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 2 No. 20 [Special Issue].
- [2] Jack C. Richards. 2006. *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge University Press.
- [3] Jiang Liping. 2013. *On Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press, Beijing, China.
- [4] Littlewood, William. 2002. *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Sirisuwilai, Watcharapon, 2017. An action research on the application of Communicative Language Teaching approach to Chinese major's Comprehensive Chinese course teaching—A case study of A University, Thailand. Ph.D. dissertation of Southwest University, Chongqing, China.
- [6] Sirisuwilai, Watcharapon. 2018. Development and Chinese Teaching Trend in Thailand. The fifth International Symposium on Chinese Language and Discourse. University of Sydney, Australia.
- [7] The Office of the Higher Education Commission. 2010. *Strategies for Promoting Chinese Language Teaching in Thailand Bureau of International Cooperation Strategy*, The Office of the Higher Education Commission, Bangkok, Thailand.
- [8] Xia Wu. 2011. *Teaching Communication in the Chinese as a Foreign Language Classroom*. Master of Second Language Teaching. Utah State University.