Teaching Philosophy
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Teachers should be facilitators. I believe the reason why students need teachers is someday they will not need teachers any more. The mission of a teacher is to build students' confidence, competence, and independence to face problems on their own and to give them the ability to explore the uncharted territory. So for Chinese language teachers, the paramount goal ought to be equipping students with the openness, enthusiasm, and appropriate methods to experience and use Chinese. Indeed, I need to teach characters, vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics, but the meaning of teaching this knowledge should be more than a mere introduction of knowledge. I hope after taking my classes, students can develop lifelong skills to deal with various kinds of input of Chinese language and culture, and continuously build their Chinese proficiency.

To achieve my goal, I have tried diverse teaching methods. Many of them seem to work well at some points but less satisfactory for some other things. My experience indicates there does not exist a single teaching method valid for all the time. Instead, we can only talk about the validity of teaching methods for certain purposes. In addition, two variables constitute major factors of teaching purpose, among others, which determine the validity of teaching methods: teaching content and student characteristics. My selection of teaching method is always accommodated to what and whom I am teaching.

Integration of Chinese Culture and Characters
Language and culture always go hand in hand with each other, and so does the study of them. For American students whose language and cultural background is so different from Chinese, in order to develop long-lasting language learning skill, the first lesson is to recognize the difference, and a general introduction to Chinese culture and Chinese characters can play a crucially positive role.

As a typical Chinese teacher, I address students all by Chinese names. Heritage learners normally have Chinese names given by parents that they typically do not understand, and most non-heritage learners are interested in getting "cool" Chinese names from me, with definitions of "cool" dramatically different from average Chinese people. Making students appreciate the "coolness" of names promotes their motivation of Chinese learning, helps to demonstrate the cultural difference, and also draws attention and interest to Chinese characters, which constitute a particularly challenging part for learners with alphabetic native languages. I make each student a name card with his/her Chinese name, pinyin, meaning of each character, as well as stroke orders on it. In the first two classes of general introduction to Chinese culture, language, and characters, I will always talk about the idea of 和'harmony', which is one of the most influential parts of Confucianism on Chinese culture and connects with many other ideas such as 天人合一 'the harmony between the nature and human beings'. Then students will be able to understand the reason why many Chinese names contain characters denoting grass (e.g. 莎, 兰, 茹, 芳, 英, etc.), wood (e.g. 梅, 林, 叶, 枫, etc.), or animals (e.g. 骏, 鹏, 鹃, 龙, 凤, etc.). Common radicals of Chinese characters can be introduced at the same time, in combination with a general introduction to Chinese writing system. For names carrying special metaphorical meanings, such

as 孟东篱 (for Daniel Mxx), or 梅柳岸 (for Ryan Mxx), I normally incorporate corresponding metaphors into my introduction of culture.

This kind of integration can be carried out anytime at any level of Chinese classes. For example, 络绎不绝 'in an endless stream' is typically considered a high-level word, but with three characters having the same silk radical, the metaphorical extension of meaning can be revealed easily.

By virtue of being a Chinese teacher in a non East Asian country, I need to have knowledge about culture and characters in my Chinese class.

Authentic Materials in Explicit and Implicit Instruction

It has now become a common belief in language pedagogy that language teaching should be based on real language use, and authentic materials have been attached upmost importance. Since natural language acquisition happens without explicit instruction in most cases, I think it is necessary for students to develop independent inductive learning ability in my Chinese class. When I introduce grammar patterns, I always begin with texts, images, or videos showing the use of this pattern in authentic materials. For example, for the 非 X 不可 'nothing but X will work' pattern, I first presented students with the poster of the popular Chinese matchmaking show 非你不可, on which the title appears together with the creatively designed logo and picture, followed by a simple dialogue containing 非你不可 and 非去不可 'have no choice but to go'… after a little input I found students were able to use this pattern in related scenarios without any explicit explanation.

Admittedly, for patterns relatively complicated in form, such as the 被 *bei* passive sentence, implicit teaching is sometimes confusing and time-consuming. I will provide some explicit instructions on those occasions. In the case of 被 *bei* passive sentence, I told students because the original meaning of the character 被 *bei* was 'quilt', it developed the meaning of 'cover, negatively receive, suffer', and more abstractly, 'undergo'. So the 被 *bei* passive sentence can virtually be understood as somebody undergoes a certain event. After making sure that students can understand 被 *bei* sentences without confusion, abundant input of authentic materials and contextualized sentences is still crucial. An activity of "My Unlucky Day" was performed, in which students first read about someone else' unlucky day, with plenty of 被 *bei* passive sentences, and then talked about their own unlucky days.

As for fixed collocations or sayings that do not have English equivalents, impossibility of translation renders large amount of authentic input the only practical way in teaching. When I taught the phrase 辛苦了, I employed pictures of Teacher's Day cards, letter text, and a video clip from a music video to enhance students' impression of the use of this phrase. When I taught New Year wishes, since those messages are relatively fixed, I found some videos of commercials wishing New Year and let them imitate these commercials to wish each other happy New Year in Chinese.

No matter I teach implicitly or explicitly, the goal is that when encountering unfamiliar authentic materials, students are able to connect with the knowledge that they already have and process confidently.

The Facilitative Role of Technology
New technologies are consistently introduced to us every semester, but after so many semesters, I found the belief that "the fancier, the better" is such a falsehood. Facilitating teaching should be the only meaning of the presence of technology in language class. Only technicians use technology for technology, but should not language teachers.

Honestly I do not consider myself anti-technology. I use Powerpoint, play audio and video recordings almost every day, but the only reason that I am using them is that they can present language materials more authentically and vividly. I believe in my case, technology has been fully integrated into the language content being taught. When it comes to the platform and interface for teaching, doing homework, and classroom interaction, I guess I appear to be especially cautious in trying new systems that have been introduced to me. If my students and I need to spend more time in getting familiar with a new interface than in looking at the language content, what a waste it is. Instead, I always try to make full use of everything that I already have. For example, the courseweb system adopted by University of Hawaii is called Laulima, on which I am using many functions. Students' homework is submitted through Drop Box or the Assignment Mode; all class materials including Powerpoints and even links of recommended Chinese dramas are available in Resources; grades in each detail are visible through Gradebook; essays are written in Blogs so that they are open to peer comment; and Discussion forums are for any out-of-classroom discussion.

Nevertheless, I do see a necessity to introduce popular Chinese social networking sites, softwares, and applications to students (such as Weibo, WeChat and so forth). On-line communication is dramatically gaining in momentum in China, and if used properly, students may have extra places to receive Chinese input and actually use Chinese.

Assessment for the Right Purpose
For sure, I employ traditional pencil-and-paper-based quizzes and tests to assess students' listening, vocabulary and grammar, reading, and writing. There are also separate oral examinations. Something noteworthy is that in the assessment of production, namely speaking and writing, I put more weight on the content and complexity than on accuracy, especially for high-level learners. I always encourage students to speak and write about things that really interest them and I found they could achieve much more vocabulary and syntactic complexity when working on the topics they chose for themselves, even for complicated issues such as homosexual marriage or freedom of speech. Interest is such a powerful source for motivation and apparently student are much more willing to receive language input related to their interest. Therefore, my high-level students work on two or three projects each semester for which I provide some content-based information in class or during after-class individual conferences.

Summary
I do not believe there is something always perfect, although things can be relatively good for teaching certain things to certain group of students. In this sense, teaching planning is a dynamic process at least adaptive to the teaching content and student characteristics. Beside what has already been mentioned, I think language teachers should also be sensitive to students' duration of attention and organize class activities in a student-friendly way. Students' personalities,

willingness to talk, backgrounds (especially heritage or non-heritage), and motivation are also taken into consideration in my design of teaching.