

**Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages**

Perceptions of Grammar-Translation & Direct methods  
in Teaching Chinese as Second Language (TCSL)



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## Abstract

In recent years, Teaching Chinese as Second Language (TCSL) has caused a mania in the world with more schools opening up Chinese courses. Moreover, Chinese become the first general foreign language in some of foreign countries. However, there are many studies are focus on the Phonological, Phonetic and Lexical Issues of Alveolar-Dental in TCSL or explored the speaking and reading comprehension abilities, but seldom focus on the different teaching methods impact on the oversea students' listening, speaking, reading and writing comprehensions in these days.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions by overseas learners of their speaking ability, comparing the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method in TSCL. The theme of study was including the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method impact on a foreigner's speaking ability in TCSL and the challenges need consideration in integrating the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method for TCSL speaking development.

This research utilized quantitative method and the three parts in the questionnaire were the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, and the speaking ability. The result of study shows that the oversea students think the Grammar-Translation Method is important and can effectively correct wrong speaking grammar. Moreover, the Grammar-Translation Method can improve the Chinese level and increased comprehension level by English-Chinese translation in class.

Additionally, the Direct Method increased learning motivation, interactive conversation and beneficial Chinese learning environment but accuracy is perceived more important than fluency in Chinese oral proficiency. Although, it is recommended can increased the qualitative method and also can enlarge different countries of the learning Chinese students in future research.

Key words: speaking ability, Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Teaching Chinese as Second Language (TCSL)

## 摘要

近年來，華語教學蔚為風潮，有些國家也進而開設了華語教學的課程在當地的學校為他們國人第一外語的選項之一。然而，目前華語教學的研究較為著墨於對外華語教學中舌齒音之音韻、拼音與詞彙問題或是對於華語教學當中口說能力與閱讀能力的探討，而較少研究不同教學法對於學生的聽說讀寫能力的影響。

因此，本研究主旨在探討華語教學當中，文法翻譯法以及直接教學法對於口說能力的影響力。本研究之議題包含在華語教學中，文法翻譯法和直接教學法如何影響外國學生的口說能力，並且對於此兩種教學法在口說能力上有哪些挑戰以及建議。本研究採量化研究，問卷內容分為文法翻譯法、直接教學法以及口說能力。本研究結果顯示外籍學生覺得文法翻譯法是重要的，能有效的更正口說錯誤，提升華語程度及中英翻譯之理解力。而直接教學法，則可提高學習動機，互動式分組會話及華語教學環境等優點，但口說能力的正確性比流暢性更為重要。然而，未來研究可建議增加質化研究法並增加更多不同國籍華語學生之教學觀察。

關鍵字：口語能力、文法翻譯法、直接教學法、華語教學

## Table of content

### Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background.....	P.60
1.2 Research Purpose.....	P.61
1.3 Research Questions.....	P.61
1.4 Qualifications.....	P.61
1.5 Significance.....	P.62

### Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 The definition of TCSL .....	P.62
2.2 The Grammar-Translation Method.....	P.63
2.3 The Direct Method.....	P.65
2.4 Speaking ability .....	P.67

### Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Methodology.....	P.69
3.2 Research Method.....	P.69
3.3 Instrument.....	P.69
3.4 Research procedure.....	P.70
3.5 Research participants.....	P.70
3.6 Possible challenge.....	P.70

### Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Perceptions of the Grammar-Translation Method.....	P.71
4.2 Perceptions of the Direct Method.....	P.72
4.3 The Chinese oral ability proficiency.....	P.73
4.4 Other relationships between different teaching methods and basic personal information.....	P.74
4.4.1 The different learning challenges between male and female.....	P.75

4.4.2 Different learning challenges on the varied educational levels.....	P.76
4.4.3 Learning perceptions on culture differences.....	P.77
4.5 Correlation between the Direct Teaching method and the speaking ability.....	P.80
4.6 Summary of findings.....	P.80

**Chapter 5 Discussion**

5.1 Student perceptions of the Grammar-Translation Method.....	P.81
5.2 Students perception of the Direct Method.....	P.82
5.3 The Students perception of the oral ability proficiency.....	P.83
5.4 Different basic personal information influence the speaking ability of two teaching methods.....	P.83

**Chapter 6 Conclusion**

6.1 Summary of Study.....	P.84
6.2 Limitation of Study.....	P.85
6.3 Recommendation.....	P.85

References .....	P.86
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**Appendix**

Appendix I English instrument.....	P.87
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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The learning of Chinese is provided for in courses termed as TCSL (Teaching Chinese as Second Language) (Cheng, 2008, p.173). At the current time, learning Chinese is more popular in the world because of China's rising power, and the fact that foreign countries take China more seriously, both in business and in tourism. Therefore, many people in many countries have started to be concerned about learning Chinese, which can help them to communicate with people who have Chinese as first language (Chen & Chang & Lee, 2007, p179). For this reason teaching Chinese as second language has become more and more popular in recent years. There are more and more Chinese courses open for the students. According to Jian (2014), Chinese has also become the first general foreign language in both Australia and New Zealand.

In past years, many studies explored the acquisition of Chinese speaking ability and of reading strategies by foreigners (Lee-Thompson, 2008; Hsu, 2008; Ke, 2009). However, few research studies appear have focused on the effectiveness of different teaching methods in influencing the learning of foreign learners' speaking ability.

In foreign language classrooms generally, the Grammar-Translation Method is really popular. This method is not only based on the emphasis of listening, speaking, reading and writing for general learners, but also emphasizes listening and speaking even for the beginning learners (Chang, 2006, pp.74-76). In contrast, the Direct Method is the composited systematized teaching method that combines the accurate curriculum design, the efficiency teaching skill, and the serious education supervision (Huang & Ho, 2009, p.20). Typical lesson plans for both methods are contained in Table 1.1 that takes the pearl milk tea as an example.

**Table 1.1** Lesson plans for both methods (the vocabulary of pearl milk tea)

<b>The Grammar-Translation method</b>	<b>The Direct method</b>
◆ Show picture	◆ Explain in English, such as珍珠 is
◆ Play vocabulary games	tapioca not pearl in necklace,奶 is
◆ Use flesh cards	milk or cream,茶 is black tea
◆ Create conversation of buying drink	◆ Copy the words in written practice
◆ Use pair oral practice	◆ Use sentences helping students to understand vocabulary

In the study, a questionnaire was used to collect the data regarding the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method and also to enquire about speaking ability in the foreign language classroom.

### 1.2 Purpose of study

The study set out to investigate the perceived comparison by learners of their speaking ability, comparing the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method in TCSL. The study can be separated the several parts. First, it delves into the advantages and disadvantage of the Grammar-Translation Method. Secondly, the study explores the advantages and disadvantage of the Direct Method. Thirdly this study also investigated the relationship between perceived speaking ability from learning in the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method.

### 1.3 Research questions

1. How does the Grammar-Translation Method impact on a foreigner's speaking ability in TCSL?
2. How does the Direct Method impact on a foreigner's speaking ability in TCSL?
3. What challenges need consideration in integrating the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method for TCSL speaking development?

### 1.4 Researcher's qualifications

The author is interested in teaching Chinese as the second language. She considers herself

qualified to conduct this current study because she has taken the courses about TCSL, and she learned by following the different types of teaching methods in school. She also has some basic concepts about the TCSL and the two teaching methods. On that basis, she judges herself qualified to undertake this research.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This research can help the people who are teaching Chinese as second language to enhance their teaching skills. Moreover, foreign learners who are interest in learning Chinese can find advice regarding a suitable method within this research. Furthermore, this study can help the TCSL's teachers to choose the better teaching methods for their teaching.

## **Chapter 2 Literature review**

### **2.1 The definition of TCSL**

Two key studies in this field have defined TCSL in two ways offering different scales because teaching Chinese to learners as a Second Language is different from teaching Mandarin Chinese in domestic elementary and secondary schools. Moreover, different countries' culture and thought will change the teaching in TCSL (Chen, 2009 ; Huang, 2012).

Chen (2009) investigated designing and developing the CSL program for female immigrants in the Association of Linyuan Township. Using interviews and questionnaires, author Chen probed into problems that may occur during teaching and learning, and their possible solutions. It was found that a good perspective of teaching and mutual respect can help CSL teachers have the better scheme for teaching the female immigrants (Chen, 2009), in addition to changing the thinking of teaching models, teaching environments and resources and thus solving the problem in CSL teaching (Chen, 2009). As already mentioned, teaching Chinese as a Second Language (CSL) is not the same as the teaching Mandarin Chinese or teaching Chinese in elementary and secondary schools to indigenous students. In the study concerned, the female immigrants came from different countries and had native languages, varieties of cultures, and ways of thought. Consequently, the TCSL should be viewed as

foreign language teaching (Chen, 2009).

The finding of this study was that the TCSL could not use teaching methods similar to those used for the usual teaching of Mandarin; additionally there were concerns about multicultural and multiracial issues arising in the teaching.

Huang (2014) explored by interviews and questionnaires the ethnic Chinese influences underlying different generation in the Philippines, and how these might influence the teaching Chinese as a second language (TCSL) there. He found that the ethnic Chinese identity influences all the aspects in the Philippines, since the ethnic Chinese identity has been existing with heterology in any generation. Thus the ethnic heterology of Chinese identity impacted the learning comprehension (Huang , 2014).

Additionally, Huang said that TCSL in the Philippines has the same meaning as teaching Chinese as a foreign language in China, and is also involved within the area of Chinese language education. After all, the language cannot be separated clearly. (Huang, 2014; p. 17). In view of this research, teachers cannot ignore the impact of the ethnic Chinese identity when they are teaching ethnic Chinese students.

Significantly the two researches defined TCSL in two ways using different scales including using the positive and mutual mentality to teach the student and understanding the learning purpose about students (Chen, 2009 ; Huang, 2014).

A good perspective of teaching and mutual respect can hence help CSL teachers have an effective scheme for teaching such female immigrants (Chen, 2009). Moreover, changing the thinking of teaching models, teaching environments and resources can solve problems to some extent, and also enhance the learner's learning motivation in the TCSL class (Chen, 2009; Huang, 2014). In view of this study, teachers clearly need to have a positive attitude and demonstrate mutual respect.

## **2.2 The Grammar-Translation Method**

Researchers have defined the Grammar-Translation Method in two ways. Different dimensions, including the Grammar-Translation element, can combine with the interesting course design and the positive relationship between the Grammar-Translation Method and the translating activities of

translation (Wang, 2008; Chang, 2006). Thus the Grammar-Translation Method is an important method in the teaching, and also can increase the students' learning performance (Wang, 2008; Chang, 2006).

The Grammar-Translation Method, also known as the Prussian Method or the Classical Method, maintains that the goal of language study is help learners develop reading ability in an L2 and also to foster the intellectual development of learners (Kelly, 1969). The method encourages detailed analysis of grammar rules and the application of grammar knowledge to backward and forward translation (both sentence and text level) tasks. On the whole, language learning following this method has to do with memorizing rules and facts, in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language (Wang, 2008, p. 139).

Wang (2008) explored student and teacher beliefs regarding the role of explicit grammar study and error correction, in the Grammar-Translation Method and set out to investigate their perceptions of the Communicative Language Teaching-based learning environment in Taiwan by questionnaires. It was found out that teaching methods might conflict with the learners' expectations in language learning, which might lower learner motivation (Wang, 2008).

In view of this study, grammar teaching also needs to be combined with the curriculum design, and teachers need to advance the curriculum or course design. In recent years, more and more students care about the efficiency and effectiveness of their studies in the class. Therefore, the grammar study and error correction of Grammar-Translation Method need to be investigated with the TCSL student. Moreover, the learner motivation and the studying ability also need to be considered in the teaching.

In the Grammar-Translation Method, which dominated language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s, reading and translation are emphasized. Much of the lesson is devoted to translating sentences into and out of the target language. The primary objective is to read texts in a foreign language by translating them into the native language (Chang, 2006, p.79).

Chang (2006) explored the idea of teaching the activities of translation in the Four Skills (listening,

speaking, reading, writing) and in the Five Skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, translating). It was found out there are more and more teaching methods being used, but that the Grammar-Translation obviously has the same basic idea as the teaching activities in a foreign language classroom. However, in the foreign language teaching classrooms, most of teachers are focuses on the Four skill teaching (Chang, 2006). Therefore, when the translation skill is more and more important as it has become recently the translation skill should be explicitly involved into the different teaching methods in the foreign language teaching.

In the view of this study, translation is not only a significant part in the Grammar-Translation Method, but is also an important element in the Five Skills. Therefore, if teachers focus on the Five Skills and involve translation fully into the Grammar- Translation Method, they can enhance the students' learning effectiveness in foreign learners' speaking ability.

In the study by Wang (2008), twenty items were set in the questionnaire regarding the Grammar-Translation Method. These were separated into the three factors including, “the role of grammar”, “the role of error correction”, and “the role of translation”. The purpose of the role of grammar is to understand the different thoughts of the role of grammar teaching and learning activity between the students and teachers. Additionally, the purpose of the role of error correction is to compare the role of error correction between the students and teachers; and finally the purpose of the role of translation is to compare the different conceptions between the students and teachers of role of translation.

Therefore, the present author designed the Grammar-Translation Method part of her questionnaire to include grammar study, error correction, the learner motivation and studying ability.

### **2.3 The Direct Method**

Researchers have defined the Direct Method in two ways according to different dimensions. The Direct Method is claimed to have the better value regarding curriculum design and is well-organized; it can also can particularly help the lower level students in the class (Yang & Tang 2013). In another

dimension, the Direct Method can be combined with other teaching methods that can improve the student translation ability through the teaching (Liao, 2003).

Yang & Tang (2013) explored the features of the Direct Method in their remedial teaching. It was found out that the Direct Method can exactly examine the students learning process and by using the form of curriculum design that is assessment, teaching and re-assessment, can help the students since the teaching materials have more positive relationship with each other (Yang & Tang, 2013).

The Direct Method offers better value regarding curriculum design and serious curriculum organization. Moreover, the Direct Method also emphasizes the use of the programmed method to design the teaching material, because it can not only offer students quick processes to learn, but it can also help the each student to have an equal learning level in the class (Yang & Tang, 2013). Thus, the Direct Method is classed as a serious and well-organized method that considers the student's learning ability and respects the student's behavior and reactions in the class (Yang & Tang, 2013).

In the view of this study, the Direct Method offers better curriculum design and organization than the Grammar-Translation Method. Moreover, using the Direct Method can help some students who were at a lower level than other students in the class.

Liao (2003) reported an the exploratory study primarily aimed at assessing possible roles of translation, both positive and negative, in foreign language teaching,. This suggested that the modern use of translation in the class does not mean a return to the Grammar-Translation Method, but simply implies its employment within the Direct Method as a technique or an activity. It was found that the teacher needed to combine the different teaching methods when the teachers were teaching translation, and that the foreign language teachers needed to have more concern about the translation teaching in the class ( Liao, 2003).

The Direct Method prohibit the students from using translation of the meaning, and the teacher uses the foreign language to teach and explain the meaning of vocabularies and conversation in the class ( Liao, 2003). The students come to understand the semantics and grammar just as do people who learn the mother language, and as other students can do, through the translation ( Liao, 2003).

In view of this research, the Direct Method is not a suitable way to teach translation in the class. Moreover, the Grammar-Translation Method also can not be used alone in translation-teaching. Therefore, teachers need to combine the different teaching methods to teach translation.

As reported by Lin (1996), that author explored the features of different teaching methods and the student attitudes to such teaching methods as the Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method and Communicative Language Method. Lin (1996) set twenty questions in her questionnaire, and the present author used some of these questions in the current study. Additionally, however, this author set some questions in her questionnaire that related to the curriculum design, curriculum organization.

#### **2.4 Speaking ability**

The two cited studies have defined the speaking ability in two ways with different scales included; speaking ability is related to oral communication or to conveying the oral message (Tseng, 2008), while speaking ability is also related to speaking fluency and accuracy (Tseng, 2008; Chang, 2007 ).

Tseng (2008) investigated by questionnaires the effects of jazz chants on elementary school students' English speaking performance and phonics performance. In addition, students' responses to the learning of English pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence patterns, and conversations were respectively compared after a control group had experienced the English jazz chanting program (Tseng, 2008). It was found that the students learning with the English jazz showed improvement in their different English performances including speaking, that is in terms of speaking fluency and speaking accuracy, and phonics (Tseng, 2008).

Tseng maintained that "Speaking is a verbal chant for oral communication or conveying oral messages." (p.9). Moreover, "speaking fluency and accuracy are dependent in designing a communicative language courses." (p.16). Moreover, speaking fluency refers to the ability to produce spoken language with ease, in continuous intelligible speech of a fluent oral language performance. Speaking accuracy refers to a speaker's oral competency in terms of precision of clearness, articulation, and grammatically and phonological correctness in speaking (Tseng, 2008, p. 13~15). Therefore, we can

see that speaking ability is not only concerned with the communication and conveying of oral messages, but also needs to consider the learner who needs to have better knowledge about grammar and semantics.

In the view of this study, the teacher needs to consider the balance of the speaking fluency and speaking accuracy in the curriculum design, and also needs to decide what are the most successful plans that can help the students have better learner motivation in the different level classes. Moreover, the students need to learn more grammar and semantic in Chinese that can help them to improve their speaking ability in the CSL classes.

Chang (2007) empirically examined the effectiveness of the practice of developing students' English oral proficiency via structured synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) discussions, and developing students' attitudes toward English speaking learning after practicing their English proficiency via structured SCMC online discussions by experimental. It was found that there are two results which were that using the SCMC online discussions did not significantly enhance students' English oral proficiency, but it did lead to more favorable attitudes toward English speaking learning (Chang, 2007). Chang said "The English oral proficiency refers to the ability of communicate with other people with in English and it include five elements: pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary usage, and accuracy/structure." (p.8).

In view of the advice from available research, TCSL cannot entirely rely on the structured synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) that will not enhance the students' speaking ability; but SCMC can be combined with different teaching methods that can increase the students motivation in the class. Moreover, English oral proficiency is included in pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary usage, and accuracy/structure.

In the study of Tseng (2008), that author set some questions about students' attitudes. Therefore, the present author also set questions regarding students' attitudes about learning Chinese speaking that can clearly help towards an understanding of students' attitudes. Moreover, the author also set questions in the questionnaire about the speaking fluently and accuracy.

## **Chapter 3 Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Methodology**

It was decided that the most appropriate and feasible method for understanding suitable teaching methods to use for the TCSL classes was through quantitative research. The present study therefore used a quantitative methodological approach method to investigate the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method and the issue of speaking ability in TCSL. The research method and the design of the questionnaire are presented within this chapter.

### **3.2 Research Method**

This research used questionnaires to gain insights into the learners' opinions of the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method and the development of speaking ability. The design of the questionnaire was based on the models of Wang (2008), Lin (1996), and Tseng (2008).

### **3.3 Instrument**

In the questionnaire part, the Likert Scale was used in the first to third parts of the questionnaire. The responders were asked for their opinions about the teaching methods in the TCSL classes including the Grammar-Translation Method (Wang, 2008), the Direct Method (Lin, 1996) and the development of their speaking ability (Tseng, 2008). The respondents were given different statements and asked to tell the extent to which they agreed with each. The researcher chose a 6-point rating scale, to avoid neutral responses. Six response options were thus provided: “Strongly agree,” “agree,” “tend to agree,” “tend to disagree,” “disagree,” and “strongly disagree.” In the fourth part of the questionnaire the responders were asked several questions with fixed responses, and for each question they were asked to check the appropriate response option. Moreover, the respondents needed to answer about their heritage in fourth part.

The questionnaire thus included four sections which were:

- i. The Grammar-Translation Method (Wang, 2008)
- ii. The Direct Method (Lin, 1996)
- iii. Speaking ability (Tseng, 2008)

iv. Personal information

### **3.4 Research Procedure**

The researcher planned to distribute the thirty-five questionnaires on January 20<sup>th</sup> in 2015, and received the questionnaires after one month later. The researcher hoped there would be different nationalities represented by the responders to this survey.

### **3.5 Research participants**

In the 34 collected returns, there were 33 valid samples. The participants included 8 North Americans, 10 Europeans, 7 Asians, 5 Latin Americans and 3 others from Oceania Island. There were 17 males and 16 females. There were 11 High school and vocational school students, 18 university students and 4 graduate students in the Wenzao Chinese language center.

### **3.6 Possible challenge**

One possible challenge was that there might not be enough people for the questionnaires. Another challenge was that people might not understand the meaning of the questions in English. Therefore, the researcher attempted to explain meanings when endeavoring to find enough participants to complete this survey.

## **Chapter 4 Findings**

This chapter presents the data obtained regarding the Grammar-Translation teaching Method, the Direct Teaching Method and the speaking ability in the TCSL. In section 4.1, the foreign students' feeling and thoughts regarding the Grammar-Translation Method are summarized. These reveal the importance of Grammar-Translation method. Next Section 4.2 summarizes the foreign students' opinions and perceptives on the Direct Teaching method. Then Section 4.3 reports the foreign students' viewpoints and expectations on the development of their Chinese oral ability proficiency. Section 4.4 explains the relationship between the different teaching methods and reports other basic personal information. Thereafter, section 4.5 considers the correlation between the Direct-Teaching method and speaking ability. Finally, section 4.6 is the summary of the findings.

#### 4.1 Perceptions of the Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method is concerned with three main factors, which are, “the role of grammar”, “the role of error correction”, and “the role of translation”. This section demonstrates the respondents' perceptions of how the Grammar Translation method has impacted on the learning of these the foreign students.

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics of Grammar translation method

Items	Standard	
	Mean	Deviation
1. It is necessary to correct the student when they speak the wrong grammar	5.18	1.10
2. Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level	4.39	1.41
3. I like it when teachers use Chinese to explain the text	4.33	1.32
4. In the Chinese class, I hope that the translation practice can be increased	4.27	1.38
5. I like learning Chinese grammar	4.15	1.54
6. I like to use my mother language to learn Chinese	3.73	1.53
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>1.38</b>

N=33

The average of the Grammar- Translation method include the negative item, “I don't like to learn Chinese grammar” (M=2.64, SD=1.37), is M=4.10 and SD=1.38. From Table 1, based on the result of questionnaire returns, the highest item regarding the Grammar-Translation Method which students perceived is the correction of wrong Chinese grammar (M=5.18, SD=1.10). The second most important reason in favor of the Grammar-Translation Method is the impact of grammar on the level of speaking Chinese (M=4.39, SD=1.41). The third most important factor in the result of questionnaire favoring this method is that students prefer the use of English translation by teacher to explain the text (M=4.33, SD=1.32), which is the basic principle of this method.

These findings imply that the three factors of highest importance for the overseas students in the

Grammar-Translation Method are the preference to learn grammar and hence the importance of grammar correction, the chosen language for explanations, and so the use of English translation. Therefore, according to Table 1 we realize that the Grammar-Translation Method can play a significant role in the TCSL.

#### 4.2 Perceptions of the Direct Method

The Direct Method featured in the second part of the questionnaire. There were six questions to ascertain the foreign students' opinions and perceptions on the Direct Teaching Method

**Table 2** Descriptive statistics of the Direct Method

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
8. I like a lot of oral work at the beginning of the Chinese learning	5.00	.94
9. I gain a lot benefits when teacher is using Chinese to teach in class	4.70	1.16
10. The interesting activities (pair work, group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill	4.45	1.23
11. I like Chinese to be taught only in Chinese	4.18	1.59
<b>Average</b>	4.58	1.23

N=33

The average of negative responses on the Direct Method is  $M=4.41$  and  $SD=1.24$ . From Table 4.2.1, based on the result of questionnaire returns, the most positive item of Direct Method according to students' perceptions is that they like to do a lot of oral work in the beginning of class ( $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=.94$ ). The second most important factor in favor of the Direct Method is because students can gain a lot benefit when the teacher using Chinese to teach in class ( $M=4.70$ ,  $SD=1.16$ ). The third most important factor in the returns of the questionnaire is that students prefer to have more interesting activities that can help students a lot in developing their Chinese speaking skill ( $M=4.45$ ,  $SD=1.23$ ). On the other hand, the least positive response was that “It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain” ( $M=4.00$ ,  $SD=1.41$ ).

These infer that three highest items of importance for foreign students in the Direct Method are

including more oral work in the beginning of class, a lot of benefits when teacher is using Chinese to teach in the class, and interesting activities that help the speaking skill. Consequently, according to Table 4.2.1 we understand the overseas students' opinions that having many oral works and interesting activities in the class are not only advantages of the Direct Method but also can increase the students' speaking ability. Moreover, in the Direct Method, students think that the teacher using Chinese to teach can bring many of benefits in the class. As a result, the Direct Method is one of importance in teaching students learning Chinese oral ability.

**Table 2.1** T-test result of descriptive statistics between Grammar-Translation method and Direct method

Item	Mean	SD	t	Sig
Grammar-Translation method average	4.34	1.38	-.113	.27
Direct method average	4.58	1.23		

From Table 2.1, based on a non-directional independent t-test at  $\alpha=.05$ , it is concluded that there is no significant difference in mean number between two groups.

### 4.3 The Chinese oral ability proficiency

Speaking ability was featured in the third part of the questionnaire. There were eight questions to obtain the foreign students' viewpoints and expectations regarding the Chinese oral ability proficiency.

From Table 4.3, based on the results of the questionnaire, the highest aspect of developing Chinese oral ability in students' perceptions is that they like to practice Chinese speaking in the class (M=4.97, SD=.85). The second important factor for prioritizing the developing of Chinese oral ability is because the speaking ability is considered the most important factor in learning Chinese (M=4.88, SD=1.17). The third most important factor in the returns of the questionnaire is that students think good Chinese speaking ability can help students' study in their country (M=4.79, SD=.86). However, the lowest return was for "Speaking "fluently" is more important than speaking

"accurately" (M=3.52, SD=1.37).

**Table 3** Descriptive statistics of the Chinese oral ability

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
14. I like to practice speaking in the Chinese language class	4.97	.85
15. The speaking ability is the most important factor in learning Chinese	4.88	1.17
16. The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability	4.79	.86
17. I like to concentrate on practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class	4.73	1.07
18. I know the speaking ability is helpful for my future class	4.64	1.34
19. Speaking "accurately " is more important than speaking "fluently"	3.97	1.47
20. I feel comfortable to speak Chinese	3.67	1.27
21. Speaking "fluently" is more important than speaking "accurately"	3.52	1.37
<b>Average</b>	4.40	1.18

N=33

These perceptions imply that the three highest course features for the overseas learners of Chinese oral ability proficiency to gain Chinese speaking ability is the importance of practicing Chinese speaking in the class, help for studies and the significant factor in students' learning performances. Therefore, Table 4.3 shows that students like to practice speaking Chinese and agree the importance of the Chinese oral proficiency. In addition, increasing the Chinese speaking ability also can help the foreign students' studies in their own countries.

#### **4.4 Other relationships between different teaching methods and basic personal information**

This section deals with the relationships between different teaching methods and other basic personal information. Section 4.4.1 shows that the different genders responded different learning challenges. Then, 4.4.2 reveals the different educational levels have the various learning perception

and challenges. Finally, sanction 4.4.3 displays learning viewpoints according to the culture differences.

#### 4.4.1 The different learning challenges between male and female

In the Table 4 showed the different learning perceptions between male and female and author puts all the questions of Section 1 to 3 from the questionnaires and compares with different gender.

**Table 4** T-test result of the different learning challenges between male and female

Items		Mean	SD	t	Sig
5. It is hard to understand the vocabulary when teacher use Chinese to explain	Male	4.65	.79	3.18	.00
	Female	3.56	1.15		
6. It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain	Male	4.53	1.23	2.38	.02
	Female	3.44	1.41		
7. The speaking ability is the most important factor in learning Chinese	Male	5.06	1.20	.91	.37
	Female	4.69	1.14		
8. I like to practice speaking in the Chinese language class	Male	5.12	.78	1.03	.31
	Female	4.81	.91		
9. I'd like to concentrate about the practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class	Male	4.71	1.26	-.12	.91
	Female	4.57	.87		

From Table 4, based on a non-directional independent t-test at  $\alpha=.05$ , it is concluded that there is no difference in mean number between two groups for most items. However, there are two exceptions. One is “It is hard to understand the vocabulary when the teacher uses Chinese to explain”  $t(31) = 3.18, p < .05$ , and the other is “It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher uses Chinese to explain”  $t(31) = 2.38, p < .05$ .

Therefore, according to Table 4 we can see that different genders have diversity of opinions regarding the comprehension ability when the teacher uses Chinese to explain vocabulary or

conversations. Additionally, from Table 4, we can see that the male have bigger problem than females when they use Chinese to learn conversation and vocabulary in the class.

#### 4.4.2 Different learning challenges on the varied educational levels

Table 5 and 6 present the different learning challenges and the learning perceptions for students from the varied educational levels. The author has taken all the returns of Section 1 to 3 from the questionnaires and compared them according to the different educational levels of the learners, including high school and vocational school, university and graduate school. The author only selected results of  $p < .05$ .

**Table 5** Average mean by educational levels on the Grammar-Translation Method

Items		Mean	SD
I like learning Chinese grammar	High school	5.20	.79
	University	3.47	1.58
	Graduate school	4.75	1.26
	Total	4.15	1.54
I like it when teachers use Chinese to explain the text	High school	4.50	1.08
	University	3.95	1.35
	Graduate school	5.75	.500
	Total	4.33	1.32

**Table 6** ANOVA result of educational levels on the Grammar-Translation Method

Items		df	F	Sig.
I like learning Chinese grammar	Between Groups	2	5.76	.008
	Within Groups	30		
	Total	32		
I like it when teachers use Chinese to explain the text	Between Groups	2	3.78	0.34
	Within Groups	30		
	Total	32		

Table 5 Mean and SD values showed that high school and vocational school learners have a higher perception on the item of “I like learning Chinese grammar” (  $M=5.20$ ,  $SD=.79$ ); while the

graduate school learners prefer “I like it when teachers use Chinese to explain the text”(  $M=5.57$ ,  $SD=.500$ ) on the Grammar-Translation Method. In Table 6 non-directional ANOVA test with  $\alpha=.05$ , there are significant differences in the Grammar-Translation method with different educational levels, including “I like learning Chinese grammar”,  $F(2) = 5.76$ ,  $P=.008$ , and “I like it when teachers use Chinese to explain the text”,  $F(2) = 3.78$ ,  $P=.034$ .

Therefore, these differences imply that, for this sample and in their situations, the lower educational students like learning Chinese grammar rather more than do the higher educational level students. Otherwise, the table also shows that higher educational students prefer when the teacher uses English to teach them. According to ANOVA test, we can see that the different educational levels have strong differences in their judgments of learning Chinese, including their learning motivation and their other learning perceptions.

#### **4.4.3 Learning perceptions on culture differences**

Table 7 and 8 present selected results of different learning perceptions by learners' culture of origins, including Asia, Europe, North America, Middle East and others (Onesia island).

From Table 7 below, values of the Mean and SD show that Asians and Europeans rate both methods moderately high while North American students in this sample prefer to learn Chinese grammar in the class ( $M=4.88$ ,  $SD=.84$ ). On the other hand, Latin American students prefer the Direct method: two higher items including “It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher uses Chinese to explain”(  $M=5.20$ ,  $SD=1.30$ ) and “The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability” ( $M=5.60$ ,  $SD=.55$ ). Moreover, the “others” category of students also have two highest returns on items including, “Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level” ( $M=5.67$ ,  $SD=.58$ ), and “The interesting activities (pair work, group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill” ( $M=5.67$ ,  $SD=.58$ ).

**Table 7** Average mean by culture differences on teaching methods

Items		Mean	SD
I like learning Chinese grammar	Asia	4.14	1.68
	Europe	4.70	1.16
	North America	4.88	.84
	Latin America	2.20	1.79
	Others	3.67	1.16
	Total	4.15	1.54
Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level	Asia	4.29	.95
	Europe	4.30	1.25
	North America	5.25	.71
	Latin America	2.60	1.82
	Others	5.67	.58
	Total	4.39	1.41
It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain	Asia	4.00	1.53
	Europe	4.20	.92
	North America	2.75	1.17
	Latin America	5.20	1.30
	Others	4.67	1.53
	Total	4.00	1.41
The interesting activities(pair work, group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill	Asia	4.43	.79
	Europe	4.40	1.43
	North America	3.38	.74
	Latin America	5.60	.55
	Others	5.67	.58
	Total	4.45	1.23
The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability	Asia	4.57	.54
	Europe	4.30	1.06
	North America	4.88	.64
	Latin America	5.60	.55
	Others	5.33	.58
	Total	4.79	.86

**Table 8** ANOVA result of culture differences on teaching methods

Items		df	F	Sig.
I like learning Chinese grammar	Between Groups	4	3.83	.013
	Within Groups	28		
Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level	Between Groups	4	5.12	0.03
	Within Groups	28		
It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain	Between Groups	4	3.53	.019
	Within Groups	28		
The interesting activities(pair work, group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill	Between Groups	4	5.11	.003
	Within Groups	28		
The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability	Between Groups	4	2.94	.038
	Within Groups	28		

In Table 8 non-directional ANOVA test with  $\alpha = .05$ , there are significant cultural differences regarding the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method and the speaking ability by ethnic groups: including “I like learning Chinese grammar”,  $F(4) = 3.83$ ,  $P = .013$ , “Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level”,  $F(4) = 5.12$ ,  $P = .003$ , “It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain”,  $F(4) = 3.53$ ,  $P = .019$ , “The interesting activities(pair work, group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill”,  $F(4) = 5.11$ ,  $P = .003$ , “The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability”,  $F(4) = 2.94$ ,  $P = .038$ . Therefore, we can easily realize that the North American students are preferred to Grammar translation method and the Latin American students like to use Direct method to learn Chinese. Otherwise, the “others” students would like to combine the both teaching methods when they learning.

According to ANOVA test, these imply that the different culture can influence the student prefer what kind of teaching method. Take the Latin American students for an example. They do not like to learn Chinese grammar, and also think that learning Chinese conversation is hard when the teacher uses Chinese to explain. Hence we can infer that the Latin American students are using Latin

language system that is a totally different system to the English and Chinese language systems. Therefore, Latin American students have learning challenges when they use the Grammar-Translation Method to learn Chinese, because of the culture differences.

In conclusion, the different cultures will have the various learning perceptions and challenges. Moreover, the foreign students have differing viewpoints on the course activities and the effectiveness of oral ability proficiency. Therefore the culture differences might also affect the foreign students learning motivation and effectiveness.

#### 4.5 Correlation between the Direct Teaching method and the speaking ability

This section summarizes out the relationships found between the Direct Teaching method and speaking ability. One questionnaire item, “I like a lot of oral work at the beginning of the Chinese learning”, related to the Direct Method; and another item, “I’d like to concentrate about the practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class”, related to speaking ability.

**Table 9** Correlation between The Direct Method and speaking ability

		I'd like to concentrate about the practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class	I like a lot of oral work at the beginning of the Chinese learning
I'd like to concentrate about the practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class	Pearson Correlation	1	.47**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.01
I like a lot of oral work at the beginning of the Chinese learning	Pearson Correlation	.47**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01	

From Table 9, based on the result of Pearson Correlation test, this study concludes that there is a significant positive correlation between the Direct Method and speaking ability ,  $r = .47$ ,  $p < .05$ .

#### 4.6 Summary of findings

- The Grammar-Translation Method plays a significant part in TCSL in grammar correction, a decided speaking level and increased comprehension level by English-Chinese translation in

Chinese class.

- The Direct Method is highly positive in regard to the development of oral ability proficiency in curriculum design: increased learning motivation, interactive conversation and beneficial Chinese learning environment.
- Accuracy is perceived more important than fluency in oral proficiency in Chinese the learning performance.
- Regarding educational levels, high school and graduate students prefer the Grammar-Translation method while university students prefer Direct method.
- North Americans prefer Chinese translation into English more than Latin American students who like Direct method more. Asians and Europeans rate both moderately high.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

Chapter 5 is divided into five parts: (1) Students perception of the Grammar-Translation Method. (2) Students perception of the Direct Method. (3) The Students perception of their oral ability proficiency. The final part (4) covers how different basic personal information influences speaking ability in two teaching methods.

### **5.1 Student perceptions of the Grammar-Translation Method**

Similar to the findings of Wang (2008), the Grammar-Translation method has been found important to grammar study and error correction in the class. According to the findings in Table1, grammar is very important and grammar error correction is necessary. Therefore, these perceptions imply that the oversea students value the grammar learning. Moreover, the findings are also similar to those of Chang (2006), in that developing the translation skill should involve blending different teaching methods in the foreign language teaching. Table 1 also reveals that the some of foreign students would like to have more Chinese translation activities in class.

What is more, Table 2 shows that the high school and graduate students have the higher perception

of the Grammar-Translation method. The high school students would prefer to learn Chinese grammar explicitly, and the graduate school students would like to use English translations in their learning. Therefore the data analysis is also similar to Wang (2008) and Chang (2006), in that the Grammar-Translation Method is an important teaching method but must be combined with different course designs. Thus, the method can increase the student learning motivation. Because these results imply that the teacher needs to design different activities and teaching strategies to increase the motivation of students from different educational levels in the class.

## 5.2 Students perception of the Direct Method

Similar to Yang and Tang (2013), the present study demonstrated that the Direct Method has the better value in respect to curriculum design and also regarding the student activity and reaction in the class. The two highest items for foreign students' perception of the Direct Method in Table 2 are the including of more oral work in the beginning of class, and the interesting activities that help the speaking skill. Besides that, according to Table 9, the results show that there is a correlation between the Direct Method and speaking ability, because of the interesting class activities at the beginning of the class can increase the student learning motivation and learning effectiveness. The Direct Method develops student learning motivation, speaking ability but also infer the better learning curriculum and many oral activities in class.

Moreover, in the results of Table 2, there are two lowest items included "It is hard to understand the vocabulary when teacher use Chinese to explain" (M=4.12) and "It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain" (M=4.00). These findings are close to the study by Liao (2003) and show that teachers need to combine different teaching methods when they are teaching translation, and generally that the foreign language teachers need to have more concern about the translation teaching in the class. These imply that the Direct Method is not the suitable method for the oversea students when they learn translation, because it is hard for the students to understand the meaning of the Chinese conversation or vocabulary.

However, contrary to the research by Yang and Tang (2013) which shows that the Direct Method

can help the lower level students who have the lower education degrees and lower learning effectiveness in the class.

According to Table 5 and 6, the high school students and graduate students need more systematic teaching imputes literature. Moreover, the high school students also express the challenge of Grammar-Translation is very expiring. Therefore, these findings imply that not every lower level student might like the Direct Method.

### **5.3 The Students perception of the oral ability proficiency**

In the Table 3 shows that there are positive perceptions of the oral ability proficiency including practicing Chinese speaking, since speaking is the important factor in learning Chinese. Similar to the findings of Tseng (2008) and Chang (2007), the present studies confirm that speaking ability is not only concerned with communication and conveying oral messages, but also needs to consider the learners who need to have better knowledge about grammar and semantics. Therefore, two studies, Tseng (2008) and Chang (2007), found that speaking ability is related to speaking fluency and accuracy. According to Table 3, the present results show that the student perceptions of speaking fluency and accuracy is that the student thinks that speaking "accurately " is more important than speaking "fluently". For that reason, if we relate this result to the two teaching methods which are the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method, we can see that students think the Chinese oral proficiency is more important than the grammar and language semantic.

### **5.4 Different basic personal information influence the speaking ability of two teaching methods**

According to Table 4, learning perceptions on the gender differences, two of items reveal that the male students have bigger problems when they use the Direct Method to learn conversation and vocabulary in the class. One problem is "It is hard to understand the vocabulary when teacher use Chinese to explain" with responses from male (M=4.65) and from female (M=3.56); and another is "It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain" where males responded (M=4.53) and females (M=3.44). Therefore, these findings imply that the teacher needs to consider that the different gender have the different learning challenges and then give them various

teaching methods. This is similar to Chen (2009) whose study reveals that the good perspective of teaching and mutual respect can help CSL teacher s have better schemes for teaching oversea students.

Furthermore, according to Table 7 and 8 Latin America like Direct method than North America overall. Interestingly, the Europe, Asia students, and others rate both methods in moderately high prospection. List Asian students evaluation impact Chinese speaking at  $M=4.29$  while interesting activities by  $M=4.43$ . Therefore, the students like both teaching methods expect Latin America and North America.

These findings imply that different cultures of origin can influence the student preferences regarding what kind of teaching method are desired. Thus, the different culture will impact on the student learning motivation and effectiveness. The result is similar to studies by Chen (2009) and Huang (2014) which show that CSL is different from teaching Mandarin Chinese in the domestic elementary and secondary schools. The different countries' cultures and thoughts should change the teaching in TCSL.

## **Chapter 6 Conclusion**

### **6.1 Summary of Finding**

The research set out to explores the students' speaking ability who learning Chinese as second language in Grammar-Translation and Direct methods. The result reveals the Grammar-Translation method important method in the TCSL. Moreover, the oversea students like to learning grammar in the class and also think the method can help them improve their Chinese oral ability. Therefore, that is contrary to people common thought which is people have less learning motivation when they learning grammar.

Furthermore, the study display the Direct method which is need to have more interesting activities can improve the students' speaking ability. However, there is a contrary to the Yang and Tang (2013) research which indicated that the lower level students are preferring the Direct method.

In addition, the study discovers the cultural diversity will influence the learning motivation and effectiveness. Therefore, teacher how to teach the students from different cultures. For North America to first translation Chinese character into English with systematic lecture and then supplement with approach by character later. For Latin America students may not good at English speaking and listening so they may need translate English before written or reading activities to improve comprehension level.

In conclusion, Grammar-Translation method and the Direct method should combine in the class because both teaching methods can improve the student Chinese oral proficiency. However, the teacher need to consider the student different gender and countries when they are teaching in the class.

## 6.2 Limitation of Study

According to the limit on the sample size, the findings of this current study cannot be generalized to the entire population for the oversea students' thought about Grammar-Translation method and Direct method. Lack of countries balance was also one of the limitations. In this study, the number of Europe participants is higher than America participants because students who helped researcher to distribute the questionnaire were Europe students in Wenzao Chinese language center. Another limitation is there are some participants who is exchanging student. Moreover, Wenzao disciplines order the exchange students need to learn Chinese in Wenzao. Therefore, the some students may not have the higher learning motivation with learning Chinese.

## 6.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that future research can combine qualitative and quantitative research methodologies with balanced numbers of learners from different regions. In addition, future studies are also recommended to integrate the Grammar-Translation and Direct methods for differently mixed combinations of overseas students. These will help better explore effective Chinese teaching and learning pedagogy for different learners and optimal Chinese learning acquisition

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## **Appendix I**

### **The comparison of the speaking ability between Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method**

#### **in TCSL**

RQ:

1. How does the Direct method impact foreigner's speaking ability in TCSL?
2. How does the Grammar-Translation method impact foreigner's speaking ability in TCSL?
3. What challenges and suggestions are needed in integrating Grammar-Translation method and the Direct method in TCSL speaking development?

Dear all:

This questionnaire attempts to understand the teacher's and student's opinions between the Grammar- Translation Method and the Direct Method. This study is only for academic purpose, thank you for your cooperation. Have a nice day!

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	Very disagree ←→ Extremely agree					
Part I: The Grammar-Translation Method	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I like learning Chinese grammar (Wang, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Grammar is very important to decide student's speaking Chinese level (Wang, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I don't like to learn Chinese grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I like to use my mother language to learn Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It is necessary to correct the student when they speak the wrong grammar (Wang, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I like the use English translation by my teacher explain the text (Wang, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. In the Chinese class, I hope that the translation practice can be increased (Wang, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued on the next page

	Very disagree ←→ Extremely agree					
Part II: The Direct Method	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. I like a lot of oral work at the beginning of the Chinese learning (Lin, 1996)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. I like Chinese to be taught only in Chinese (Lin, 1996)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
10. I gain a lot benefits when teacher using Chinese to teach in class	<input type="checkbox"/>					
11. It is hard to understand the vocabulary when teachers use Chinese to explain	<input type="checkbox"/>					
12. It is hard to understand the conversation when teacher use Chinese to explain	<input type="checkbox"/>					
13. The interesting activities (pair work , group work) will help a lot in Chinese speaking skill (Lin, 1996)	<input type="checkbox"/>					

	Very disagree ←→ Extremely agree					
Part III: The Speaking ability	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. The speaking ability is the most important factor in learning Chinese.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Speaking “accurately” is more important than speaking “fluently”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Speaking “fluently” is more important than speaking “accurately”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I feel comfortable to speak Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. The good speaking ability is helpful for my study of Chinese speaking ability (Tseng, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I know the speaking ability is helpful for my future career. (Tseng, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I like to practice speaking in the Chinese language class (Tseng, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I'd like to concentrate about the practicing Chinese speaking in Chinese language class (Tseng, 2008)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued on the next page

Part III: Information about you

Gender:  Male  Female

Educational level:  High school & Vocational school  University  Graduate school  PH.D

Please check below the region of your home country where you were raised:

Asia Africa Europe North America Latin America Middle East  
Oceania Oversea Chinese

Ethnicity:  Chinese heritage  Non-Chinese heritage

Thank you very much!! ☺

