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CHINESE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE IN A HERITAGE LANGUAGE SCHOOL

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Abstract

Research shows that heritage language (HL) maintenance benefits both the individual and society, and that HL schools have a great impact on HL development. This study investigates the effectiveness of a HL program in supporting students to maintain their first language. I conducted a mixed methods research in a weekend Chinese HL school in a community in southwestern Ontario, utilizing various methods, such as questionnaires, focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations to explore this issue.

The results revealed that many students in the Chinese school held a positive attitude towards maintaining their HL. This school presented a place for students to learn their heritage language and culture. However, limitations such as lack of sufficient certified and qualified language teachers, lack of appropriate textbooks, teaching material and curriculum guidelines, as well as time and space restrictions impeded the quality of instruction and success of the program. More support is required to make the HL program more effective.

Key words: heritage language maintenance, heritage language education, heritage language programs, first language maintenance, Mandarin Chinese

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I also wish to thank the students and teachers in the Chinese school where I conducted this study. Their participation and cooperation helped me to complete this study.

Last, but not least, I must thank my parents for their love and unconditional support throughout this research.

Dedication

To my dear parents, and my beloved grandparents on their coming 70th Anniversary.

谨以此文献给我亲爱的父母，我敬爱的祖父母和他们的结婚 70 周年纪念。

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Chapter One: Introduction

Personal Reason for Doing This Study

I noticed an interesting phenomenon when I was a teacher in an international school in Shanghai. Some of my students had grown up in Canada, the United States of America or some other countries because their parents had immigrated to those countries several years ago. However, when they came back to China with their parents, these students could not speak much Mandarin.[1] Their Mandarin proficiency was much lower than students of their ages in China. Some of these students even had zero proficiency in Mandarin. At that time, I wondered why their parents did not teach them Mandarin and why the students were not asked to speak Mandarin exclusively at home. I had thought that it would not be difficult for those children to maintain their Mandarin, as long as their parents asked them to do so.

However, when I came to Canada, I found that it was not easy for immigrant children to acquire both oral and literacy skills in Mandarin. Numerous studies show that children tend to rapidly lose the ability to use their heritage language (HL) when they go to dominant language schools (e.g., Krashen, 1998; Wong Fillmore, 1991; Kouritzin, 1999; Portes & Hao, 1998). My volunteer experience in a Chinese school[2] supported this finding. Many children in the Chinese school preferred to talk to each other in English rather than Mandarin. At the Chinese school, I met some parents and

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[1] Mandarin is one of the eight main dialects in China. It is the official language in China and Singapore. I will further explain the characteristics of the Chinese languages in Chapter Three. In this paper, the term "Chinese" refers to Mandarin-Chinese.

[2] The school is a heritage language school in a community in southwestern Ontario. It is officially called the Chinese school. However, it provides language courses both in Mandarin and Cantonese. I will further introduce this school in Chapter Three.

when they knew that I used to teach Mandarin in China, they asked me how to improve their children's Mandarin language ability. My personal experience raised my interest in HL maintenance. I felt passionate about exploring the effectiveness of a HL program in students' maintenance of their first language.

Rationale of the Study

Immigration has contributed to linguistic and cultural diversity in Canada. Due to increased immigration since the mid-1980s, and the tendency of most immigrants to have a mother tongue other than English or French, the proportion of the allophone population (people who have a mother tongue other than English or French) in Canada has grown rapidly from 13% in 1986 to 17% in 1996 and to 20% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Within this population are speakers of Chinese languages[3] whose number is on the rise every year. China now ranks first among the countries whose people immigrate to Canada. The Chinese languages currently represent the third largest first language group in Canada (after English and French), as 3% of the Canadian population reported a Chinese language as their first language (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Some people may think that immigrants are reluctant to give up their heritage languages, and prefer to keep them, rather than acquire English. However, Krashen (1996) reviewed a number of studies that showed just the opposite was true: English is acquired surprisingly rapidly and heritage languages are typically not maintained and are rarely developed among young people. In fact, heritage languages are victims

[3] In the 2006 Census, 'Chinese languages' were broken down into seven major languages: Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Taiwanese, Chaochow (Teochow), Fukien and Shanghainese.

of language shift, a powerful process that favors the language of the country over the language of the family (Krashen, 1998; Wong Fillmore, 1991). As reported by the 2006 Census, 2.8 million Canadians whose first language is not English use English most often at home. This situation reflects the prevalence of transfer to English by many Francophones and allophones (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Support is needed to help immigrant children maintain their first language. Parents cannot work alone to counter-act intergenerational loss of language. In June 1977, the Multiculturalism Directorate's Cultural Enrichment Program was established at the federal level to support ethnocultural communities for the teaching of heritage languages. In the same month, the Ontario government announced the Ontario Heritage Languages program to accommodate the persistent ethnic demands as well as to minimize the backlash from those against publicly supported heritage language teaching (Cummins & Danesi, 1990). School boards are responsible for providing staff, and for designing and implementing the curriculum to help heritage language (HL) programs develop (Cummins, 1984).

The purpose of this study was to take a closer look at one of the Chinese HL schools in a community in southwestern Ontario and investigate how this weekend school supported students in maintaining their first language. This issue was worth investigating because the process of accelerated language loss in immigrant children and families has been documented repeatedly (Wong Fillmore, 1991; Kouritzin, 1999; Portes & Hao, 1998), and the loss of language can affect the development of immigrant children and has a negative impact on their families and society at large

(Wong Fillmore, 2000). However, research findings suggest that relying on parents alone cannot help the immigrant children become bicultural and biliterate (Li, 2006). More support from the schools is needed. The HL schools cannot do everything but certainly have a role to play. Thus, it is important to examine the role of HL schools. Why do students attend HL programs? How well can they learn their HL in such programs? Do they have enough chances to practice their HL? I explored both the teachers' and students' perspectives on such issues.

Terminology

First Language, Second Language, and Heritage Language

According to Klein (1986), first language (L1) is the language one learned first. L1 is the language a child learns during the first few years of life and therefore L1 acquisition is intimately bound to the child's cognitive and social development. The term second language (L2) is used in psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, and language pedagogy to refer to any language that is learned after the first, or native language, especially in educational settings (Danesi, 1983).

The concept of heritage language, as used in Canada, is an educational concept referring to the languages, other than English or French, which belong to the child's ethnocultural heritage or ancestry (Danesi, 1983). Heritage language has a lot of synonyms, such as ethnic, minority, ancestral, third (with English and French being the first two languages), langue d'origine (used in Quebec), non-official (as English and French being the official languages), and international language. They are mostly used interchangeably in the research literature. The most recent term which has been

adopted by the Curriculum Guidelines published by the Ontario Ministry of Education is international languages. It is definitely an emotionally neutral term because HL label can evoke association with ancient cultures and past traditions that "may fail to give the impression of a modern international language that is of value in a technological society" (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 509). HL acquisition has been regarded as a special type of second language (L2) learning (Danesi, 1983). Correspondingly, some HL teachers use theories and methods of L2 teaching in HL education; others use first language (L1) theories and methods. Hence, the confusing question is which language acquisition category we should adopt to label HL acquisition.

Many immigrant children have acquired their HLs as L1 to some degree—either monolingually or simultaneously with the majority language. However, a heritage language acquired in childhood may not develop further once schooling in the majority language begins. As a result of incomplete acquisition, many HL speakers and learners may exhibit fossilization and/or language attrition in the HL (Montrul, 2008). The dominant language becomes the language that the immigrant children know best. Their HL becomes their L2. To maintain their HL, they have to learn it as a subject. Thus, the HL becomes a special type of L2 studied in school.

Language Loss

Many different terms are also used in the literature for language loss: language attrition, language shift, language change, language death, language erosion, and subtractive bilingualism. Fase, Jaspaert, and Kroon (1992) point out that language loss

occurs when "a minority group member cannot do the things with minority language he used to be able to do" or when "some of the proficiency he used to have is no longer accessible" (p. 6). They refer language loss to the loss of ability to use the language.

Lambert and Freed's (1982) definition of language loss is relatively comprehensive. They state:

> The problem of language loss in general is not new. Previous research in a number of areas has documented the phenomenon of language loss, or as we have called it, language attrition. Broadly defined, language attrition may refer to the loss of any language or any portion of a language by an individual or a speech community. It may refer to the declining use of mother tongue skills by those in bilingual situations or among ethnic minorities in (some) language contact situations where one language, for political or social reasons, comes to replace another. Language attrition also refers to the deterioration of language skills in neurologically impaired patients and to the decline of certain types of language usage by the elderly. Likewise, language attrition may be used to describe the death of an entire language. There is yet another sense in which the term language skill attrition is used which has received considerably less attention. That is the loss of language skills by those who have studied and then discontinued the use of a second language (p1).

Lambert and Freed (1982) use the term "language attrition" for language loss. Their definition is comprehensive and refers to various situations of language loss.

Problem Identification

Researchers investigating L1 loss have reported that children from immigrant families tend to not maintain or develop their home language in the process of L2 learning (e.g., Cummins & Danesi, 1990; Guardado, 2002; Krashen, 1996). Not only are HLs hard to maintain, children shift to dominant languages

with remarkable speed (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

Through conducting a literature review on L1 loss and maintenance, I found that very little was focused on Mandarin. However, as already noted, the Chinese community is becoming the third largest ethnic community after Anglophones and Francophones in Canada. Many Chinese parents believe that children should maintain their unique language and cultural heritage (Li, 2006). Therefore, more research is needed to study L1 loss and maintenance in Chinese immigrant children.

Wong Fillmore (1980) points out that for the minority mother-tongue to be maintained in a multicultural environment, well-developed HL programs with teacher involvement, heterogeneous groupings, appropriate program content, supported L1 practice and corrective feedback are necessary. In this sense, the general purpose of my study is to contribute to the research literature on language maintenance by focusing on one such Chinese HL program. I intend to investigate the effectiveness of the weekend HL school in southwestern Ontario in helping students maintain their mother language. The broad research question for this research was, "How does the Chinese HL School aid in the maintenance of Mandarin?" Sub-questions I attempt to explore are:

1) What motivates students to attend the HL school?
2) What pedagogical practices occur in the HL classrooms in this school?
3) How often do students use their HL inside and outside of the classroom?

Overview of the Thesis

There are five chapters in this thesis: (One) Introduction; (Two) Literature Review; (Three) Methodology; (Four) Findings, Analysis and Discussion; and (Five) Conclusion and Recommendations. In this introductory part, I explain what motivated me to conduct this research, its rationale, my purpose, definition of key concepts as well as the research question. Chapter Two begins with a historical overview of HL education in Canada, reviews the recent research literature on HL maintenance and then addresses my theoretical framework. Chapter Three illustrates the methodology and design for the research. Chapter Four analyzes the data, and discusses the findings. Chapter Five summarizes and concludes the research findings and also provides suggestions for HL programs and future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter I provide a historical overview on the language policy both at the federal level and the provincial level, followed by a review of research in the field of HL loss and maintenance. The topics include negative consequences of HL loss, personal and national merit of HL development, and the role of schools in HL maintenance. Then, I present the theoretical framework.

Heritage Language Education in Canada

Historical Perspective

The prevailing attitude towards ethnic diversity in English Canada in the first half of the 20th century has been termed "Anglo-conformity." It was assumed that all ethnic groups should give up their own languages and cultures and become assimilated to the dominant British group. Education was naturally regarded as a major means of Canadianizing "foreign" students. Given the strong emphasis on Anglo-conformity in the schools, it is not surprising that bilingualism came to be regarded as a negative force in children's development (Cummins 1981). Canadian educators aimed at assimilating and eradicating students' L1 rapidly in order to facilitate the learning of English and the acquisition of Canadian values (Black, 1913, as cited in Cummins & Danesi, 1990).

The rise of Quebec nationalism and separatist sentiment led the federal government to establish the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (The B&B Commission) in 1963. On October 8, 1971, Prime Minister Trudeau proclaimed the policy of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework" under

which there are two official languages but all ethnic groups are encouraged to enrich Canadian society by continuing to develop their unique cultures. Book IV of the B&B Commission Report made explicit the value of linguistic diversity to Canada as a whole and recommended that educators explore ways of promoting the development of the linguistic resources but cautioned that promotion of heritage languages should not be at the expense of French or English.

In order to test the political grounds with respect to multiculturalism and multilingualism, the federal government commissioned two large-scale national surveys in 1970s: the *Non-Official Languages Study* (O' Bryan, Reitz & Kuplowska, 1976) and the *Majority Attitudes Study* (Berry, Kalin & Taylor, 1977). The *Non-Official Languages Study* showed that among ten ethnic groups surveyed, a large majority of individuals were committed to ethnic language maintenance for their children and felt that public institutional support was needed if this goal was to be achieved. This study was influential in the establishment of the Multiculturalism Directorate's Cultural Enrichment Program in June 1977 whereby support was provided to ethnocultural communities for the teaching of heritage language.

The *Majority Attitudes Study* showed that Canadians of English and French backgrounds were mildly positive towards the idea of cultural diversity; however, there was considerably more support for manifestations of cultural diversity such as ethnic festivals, community centres, and so forth, than there was for teaching heritage languages in regular school programs or for broadcasting in heritage languages. The policy of multiculturalism was put in place to highlight Canada's aspirations of ethnic

inclusiveness and of becoming a truly multicultural, pluralistic "mosaic" as opposed to what has often been referred to, stereotypically, as an American-style assimilationist melting pot (Baker, 2001).

Multiculturalism and the Heritage Languages Program (HLP) in Ontario

Support for HL education across Canada and the languages selected have varied regionally. What they have in common is the underlying belief that learning heritage languages is not just a way of transitioning students into monolingual programs in one of the official languages but an important form of educational and community enrichment (Duff, 2008). To help minority children gain strong L1 language and literacy skills will in turn support their L2 schooling. There might be social, cultural, and economic advantages in knowing more than one language.

In response to the federal multiculturalism policy, the Ontario provincial government and some of the larger school boards set up Task Forces and Work Groups in the early 1970s to formulate policies and programs with respect to the cultural diversity in their respective jurisdictions. The HLP was announced in the spring of 1977 and represented a carefully considered attempt to accommodate the persistent "ethnic demands" while minimizing the backlash from those opposed to publicly supported heritage language teaching (Cummins & Danesi, 1990).

There are three basic options for when classes may be held under the HLP: (1) on weekends; (2) after the regular 5-hour school day; and (3) integrated into a school day extended by half-an-hour. As the HLP is funded under the Continuing Education Program of school boards, instructors do not need to have Ontario teaching

certification and can be paid at a considerably lower rate than regular certified teachers.

On June 8, 1987, a document entitled *Proposal for Action: Ontario's Heritage Languages Program* was published. This document proposed several initiatives to consolidate the HLP. Implementation of the program by a school board would be required if 25 or more parents with children in the board requested it, then support would be provided for curriculum development, dissemination of resources, teacher training, and research (Cummins & Danesi, 1990).

Heritage language instruction recognizes Ontario's linguistic diversity by enhancing the children's understanding of themselves and their linguistic and cultural background, developing and/or enhancing the student's ability to use their heritage language, and encouraging all students to develop new language skills that will help them to function more effectively in Canada's multicultural environment as well as in the international community (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1991). In recent government documents, as well as in provincial educational curricula, the term heritage languages is being replaced by international languages to reflect a more forward-looking global focus as opposed to one that harks back to the ethnolinguistic roots of certain sections of the population (Baker, 2001).

Negative Consequences of Heritage Language Loss

Since it is difficult for people to believe that children can actually lose a language, it is often too late when the people involved in the process of language loss realize the consequences it can have on their family or children (Wong Fillmore,

2000). For this reason, it is necessary to point out the potential negative consequences of HL loss to parents, teachers and the public.

Wong Fillmore (1991) describes two cases of intergenerational conflict in which heritage language loss played a role. In one case, children received corporal punishment for showing disrespect for their grandfather who was visiting from Korea. The children in the family had stopped speaking Korean at home, and they made errors using markers that marked respect when trying to speak Korean to their grandfather. This linguistic error was interpreted as disrespect. In a second case, a mother and her 17-year-old son actually came to blows "when words failed them" (p. 344). The mother spoke only Spanish and her children refused to use Spanish, and even did "not acknowledge it when their parents spoke it" (p. 344). Without knowledge of one's HL, children lose a great deal. As Wong Fillmore notes, "talk is a crucial link between parents and children" (p. 343). When children lose their HL, they lose the means by which parents socialize their children. Parents cannot easily deliver their values, beliefs, knowledge, and culture to their children. What is more, when parents cannot talk with their children, the children lose the bits of advice that parents should be able to offer children in the everyday interactions with them (Wong Fillmore, 1991). Wong Fillmore's point indicates that HL loss by children has a great impact on communication among family members and may ultimately deteriorate the family relations.

Wong Fillmore's (1991) observations were further confirmed by Cho and Krashen (1998). The cases in Cho and Krashen's research show that the problem

extends beyond parent-child and grandparent-child communication, a lack of heritage language competence affects communication with a much wider social group. From their data, they add that when children loose their L1, they loose the chance to gain wisdom and experience not only from other elders but from the HL community as well. Hence the authors argue that heritage language development in school is "desirable and important" (p. 37).

Kouritzin (1999) paints a negative picture of the consequences of L1 loss from three perspectives: family relationships; self-image and cultural identity, and school relationships. She argues that the most common familial consequence of L1 loss is the subsequent "loss" of extended family. Many who lose their L1 are unable to maintain contact with extended family members who cannot speak English. In addition, Kouritzin states that it is very common for children who have lost their L1 to feel uncertainty about their own identity. Furthermore, she views uncomfortable school relationships as another negative consequence of L1 loss. Young children desire to fit in with school friends. Thus, they may stop speaking their L1 both at home and at school in order to learn the language most of their friends speak as quickly as possible. However, learning the mainstream language should not cost the loss of L1. One of the basic linguistic human rights of minority people is— or should be— to achieve high levels of bi- or multilingualism through education. Becoming at least bilingual is in most cases necessary for minorities to exercise other fundamental human right (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). There are many advantages of developing heritage language.

Personal and National Merit of Heritage Language Development

Consistent research shows that HL maintenance benefits both the individual and the society. The government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) has initiated early education in over 300 of the country's 820 languages. PNG celebrates rather than regrets its diversity, as noted by John Waiko, former Minister of Education, diversity of cultures is their greatest national resource. Diversity means more viewpoints to clarify, more ways of solving problems, more creative ideas, a greater ability to deal with change (Waiko, 1997).

What is more, the notion that language is a resource includes social, educational and economic domains wherein language facilitates effective communication and co-operation amongst people (Heugh, 1999). In most parts of the world people always have chances to communicate across language boundaries for purposes of trade. Research in Australia has shown the advantages of using the languages of the target market when selling goods in the global market place (e.g., Lo Bianco, 1996). Helping immigrant children maintain their HL is also a way to take advantage of their linguistic resource.

At the individual level, Cho and Krashen (1998) enumerate two reasons for developing immigrant children's HL. First, the ability to communicate comfortably with family and other members of the community is not the only advantage of HL development. Bilingualism provides cognitive and practical benefits. Second, HL education can be considered much more than simply a service to help children speak their HL better. HL education is also a multicultural education, with the goal of

helping students understand cultural universals and the commonalities that unite people.

Cummins (1993) reviews several Canadian research on HL development in home and school, and the data suggest that there is considerable validity to the claim that promoting HL proficiency will enhance the educational development of the individual child. When children develop HL skills, they are developing not only skills in that specific language, they are also deepening their knowledge of language and literacy in general and this entails concrete benefits in other areas of academic effort. HL literacy was also reported to facilitate third language acquisition (Swain & Lapkin, 1991). Based on two studies conducted in French immersion schools, Swain and Lapkin (1991) conclude that students in French immersion programs who have maintained their HL outperform those who have either not maintained their HL, or who are Anglophones without a HL other than English.

The Role of HL Schools

Language loss is not a necessary or inevitable outcome when children acquire a second language (Wong Fillmore, 2000). When learners have adequate support from parents, schools, and the larger community, they can be resilient and achieve success in becoming bilinguals (Tse, 2001).

HL schools have a great impact on HL development. Fishman (1980) claims that one of the main functions of most HL schools is to teach children about their ethnic identity. Long (1987) also has a similar view toward heritage schools. "By giving him/her [the student] the opportunity to know his background, the school

provides the child with more options to choose from when he begins to develop his own perspective on his identity" (p. 135). Shinbata (2000) is more explicit about the school as a place for socialization. She conducted qualitative research that addressed the problem of how immigrant parents from Japan pass on their native language to their children, and concluded that Saturday schools (i.e., HL schools) are one of the most effective ways to teach children a HL. She states

> The role of Saturday schools is not only to teach Japanese language and culture but also to offer a place to use it through interaction with other children and adults. School is also the place to nurture ethnic identity and friendship among children of the same age or beyond (p. 471).

HL schools not only provide a place for immigrant students to learn their heritage language and culture, but to also help them to nurture ethnic identity and friendship. Man (2006) examines the L1 use of Chinese students in Toronto, Canada. The data in her study illustrates that attendance at HL programs, enjoyment of the international language program, time spent on Chinese class-related activities and so on, are related to students' behavior with regard to frequency of speaking Chinese and contact with the media.

However, in Man's (2006) research, 11% and 5% of the participants rated the HL program as "unpleasant" and "very unpleasant," indicating that there is a lot of room for improvement of HL programs. The author suggests that Chinese language learning methodology should be adapted to cater more to the interests and needs of students. The curriculum could also be broadened to include opportunities for critical reflection on personal and collective identity, on issues of social justice, or on multiculturalism (Cummins & Danesi, 1990).

Essential Components for HL Programs

After reviewing several minority language education (MLE) programs around the world, Malone (2003) argues that in addition to leadership and support for the program among a critical mass of mother tongue speakers of the minority language, successful MLE programs in ethnic minority communities should include the following components:

1. Preliminary research that gathers information about the language situation, the community's motivation for MLE, and potential resources for the program (especially people).
2. Awareness-raising and mobilization activities that generates interest and support for the program at all levels.
3. Recruitment methods that bring motivated, knowledgeable and respected people into the program and build their professional capacity.
4. Government-produced curriculum guidelines that can be adapted to a variety of ML communities.
5. Graded reading materials, in the learners' home language and additional languages that help them build competence and confidence in reading for enjoyment and learning.
6. Monitoring, evaluation and documentation to assess learners' progress and identify program strengths and weaknesses.
7. Cooperation among the individuals and entities—government agencies,

NGOs and academic institutions—that are committed to supporting appropriate education in ethnic minority.

Theoretical Framework

The intention of my study is to examine the effectiveness of the HL programs in a Saturday school. Two theories are influential in the design of my study: Cummins' (1979, 1995) theory of interaction model of bilingual education; and Dörnyei's (1994) theory of motivation in L2 classrooms. I also use the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) scheme (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995) to observe the teacher-student interaction in the classroom.

Cummins (1979) suggested that many evaluations of bilingual education programs have produced uninterpretable data because they have failed to incorporate the possibility of the interactions between background, child input, and educational treatment into their research designs. He proposed that evaluations of bilingual education programs should aim to discover what the relevant dimensions of child input are and how they interact with different patterns of educational treatment. He designed an interaction model (see Figure 2.1) to allow Child Input variables to be systematically related both to Background and Educational Treatment variables.

A central tenet of the interaction model is that "talking and writing are means to learning" (Bullock Report, 1975, p. 50). The use of this model in teaching requires a genuine dialogue between student and teacher in both oral and written modalities, guidance and facilitation rather than control of student learning by the teacher, and the encouragement of student-student talk in a collaborative learning context. This model

emphasizes the development of higher level cognitive skills rather than just factual recall, and meaningful language use by students rather than the correction of surface forms. In short, pedagogical approaches that empower students encourage them to assume greater control over setting their own learning goals and to collaborate actively with each other in achieving these goals (Cummins, 1995).

The core of the interaction model is its explicit assumption that the outcomes of bilingual education can be understood only in the context of the interaction between Educational Treatments and Child Input and Process variables. It carries important implications for both program planning and evaluation. For program planning, it implies that educators take account of the diversity of input characteristics of their students and adopt a differentiated approach to bilingual education. Evaluations must follow a "planned variation" approach in order to find the optimum blends of Input and Treatment characteristics under different socio-cultural conditions (Cummins, 1979).

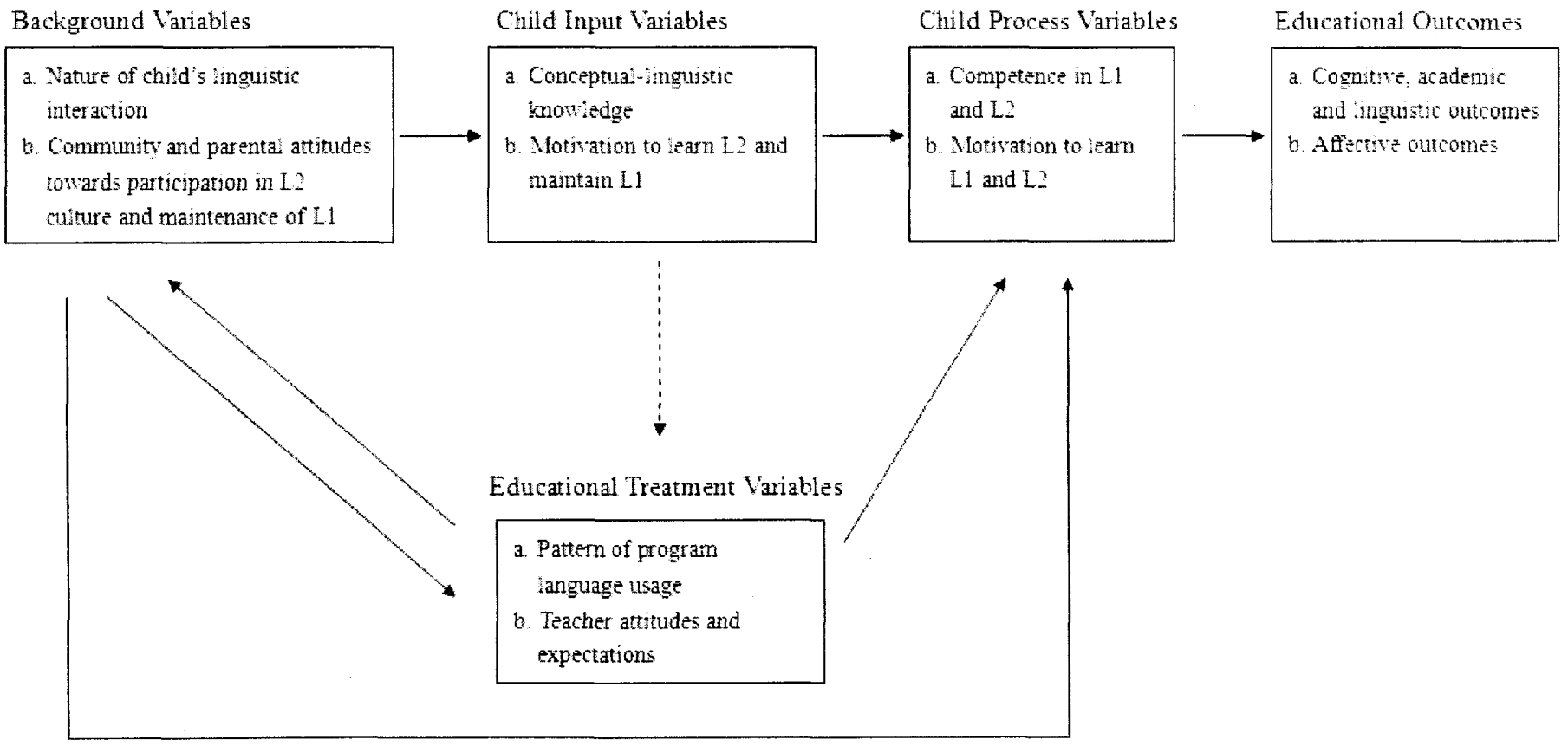

Figure 1: Interaction Model of Bilingual Education (Cummins, 1979)

The other theory that influenced my work is developed by Dörnyei (1994). I used his theory of motivation in the L2 classroom to examine the motivation variable in Cummins' (1979) interaction model. By combining research done by a variety of researchers in various fields, Dörnyei (1994) presents not only a framework based on a more holistic approach, but also makes direct connections with motivation in L2 classroom. The framework developed by Dörnyei (1994) has three levels which coincide with the three basic constituents of the L2 learning process (the L2, the L2 learner, and the L2 learning environment) and also reflects the three different aspects of language (the social dimension, the personal dimension, and the educational subject matter dimension).

The first level is the Language Level, and within this category lays both the integrative and instrumental motivational subsystems. The former is associated with a positive disposition toward the L2 group and the desire to interact with the community. The latter is related to the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or a higher salary. The second level of the construct is the Learner Level. This category includes both the need for achievement and self-confidence. Need for achievement is considered to affect a person's behaviour in every facet of life, including language learning. Self-confidence refers to the belief that one has the ability to produce results, accomplish goals or perform tasks competently. The third level is the Language Situation Level which consists of course-specific motivational components, teacher-specific motivational components, and group specific motivational components.

In order to look at the nature of classroom pedagogies, I implemented an observation scheme called Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995) to conduct classroom observation. COLT effectively distinguishes between more or less communicatively oriented classrooms and characterizes these differences along several dimensions. This observation scheme is divided into two parts. Part A describes classroom events at the level of episode and activity, and Part B analyses the communicative features of verbal exchanges between teachers and students as they occur within each episode or activity (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995).

There are seven main features in Part A:

1. Time: the start time of each episode/activity
2. Activities and episodes: separate units which constitute the instructional segments of a classroom.
3. Participant organization: the way in which students are organized. Three basic patterns of organization are differentiated in this category: Class, Group and Individual.
4. Content: the subject matter/theme of activities. Three major content areas have been differentiated: Management, Language and Other topics.
5. Content control: who selects the topic (or task) that is the focus of instruction.
6. Student modality: the various skills involved in a classroom activity.

7. Material: classroom materials in terms of text type and source of materials.

The second part of the COLT observation scheme consists of an analysis of the communicative features occurring with each activity. The seven communicative features are as follows:

1. Use of target language: the use of the native language versus the use of the second language.
2. Information gap: the extent to which the information requested and/or exchanged is unpredictable.
3. Sustained speech: the extent to which speakers engage in extended discourse or restrict their utterances to a minimal length of one sentence, clause or word.
4. Reaction to code or message: whether teachers and/or learners react to the form or the meaning of an utterance.
5. Incorporation of student/teacher utterances: various ways in which teachers and students react to each others' utterances.
6. Discourse initiation: the frequency of self-initiated turns by students.
7. Relative restriction of linguistic form: the degrees of linguistic restriction imposed upon the students' utterances.

The COLT scheme can effectively describe instructional differences in a variety of L2 programs (Ammar & Spada, 2006).

In the next chapter, I explain how I applied both Cummins' (1979) and

Dörnyei's (1994) theories and the COLT scheme (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995) to investigate how the Chinese HL school contributes to students' L1 maintenance.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter starts with a brief introduction to the main characteristics of the Chinese language and the research site, and then introduces the research design, the methods of data collection, the participants' background information, and the research process.

Chinese Language

The Chinese language is claimed to have the largest number of speakers of all languages of the world (Weber, 1997). There are eight major dialects in China (Hu, 1995):

1) Mandarin (spoken in various sub-dialect forms by approximately two-thirds of China's population across the northern, central and western regions of the country);
2) Wu (spoken in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, including the city of Shanghai, by 8.4% of the population);
3) Xiang (spoken in Hunan province, 5%);
4) Gan (Jiangxi and Hubei provinces, 2.4%);
5) Hankka (Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Jiangxi provinces, 4%);
6) Cantonese (Guangdong province, 5%);
7) Northern Min (Fujian, Taiwan provinces, 1.2%);
8) Southern Min (Fujian, Guangdong, Hainan, Taiwan provinces, 3%).

The above dialects are not mutually comprehensible. They are very different in terms

of pronunciation, usage, and, to some extent, also with regard to grammar. Each of the above dialects has numerous sub-dialects. Some sub-dialects are unintelligible to each other, whereas, some are mutually understandable. However all of them are unified by the fact that they share a common script— the Chinese character. Mandarin is the standard language in China. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Mandarin is widely announced under the name of Putonghua in Mainland China. In the west, it is generally referred to as "Mandarin." It integrates the pronunciation of the Beijing dialect, the grammar of the Mandarin dialects and the vocabulary of colloquial Chinese literature. In 1956, it became the medium of instruction in all schools (Hu, 1995). No matter which dialect children use at home, they start to learn Mandarin since school age or even earlier at home.

As many people from Guangdong, Fujian, Taiwan and Hong Kong immigrated to other countries during the last century, Cantonese, Min, and Hakka are widely spoken among Chinese communities overseas. A lot of people who speak Cantonese as their L1 immigrated to Canada in the past decades. Thus Cantonese is very popular in the Chinese communities in Canada. However, in recent years, the number of Mandarin speakers living abroad has increased rapidly due to heightened immigration to many parts of the world including Canada. In this paper, the term "Chinese" or "Chinese language" refers to the Mandarin-Chinese.

Learning Chinese is quite different from learning Romance, Germanic or Slavonic languages. As Chinese writing is based on pictogram, the Chinese characters do not provide the learner with much phonetic information. Many Chinese

speakers and teachers believe that all characters must be learned by heart. It requires extensive memorization to build literacy.

Research Site— The Chinese School

In order to investigate the effectiveness of heritage language (HL) schools, I chose to do a case study on a weekend Chinese HL school, which is located in a community in southwestern Ontario.

Heritage language programs are created to provide students with a place to learn their native language and culture within the Canadian society. HL schools encourage students to embrace a sense of belonging in Canada while still maintaining a sense of pride from their origins and their native language (Walker and Young, 1989).

The weekend HL school that I chose to do my research was officially established in March, 1981, with financial help from the Ontario Ministry of Education, and guided by the local district Catholic School Board. The initial enrolment in 1981 was 18 students. During the 2008/9 academic year, the number of students enrolled reached 300. This Chinese school provides both Mandarin and Cantonese language classes from JK to Grade 12. However, credit courses are offered only in Mandarin through Grade 9 to Grade 12. To be qualified as a credit course, there must be 110 or more hours of instruction. Because the school only operates on Saturdays, there must be 3.5 hours of instruction each week to meet the minimum 110 hours requirement. There are usually 32 sessions each academic year and students cannot miss six or more classes in order to get the credit. There are also

several extracurricular programs in this Chinese school, including singing, theatre club, Chinese calligraphy and painting, arts and crafts, as well as traditional Chinese art classes. All the classes are conducted in a rented space in a Catholic school on Saturdays.

In following the Ontario Ministry of Education's guidelines, all the programs implemented at this Chinese school aim to: 1) help Chinese immigrant students to maintain their heritage language and culture; 2) increase non-heritage students' interest in Chinese language and culture; 3) provide heritage and non-heritage students the best Chinese language education; and 4) optimally prepare them for the economic globalization (from http://www.XX.com/currentnewspages/2008-2009/Brochure.doc).[4]

When I came across a brochure with the "Aims and Objectives" of the HL program, I decided to do my research in this school as their prior aim was within my research interest. This was an ideal site for me to investigate how effectively a HL program can help immigrant students maintain their heritage language and culture. The second reason I chose this site is that this HL program is one of the largest Chinese heritage schools in Ontario. Its scale was a good indication that I could find enough participants for my research. Also, as I volunteered in one of the classes at this school from October 2007 to June 2008, I had already established a level of trustworthiness prior to my research and could gain access to the facility without much difficulty.

[4] I changed the name of the website so that this heritage language school could not be identified.

Mixed Methods Research

Based on the literature review in the previous chapter, heritage languages are difficult to maintain and are rarely developed. The intention of my study is to contribute to the existing work on how school administrators, teachers, and immigrant parents can work together in order to create optimal learning contexts for HL learners at home, in school, and in the community. As noted in Chapter I, the broad research question for this research is, "How does the Chinese HL School aid in the maintenance of the Chinese language?" To answer this question, I used a mixed methodology approach to conduct this research. Creswell and Clark (2007) define mixed methods research as a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. They state:

> As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumption that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (p. 5).

Mixed methods research is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research and can better interpret data than either approach alone.

To explore the effectiveness of the Chinese school, I administered questionnaires to students, conducted interviews with teachers and students, and also observed the classroom. Questionnaires provided me with quantitative data. I used descriptive statistics to describe students' background information and perspectives on HL development. However, this was not enough to answer my research question.

Qualitative data from classroom observations and interviews helped me to better understand how the students view their HL and their learning, and how teachers perceive this HL program and their teaching. The intense contact with both students and teachers offered me valuable information.

The application of various methods to gather data also ensured the trustworthiness of this study. This multiple data collection approach is referred to as "triangulation" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). According to Campbell and Fiske (1959), triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating validity. Researchers need to be confident that the data generated are not simply artifacts of one specific method of collection (Lin, 1976). Such confidence can be achieved when different methods of data collection yield substantially the same results. The more the methods contrast with each other, the greater the researchers' confidence (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Collecting Data

There were three stages of data collection in this study. The first stage included a questionnaire that sought information about students' background, Chinese language proficiency, and language use inside and outside of the classroom. The second stage was classroom observation. The last stage consisted of an individual semi-structured interview with the Grade 12 teacher and focus group interview with students.

Although the Chinese school provides both Mandarin and Cantonese language classes, this study only focused on the Mandarin program. As I mentioned early in

this chapter, Mandarin credit courses were offered in this school from Grade 9 to Grade 12. I focused my study on these four grades. As the students cannot miss six or more classes in order to get the credit, the high attendance rate provided me consistent data in the four classroom observation sessions.

With the permission of the HL school principal and the Mandarin teachers of Grade 9 to Grade 12, I introduced the study to prospective Grade Nine, Ten, Eleven and Twelve students at the beginning of their Saturday class. After explaining the rationale of my study to the students and answering their questions, I handed out parental consent forms (see Appendix I) to students who thought they might be interested in participating. During the following weeks, I followed up by collecting permission forms and answering further questions regarding the study. I sought students with a Chinese background. In this study, I define "Chinese background" as a student who was born in China or for whom one or both parents are originally from China. Those who met this criterion and completed a consent letter with both students' and parents' consent were finally invited to participate in the study. There were altogether 32 students who volunteered to participate. Among them, seven students consented to take part in the focus group and 16 students in Grade 12 consented to be observed in the classroom for four sessions.

I also invited the teachers who taught these four grades to take part in the study as I was interested in not only students' understanding of the HL program, but also teacher's perceptions. As the number of students in Grade 9 and Grade 11 were less than 22 and thus did not reach the School Board's requirement, these two grades

had to share one teacher. Therefore, only three teachers taught the four grades. I explained the purpose of my study to all three teachers and invited them to participate. However, only the Grade 12 teacher responded to my request. I obtained his consent during my second visit to the school.

Participants

The students who participated in this study were recruited from grades 9 to 12 in the Chinese school. By my fourth visit to the Chinese school, 32 students altogether handed in permission forms. All of them had a Chinese background and were invited to take part in the first stage of this study. The numbers of participants in each grade are as below:

Table 1

Numbers of Participants in Each Grade

	Participants		
	Male	Female	Total
Grade Nine	1	2	3
Grade Ten	2	4	6
Grade Eleven	2	5	7
Grade Twelve	7	9	16

As shown in this table, more female students took part in this study than male students and half of the participants were in Grade 12.

Among the 32 participants, seven students agreed to continue to participate in the focus group interview. Three of them withdrew after they completed the consent forms because of some personal reasons and finally, four students took part in the focus group interview. One was from Grade 10; two from Grade 11; and one from Grade 12.

Timeframe

As the school was only open on Saturdays, my research time was also limited to this time frame. I started visiting the Chinese school from February, 2009. On my fourth visit in early March, I collected all the consent forms from the teachers and students. Questionnaires were distributed to the students in late March and early April. In April and early May, I conducted classroom observations on the four Saturdays. After three sessions of classroom observation, I conducted a focus group interview with the four students who showed further interest in my study and had completed the consent forms. By the end of the last observation session, I interviewed the Grade 12 teacher.

Questionnaire

Using questionnaires is one of the most common methods of data collection in second language research as questionnaires are easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processable (Dörnyei, 2003). Questionnaires can allow researchers to investigate phenomena such as perceptions or motivation that are not observable, as well as allowing them to investigate sufficient quantities of an observable phenomenon in a restricted time frame (Adams, Fujii, & Mackey, 2005).

The major reason I used questionnaires as the first stage of my research is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of (a) researcher time; (b) researcher effort; and (c) financial resources. The school was only open on Saturdays. It would be time consuming for me to interview every student to collect information about their

background, language proficiency, and attitudes towards HL school. In addition, I intended to do the survey during class time, so I needed a survey instrument that could decrease classroom interruption. For this reason, the questionnaire was the best choice. By administering questionnaires to the students, I collected information I needed in less than half an hour, and the personal investment required was a fraction of what would have been needed, for example, interviewing the same number of students (Dörnyei, 2003).

From late March to early April, I spent two Saturdays administering questionnaires (see Appendix II) to Grades Nine, Ten, Eleven and Twelve students. The questionnaires were written in both English and Chinese. The students could choose to do either version, so that their language proficiency would not interfere with their ability to respond to the questionnaire. However, only one student asked for the Chinese version and the rest of the participants all completed the English version.

This first stage of my study was conducted in each grade's classroom. With the permission of the teachers, I spent 20 minutes in each class to allow the participants to finish the questionnaires. All the students remained in the classroom regardless of their participation in the study so that the teachers would not recognize the participants from the non-participants. Before starting, I told the students that they should not write their names or anything that would identify them as individuals in order to protect their anonymity.

The majority of the questions were closed-items. "A closed-item question is one for which the researcher determines the possible answers..." (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 93). As some students may feel uncomfortable expressing themselves in writing, closed-items are more user-friendly to them because these items do not require the respondents to produce any free writing; instead, respondents are to choose one of the alternatives (Dörnyei, 2003). When options are already presented to the students, they do not need to worry about choosing their own words to fill the questionnaire. Some of the questions in the questionnaire were adapted from other research on HL maintenance (e.g., Costaki, 1993; Chinen & Tucher, 2006; Kim, 2006; Yang, 2005).

Classroom Observation

Classroom observations are useful in investigating internal and external factors in L2 Learning as well as in investigating the relationships between various factors (Adams, Fujii, & Mackey, 2005). While data from questionnaires provided me with a general idea of the students' background information and perspectives on HL maintenance, classroom observations allowed me to investigate students' language use and teacher's strategies to motivate the students by inspecting the classroom interaction.

I decided to do classroom observations in Grade 12 because I volunteered in this class for one school year when they were in Grade 11 and most of the students were already familiar with my presence. The teacher who taught this class was not aware of the participating students in the study. This guaranteed that he did not treat

students differently due to their participation.

I spent four Saturdays, one to two hours each time, in Grade 12 observing and taking field notes in April and early May. During my observations, I coded classroom activities using the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) scheme (see Appendix III) to examine how the classroom pedagogies promote language development. The COLT observation scheme is divided into two parts: Part A describes classroom events at the level of episode and activity; and Part B analyses the communicative features of verbal exchanges between teachers and students and/or students and students as they occur within each episode or activity. This scheme was developed to examine the relationship between instructional input and learning outcomes (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995).

I made some modifications to the COLT scheme for my research (see Appendix III for both the original and revised versions). I used COLT Part A to examine the overall communicative orientation of the instructional setting. However, I did not use all categories in Part B to observe the class, as in my previous visits to the Grade 12 classroom, I noticed that the teacher seldom gave corrective feedback to his students. Also, I was interested in the language use inside and outside of the classroom, and not how the teacher corrected his students' mistakes. For these reasons, I only implemented the first three categories in Part B to explore if target language was used, to examine the extent to which the students were engaged in activities where the message was reasonably unpredictable, and to investigate whether speakers engaged in extended discourse, or restricted their utterances to a

minimal length of one sentence, clause or word. I also implemented two features on Part B that only refer to student verbal interaction to measure the frequency of self-initiated turns by students and the degrees of linguistic restriction imposed upon the students' utterances.

According to Spada and Fröhlich (1995), all categories in Part A of the scheme should be done in "real time;" that is, while the observers are present in the classroom as the lesson unfolds. During my observations, I wrote down the starting time of each activity and episode and placed checkmarks in the appropriate boxes under each of the five major features: (1) Participant organization; (2) Content; (3) Content control; (4) Student modality; and (5) Materials. During this time, audio or video recordings should have been made for later Part B coding. However, as not all the students in the class participated in this study, I was not able to audio or video record the sessions. I coded Part B categories in "real time" as well. The coding procedure for Part B was to place checkmarks in the appropriate columns for any of the relevant categories which occurred within a teacher or student turn. A turn is defined as any (and all) speech which is produced by a speaker until another person begins speaking. Therefore, a turn can include as little speech as one word, or as much as several sentences in extended discourse (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995). As I made modification to Part B categories and did not use all of them, I was able to code every utterance by teacher and students correctly.

Interview

An interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory

channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Interviewing allows researchers to understand not only the participants' perceptions but also to understand probable future actions (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). At the centre of the interview is the goal of understanding how the person being interviewed thinks (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). In qualitative research, questions are not set in stone; rather, it is up to the researcher to use them as a guideline when interviewing (Merriam, 1990). I used semi-structured interviews as they allowed for flexibility and individuality between the researcher and the participant (Bogdan & Bilken, 2003). Dependent on the study, interviews may take place between two people or more. I conducted a focus group interview with the students as they proved to be more effective in prompting younger students to actively engage in the interview process (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I also conducted a semi-structured interview with the teacher. I have provided the details below.

Teacher interview. After the final classroom observation, I interviewed the teacher who taught Grade 12. He was informed that his participation was strictly voluntary and that he could withdraw at any time with no consequences. The interview was semi-structured, providing a set of questions, but which, according to the answers given, could result in changes in the remaining questions or in the addition of new ones. While I had a solid base of questions to cover, a semi-structured format provided data that were not limited by my beliefs about the area of interest and gave me the freedom to uncover information I had not previously considered.

The interview questions were based on results of previous questionnaires, classroom observation and student focus group (see Appendix IV). The interview with the teacher was conducted in Mandarin because it was easier for the interviewee to talk about a topic in Mandarin. Mandarin is also my first language and I have been using it throughout my life. Since we shared the same background, Chinese ethnicity, it was easier for both of us to speak Chinese in order to develop a better understanding of his perception. The interview lasted for 45 minutes and I transcribed it in full after the interview. I e-mailed the transcription to the Grade 12 teacher to make sure that all the data was correct. Before analyzing the data, I translated the key themes of the interview to English.

Student focus group. After administering the questionnaire, I put together a focus group of four students, one from Grade 10, two from Grade 11, and one from Grade 12. There was no volunteer in Grade 9. One of the Grade 11 students was male and the rest were female.

According to Krueger and Casey (2000), focus group aims at listening and gathering information. A permissive environment should be created by the researcher to encourage participants to share perceptions and points of view without pressure. Focus groups are a specific kind of interviewing where the researcher is able to access both individual and interactive opinions. They have also been proven useful following the analysis of a large-scale quantitative survey (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007). The purpose of my questionnaire was to generate answers to my research questions, especially to the questions about language use outside of the

classroom and language proficiency development while the focus group provided more detailed information on such issues and explored reasons behind students' choices of their language use.

Before conducting the focus group, I sent an e-mail to the students who agreed to take part in the focus group interview, explaining in detail the process and providing them with sample questions. The students were informed that I would give all of them pseudonyms to protect their anonymity and that they had the right to decline to answer any question during the interview or to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished. I also asked them if they would allow me to tape record the interview. Students selected a time that best suited their schedules. They finally chose to do the interview after an international language program celebration which was held on some other school site. We conducted the interview just outside of the school auditorium. This location was very quiet, and thus our interview was not interrupted.

Before we started the interview, I asked the students which language they wanted to use. They finally chose to conduct the interview in Mandarin. I told the students that they could use English any time they needed to during the interview and that I could repeat my questions in English if they had difficulty in comprehending questions in Mandarin. As the interview was conducted in Mandarin, I had a chance to discern the students' communicative skills in their HL. Throughout the interview with the students, I was impressed by their capability of comprehending my questions perfectly and by their ability to elaborate on their own

experiences and thoughts articulately in Mandarin. They only switched to English to express their feelings a few times. Topics of discussion within the focus group ranged from the use of Mandarin inside and outside the HL classroom, students' opinions on and reasoning for the use of Mandarin, their understanding of the importance of HL maintenance and to their perspective on the HL program (see Appendix IV). The interviews were tape-recorded and I also took field notes during the interview to ensure I had information about some details that might not have been captured by tape-recording. The focus group lasted for 45 minutes. I also transcribed it in full. Before analyzing the data, I translated the key themes of the focus group interview to English as well.

Analyzing Data

Data analysis was a process of getting to know the data and, informed by theory discussed earlier, finding out which information seemed frequent or common, as well as which was unique or peculiar. While doing the analysis of the study findings, I always kept in mind my research objectives, aware that they give researchers a direction to organize the data, guide the research inquiry, discover significant issues to the research, and keep the data manageable (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Merriam, 1998). I paid attention to whether the findings were answers too and whether they reflected my research purpose. I analyzed my data inductively to withdraw important patterns and themes which were constantly repeated within the data (Merriam, 1990) and to find common responses that could help organize the data thematically. "In inductive data analysis the goal is generally for research

findings to emerge from the frequent or dominant, or significant themes within the raw data, without imposing restraints as is the case with predetermined coding or analysis schemes" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 179).

The data was collected from 4 main sources: (1) questionnaires; (2) classroom observations; (3) student focus group interview; and (4) teacher individual interview. Merriam (1998) suggests that data collection and analysis can take place simultaneously in qualitative research. Analysis should begin with the first interview, the first observation, and the first document read. It is an interactive process that allows the investigator to produce believable and trustworthy findings (Merriam, 1998). Findings from questionnaires and classroom observations helped me to generate questions for the interviews. This analysis-data collection process enabled researcher to consistently reflect on the study, organize the data, and develop analytical thoughts.

During the interviews, I also took field notes to put down some details that might not be captured by tape-recording. As one of the primary data sources, field notes were very important in analyzing the collected information. They provided the detailed information that related to what I saw, heard, felt, thought and learned, or what the tape-recorder missed during the course of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). I wrote down my observations and impressions right after the interviews to record what the tape recorder could not describe. I also tried to keep notes of my reflections, ideas, challenges, or rudimental analysis of the research whenever something came to my mind, as well as the participants' comments, reactions and

feedback to this study.

With the participants' permission, both the student focus group interview and the teacher interview were tape-recorded. Prior to transcribing the interviews, I listened to all the tapes several times to try to recall vivid images of the interview scene: faces, voices, and gestures of the participants, my feelings, and interview locations. Once I became familiar with the content of the tapes, I started to transcribe all their utterances. This repeated listening to the tapes made me feel comfortable with the information, and facilitated transcription of the recording.

Limitations

As time was limited, I could only observe four sessions of the Chinese class. I had planned to conduct the classroom observations on four consecutive Saturdays. However, this plan was interrupted by some school activities. Also, two of the sessions I observed only lasted for one hour due to some extra curricular activities. These limitations might have influenced both the quality and quantity of the data I collected through my observations.

In addition, there were only four students who volunteered to take part in focus group interview. Therefore, I did not have the luxury of being able to select participants from a volunteer pool according to their language proficiency. The participants in the focus group interview all succeeded in maintaining their HL. I did not have a chance to listen to the voices of those who were not proficient and comfortable in using their HL.

This chapter illustrates the procedure of my research. In Chapter Four, I

present the data from questionnaires, classroom observation and interviews, and discuss the findings in light of the literature.

Chapter Four: Results, Analysis and Discussion

This chapter begins with analysis of data from the questionnaire, classroom observation, and interviews, followed by a thorough discussion of the findings in light of the literature. The research question of this study was, "How does the Chinese HL school aid in the maintenance of Mandarin?" The discussion focused on students' motivation, classroom pedagogical practices, and students' language use.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire requested students to provide information about their age, gender, number of years staying in Canada and studying in a heritage language (HL) program, and the language they prefer to use with parents and siblings. Students were also asked to self assess their abilities in Mandarin in all four skills on a 6-point scale. In addition, the questionnaires required the students to indicate their motivation to learn Mandarin, and to comment on the HL program they attended.

Background Information

Age, gender, number of years spent in Canada. The first part of the questionnaire included general questions such as age, gender, and the number of years students had lived in Canada. Thirty-two students completed the questionnaire. Their ages ranged from 13 to 18-years-old and they were enrolled in Grades 9 through 12 in the Chinese school. There were 12 boys (37.5%) and 20 girls (62.5%) among the participants. Twenty-five students (78.1%) were born in Mainland China, Hong Kong or Taiwan. They came to Canada between the ages of 1 to 17 following their parents' immigration. The remaining seven participants were born in Canada to

Mandarin-speaking parents. The average length the students spent in Canada was 9.2 years.

Mandarin schooling after immigration to Canada. All the participants attended a HL program for an average of six years. Among the 32 participants, seven students were born in Canada. They had all been studying in a HL program for more than eight years and the average number of years they had been studying in a HL program was 11. The students who came to Canada following their parents' immigration also started to attend a HL program in the first couple of years after their arrival. The average number of years that they had been living in Canada was 7.8 and they had been studying in a HL program for an average of 4 years.

Language use at home. In the questionnaires, the students were asked to describe the language they used with their parents and siblings if applicable. Table 2 shows that only 10 participants (31.3%) spoke with their parents only in Mandarin or other Chinese languages. Twenty-one students (65.6%) reported that they used both Chinese and English when talking to their parents. The remaining one student spoke English only at home. Table 3 shows that among the 20 students who had siblings, only 5 (25%) spoke with their siblings only in Mandarin or other Chinese languages. The number of students who spoke English only with their siblings was the same as that of those who spoke only Mandarin or other Chinese languages. The remaining half students used both Chinese and English when talking to their siblings. The results indicated that students used less Chinese and more English with their siblings than with their parents.

Table 2

Language Used with Parents

	Number of students	Percentage
Mandarin/other Chinese languages only	10	31.3
Mandarin/other Chinese languages and English	21	65.6
English only	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Table 3

Language Used with Siblings

	Number of students	Percentage
Mandarin/other Chinese languages only	5	25
Mandarin/other Chinese languages and English	10	50
English only	5	25
Total	20	100.0

Mandarin Skills

To measure the students' HL development, I investigated their perceptions of their HL proficiency by using task-based "can-do" statements in the second part of the questionnaire. These statements asked the participants how well they could complete a number of tasks involving the four linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There were altogether 16 items. Items one and two focused on listening skills; items three to seven on speaking; items eight to 12 on reading and items 13 to 16 on writing. A 6-point scale was used to measure the participants' self-assessment of their linguistic skills. Scale one was labeled strongly disagree which meant the participant could not complete the task at all. Scale six was labeled strongly agree which meant the participant could complete the task very well.

Students were asked to self assess their language proficiency according to each statement. Fishman (1969) asserts that there is a strong correlation between self-reporting and levels of second language proficiency (cited in Stevens, 1999).

Of all the participants, three students ranked themselves the highest score in all the tasks. All these three students were newcomers to Canada. Two of them had lived in Canada for less than one year and the other came to Canada three years prior to the study. I calculated the mean scores for each student's responses under the categories of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For example, items one and two focused on listening skills. I calculated the mean score of these two items for each student. Among the 32 participants, the lowest mean score of these two items was 1.00 and the highest was 6.00. I also calculated the mean scores for all tasks. Only 8 participants (25%) thought their Chinese was very good and got a mean score higher than 5 in all 16 statements.

Table 4

Student Language Proficiency Self-assessment

	N	Lowest	Highest	Average	Std. Deviation
mean scores for listening tasks	32	1.00	6.00	4.75	1.264
mean scores for speaking tasks	32	1.80	6.00	4.04	1.245
mean scores for reading tasks	32	1.40	6.00	4.00	1.523
mean scores for writing tasks	32	1.00	6.00	3.87	1.431
mean scores for all tasks	32	2.06	6.00	4.08	1.155

Table 4 shows that the average of students' mean score for all 16 statements was 4.08 out of 6. However, the average score varied in each category of listening,

speaking, reading, and writing. According to their self-assessment, students' listening was much better than the other three skills whereas the average score for their writing ability was the lowest among four linguistic skills.

Attitudes Towards Maintenance of HL

In the third part of the questionnaires, students were asked whether learning Mandarin was important to them and how fluent they wanted to be in Mandarin. A 6-point scale was used to measure students' perceptions of learning Mandarin. Scale one indicated participants strongly disagree with the statement whereas scale six indicated participants strongly agree with the statement.

Table 5 shows that the participants had a positive view towards their HL. Many participants thought that maintaining and improving Mandarin language proficiency was important to them. The mean score for this statement was 4.69 out of 6 and 18 students (56.3%) chose 5 or 6 in this statement. The major reason they believed it was important to maintain and improve Mandarin was that it would benefit their future career. Twenty-seven students (84.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that Mandarin proficiency would help them become successful in their future career.

When asked if they wanted to be fluent in Mandarin in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, more than half of the participants chose 6 in all four skills and indicated that they wanted to be as fluent as individuals living in China. There were also 19 students (59.4%) who strongly agreed that they wanted to use Mandarin throughout their life. Also, the mean scores for these statements illustrated that students emphasized listening and speaking more than reading and writing.

Table 5

Students' Perceptions on Learning Mandarin

	N	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Std. Deviation
Maintaining and improving Mandarin language proficiency is important to me	32	2	6	4.69	1.256
Mandarin proficiency will help me become successful in my future career	32	1	6	5.22	1.263
I want to be fluent in listening to and understanding Mandarin	32	1	6	5.31	1.120
I want to be fluent in speaking Mandarin	32	1	6	5.19	1.256
I want to be fluent in reading Chinese	32	1	6	5.03	1.379
I want to be fluent in writing Chinese	32	1	6	5.00	1.414
I want to use Mandarin throughout my life	32	1	6	5.09	1.279
I want to be as fluent as Chinese living in China	32	1	6	4.81	1.662

Perceptions of Chinese School

The last part of the questionnaire investigated the HL school support in relation to HL development. I asked questions focusing on students' academic achievements, socialization, and personal feelings towards the HL school. Again, a 6-point scale was used to measure the participants' attitudes toward the HL school. In each statement, scale one indicated participants strongly disagree with the statement and scale six indicated participants strongly agree with the statement.

Table 6 illustrated that the results in this part were in sharp contrast to the results in the previous parts. While the participants appeared to have a very positive

perception of learning Mandarin, they did not seem to enjoy the Chinese school nor did they think they had learned much HL or Chinese culture at school. The Chinese school aimed at helping Chinese immigrant students maintain their heritage language and culture, and provoking non-heritage students' interest in Chinese language and culture. However, not all the students enjoyed the time they spent in this Saturday school. Only five participants (15.6%) strongly agreed that they enjoyed the Chinese school whereas six of them (18.8%) strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean score for this statement was merely 3.45 out of 6.

Table 6

Students' Perception on Chinese School

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I enjoy Chinese school	32	1	6	3.45	1.660
I have many friends in Chinese school	32	1	6	4.91	1.208
I often use Mandarin when I talk to my friends at Chinese school	32	1	6	2.09	1.355
I have many chances to practice Mandarin in class at Chinese school	32	1	6	3.58	1.480
I am learning much Mandarin in Chinese school	32	1	6	3.52	1.623
I am learning about Chinese culture in Chinese school	32	1	6	3.27	1.464

Students made many friends in Chinese school. However, they did not often use Mandarin to socialize. English was the most common language among students. Fifteen participants (46.9%) reported that they never used Mandarin to communicate with friends in Chinese school. The mean score for this question was only 2.09 out of 6, which was the lowest in the whole questionnaire.

As for the Chinese class, the mean scores for the last five questions of the questionnaire were all lower than 4 out of 6. Only three participants (9.4%) strongly agreed that they had many chances to practice Mandarin in class at Chinese school. In addition, there was the same percentage of students (9.4%) who chose scale 1, which meant they strongly disagreed with this statement. Many students also reported that they disliked the textbooks they were using in the HL program. Fifteen participants (46.9%) chose 1 or 2 in this question and only 3 students (9.1%) claimed that they liked the textbooks very much. When asked if they had learned much Mandarin or Chinese culture in Chinese school, 13 and eight of the students chose 5 or 6 respectively in these two statements.

Classroom Observation

Data in this part was from the classroom observations. I spent four weekends observing the language use between teacher and students in the Grade 12 classroom. Every Saturday, the class started at 12 o'clock in the afternoon and ended at 3:30. I started my observation from 1:15 when the second period of class began. The observations lasted for 2 hours on my second and fourth visit and only for 1 hour on my first and third visit due to some school activities. Teacher-students interaction and their language use in the classroom were coded using the COLT scheme. I recorded the starting time of each activity and episode during the observations and placed checkmarks in the appropriate boxes under each of the five major features: Participant organization; Content; Content control; Student modality; and Materials in COLT scheme Part A. To analyze the data, I calculated the percentage of time

spent on each of the categories under the major features according to the checkmarks. I also applied COLT scheme Part B to code teacher's and students' utterances. Within each teacher and student turn, I placed checkmarks in the appropriate columns whenever any of the categories occurred. After the data had been coded, each category of Part B was calculated as a proportion of its main feature. To calculate the proportion, I counted the number of checkmarks in each category and divided by the total number of checkmarks under its particular feature.

COLT Scheme Part A

Feature I: Classroom organization. The first category on COLT scheme Part A was participant organization. The procedure of teaching and learning in Grade 12 was almost the same every week. Before class, the teacher wrote down the schedule on the blackboard so that every student would know what they were going to learn that day. The teacher wanted the students to get familiar with his routine and follow each step. The class usually started with learning new characters. Students were asked to write down the characters they did not know on the blackboard. The whole class worked together to analyze those characters. The students often created their own stories to explain the meaning of the characters. These interesting stories helped other students remember the characters. After they all learned the vocabulary, students were divided into three or four groups and had a spelling contest. One student from each group came to the blackboard to do the spelling contest. Their teammates were allowed to give them hints in Mandarin. Following this was reading the text. The whole class repeated after their teacher sentence by sentence. After that,

students worked in groups to translate every sentence into English. When they all understood the meaning of the text, students were asked to read the text themselves. The class usually ended with the assignment of homework.

There were both teacher-centered and group-work interactions in the Grade 12 classroom. Sometimes students also had to work individually. The percentage of time spent on each pattern of organization during my observation is demonstrated in Table 7. "Whole class" means one central activity led by the teacher or students or choral work. "Group" means groups or pairs of students work on either the same or different tasks. "Individual" means students work on their own, on the same or different tasks.

Table 7

Percentage of Time Spent on Each Patterns of Organization

	Whole class	Group	Individual
Visit 1	25%	75%	N/A
Visit 2	53.3%	30%	16.7%
Visit 3	12.5%	12.5%	75%
Visit 4	42.1%	36.8%	21.1%
Total	38.9%	36.6%	24.5%

A little more than one third of the time was spent on group-work interactions during the four weeks. And among the time spent on whole class organization, 58.7% was teacher-centered, 16.3% was led by one or more students, and the last quarter was choral work (e.g., repeating a model provided by the textbook or teacher).

Feature II: Content. One of the crucial issues in L2 learning and teaching is whether the primary focus of instruction should be on meaning or form (Spada &

Fröhlich, 1995). In Grade 12, the main focus was vocabulary and the meaning of texts. During my four-week observations, 12.1% of the time was spent on vocabulary learning. As Chinese characters do not provide learners with phonetic information, students were asked to memorize how to pronounce and how to write all the new characters. The teacher asked students to analyze the characters to help memorize them. Every student had a chance to practice writing the new characters on the blackboard in the spelling contests.

Time spent on reading texts and translating texts to English accounted for 12.5% and 22.6% respectively. First, the teacher asked the students to read the text after he did. Then, students were divided into several groups to read the text. They had to help each other in the group with the pronunciation of new words and phrases. They could write down *pinyin* (the Chinese alphabet) on their textbook if they did not know the pronunciation of some characters. After this, students were asked to read the text group by group. After reading texts was translation. Students were asked to translate the whole text. Students in each group could work together and each of them could choose one paragraph to translate. When finished, they had to read their translation out loud. Students were not asked to translate the text word by word, but sentence by sentence. The remaining half of the class time was spent on other topics such as a small quiz, talking about Chinese tea culture, and signing cards for each other, etc.

Feature III: Content control. This feature examines whether the topic of instruction in the classroom is determined by the teacher, the text, or the students. In

Grade 12, the topics or tasks in the classroom were determined by either the teacher or the text. The instruction was focused on the textbook. Sometimes when the topic was about Chinese culture, the teacher would provide students with supplemental material from other books or the internet. Every week, the topic of instruction was already decided and students were assigned to various tasks, such as reading texts and completing exercises in the textbook. Students were seldom involved in their learning as co-participants. They did not have a chance to choose what to learn or what to do in the classroom.

Feature IV: Student modality. The category of student modality in COLT scheme Part A measured the focus on the four skills in the classroom. Students in Grade 12 were seldom engaged in listening practice only, rather they were encouraged to integrate their skills practice to reflect a more authentic use of language (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995).

When students were asked to analyze Chinese characters, they got the chance to practice reading and speaking. They first had to read the characters and then tried to make up their own stories to describe the characters. When one of the students was telling the story, the other students had the chance to practice their listening skill. In spelling contests, students were divided into several groups and worked as a team. In each group, one of them came to the blackboard to do the spelling contest and the others could give him/her hints in Mandarin. Those who came to the blackboard to do the spelling contest had chances to practice writing skill. When they tried to help each other in the contest, they also practiced listening and speaking skills. Text

translation also helped students improve their listening, speaking, and reading skills. The students had to read the texts and help each other to understand the meaning of the texts.

Feature V: Materials. In Grade 12, the type of material used in the classroom was extended written text: stories, dialogues, connected sentences, paragraphs etc. During the four weeks of my classroom observation, audio or visual material were never used. There were two sources of material. One was the textbook and the other was the supplemental material provided by the teacher. The supplemental material usually came from other books or the internet. This kind of material was originally intended for native speakers of Mandarin.

The textbooks used in Grade 9 to 12 in the Chinese school were specifically designed for second language teaching. Published in Australia, Hanyu (meaning "Chinese Language"), the textbook is a series of course materials in Mandarin for secondary schools. There are five levels in the whole series: beginners; intermediate stage 1; intermediate stage 2; intermediate stage 3; and senior stage 4. The series consists of a student book, activity book and audio cassette/CD. The first two levels also have character writing book. This series was one of the most commonly used textbooks in Chinese HL schools in Canada. The current edition was revised in 1999. It introduces characters from the first unit, reduces the use of pinyin in stages, and contains practice exercises for all four skills. The exercises in the student book and activity book included crossword puzzles, fill in the blanks, complete the sentences with given words, make dialogue with given topic, listen to CD and answer

questions etc. In Grade 12, some of these exercises were used as homework. The teacher seldom asked the students to do these exercises during class time.

As there was no authors' introduction in the textbooks, I could not tell if the authors were originally from China. The curriculum guideline in the Chinese school was developed based on these textbooks. Classroom instructions were focused on the textbooks. In Grade 12, although the textbook contained an audio CD, the teacher never used it during my observations. This was probably due to the limitation of school facilities. There was only one cassette player in the Chinese school and all the teachers had to share it.

COLT Scheme Part B

As mentioned in Chapter Three, Part B of COLT analyses the communicative features of verbal exchanges between teacher and students and/or students and students (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995). I coded the teacher-student interactions under the following features: use of target language; information gap; sustained speech; discourse initiation; and form restriction. As I introduced in Chapter Three, the coding procedure for Part B was to place checkmarks in the appropriate columns for any of the relevant categories which occurred within a teacher or student turn. I calculated the proportion of data of each category in its main feature. In the following part, I explain the definition of each feature and present the data from the Grade 12 class. As my research was focused on teacher-student interactions, I did not code any student-student interactions.

Use of the target language. This category investigated which language was

used most often in the classroom. In this research, the target language was Mandarin. All verbal utterances produced by the teacher or students were coded as Mandarin or English. I calculated the proportion of Mandarin and English use. Table 8 showed that there was a high percentage of time spent on the use of the target language. The teacher used English when he wanted to explain some complicated grammar. Sometimes he gave instructions in both Mandarin and English when he asked students to work in groups, although the students did those activities every week and were already familiar with the routine. Occasionally, the teacher also used some single words such as "good," "well," "ok" to draw students' attention and then went on talking in Mandarin. Students usually answered the teacher's questions in Mandarin. When they talked about some broad topics such as Chinese tea culture, students used more English. I also noticed that students often responded to their teacher in Mandarin, but when they worked in groups and communicated with each other, they tended to use much more English than Mandarin.

Table 8

Target Language Use

	Teacher utterance		Student utterance	
	Mandarin	English	Mandarin	English
Visit 1	79.9%	20.1%	81.1%	18.9%
Visit 2	89.3%	10.7%	88.0%	12.0%
Visit 3	66.7%	33.3%	31.0%	69.0%
Visit 4	95.0%	5.0%	82.1%	17.9%
Total	87.0%	13.0%	80.9%	19.1%

Information gap. Information gap refers to the extent to which the information requested and/or exchanged is unpredictable (i.e., not known in advance).

Predictable information is easily anticipated and known in advance to the questioner whereas unpredictable information is not easily anticipated. Pseudo requests are those to which the speaker already knows the answer and in genuine requests, the information requested is not known in advance by the questioner, i.e., if the teacher asks the students to tell the day of the week. This question is pseudo request and the students' answer to this question is predictable information. If the teacher asks the students to report what they did the day before, then the question is a genuine request and the students' answer is unpredictable information.

Most of the predictable information was coded in spelling contests and text reading. The spelling contests took place after the students learned all the new words. Students knew which words their teacher would say in the contests, so I coded teacher's utterances as predictable information. When students were asked to read the texts with the teacher, I also coded their utterances as predictable information because they had learned the texts and the teacher had read the texts for the students before he asked the students to do so. Table 9 demonstrated that the percentage of unpredictable information and genuine requests in both teacher's and students' utterances was a little higher than that of predictable information and pseudo requests.

Table 9

Information Gap

	Giving information		Requesting information	
	predictable	unpredictable	Pseudo requests for information	Genuine requests for information
Teacher	40.3%	47.1%	0.8%	11.8%
Students	44.2%	36.6%	1.2%	18.0%

Sustained speech. The category of sustained speech was intended to measure the extent to which speakers engaged in extended discourse or restricted their utterances to a minimal length of one sentence, clause or word (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995). Ultraminimal speech refers to student turns which consist of one word only or two-word speech fragments, such as "yes," "no." Minimal speech refers to teacher and students turns which consist of long phrases, one or two main clauses or sentences, such as "group one got five points," and "which paragraph shall I translate." Sustained speech refers to teacher and student turns which consist of at least three main clauses. For example, when the class was talking about Chinese tea culture, one of the students commented: "Longjing is not black tea. It is green tea. I do not like green tea. I prefer the taste of black tea."

Data from observations indicated that 81.6% of teacher utterances were minimal which consisted of long phrases, one or two main clauses or sentences. 19.4% of teacher turns were sustained, which consisted of at least three main clauses. Students delivered less sustained turns than their teacher did. Only 4.9% of student utterances were sustained. 82.3% of student utterances were minimal such as two or three word phrases and the remaining 12.8% were ultraminimal, which consisted of

one word only or two-word speech fragments.

Discourse initiation and form restriction. These two features on COLT scheme Part B only referred to student verbal interaction. Discourse initiation measured the frequency of self-initiated turns by students. As I explained in Chapter Three, a turn of teacher or student utterance is defined as any (and all) speech which is produced by a speaker until another person begins speaking. According to this definition, I coded 328 student utterances altogether during the four weeks. Among these utterances, 29.6% were self-initiated by students.

Form restriction referred to the degrees of linguistic restriction imposed upon the students' utterances. Spada and Fröhlich (1995) list some typical examples of restricted use of form:

- transformation and substitution drills;
- reading aloud by individual students;
- identification of vocabulary items (e.g., translations, giving synonyms, opposites etc);
- singing.

During the observations, I noticed that the teacher never asked students to give response in a particular form. The only activity that restricted use of form was reading texts aloud which occupied 42.7% of student turns.

Focus Group Interview with Students

The focus group interview explored themes such as students' motivation to attend HL school, students' language use inside and outside of the classroom, and

pedagogical activities in the classroom. Participants were given pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

Background Information

There were four participants in the focus group interview. Angela, Grade 12, came to Canada four years ago. She applied to take the Grade 12 course in this Chinese school when she came to Canada because the Grade 9 course was too easy for her. However, the school did not accept her as the Grade 12 class was already full at that time. Hence, she did not attend any HL program until September 2008 when the school had spaces for new Grade 12 students. Jane, Grade 11, came to Canada when she was in Grade 4. She attended the HL program in some other Chinese school after she came to Canada. However, as that school only offered courses from JK to Grade 6, she stopped learning Mandarin at school after Grade 6. Two years later, when she was in Grade 8, she heard about this Chinese school, so she applied for it and got enrolled. Mike, the only male focus group participant, was a newcomer to this country. He came to Canada eight months prior to the study. He was placed in Grade 10 in a regular school, but was in Grade 11 in the Chinese school because Grade 10 was too easy for him. He started to attend the HL program right after he came to Canada. Rachel, Grade 10, came to Canada at the age of two with her parents. She had been studying in the HL program for almost ten years. She also attended some other Chinese school when she was in elementary school.

Before we started the interview, I asked the students how confident they were speaking Mandarin and which language they felt more comfortable when they talked

to people. Angela, Jane, and Rachel told me that they felt comfortable with either language. Since they always used Mandarin at home with their parents, they did not have any problems in comprehending or expressing themselves in Mandarin. Although Mike spoke Cantonese at home, he could speak Mandarin fluently because Mandarin was the instructional language in his previous school in Hong Kong. In fact, as a newcomer, he felt more comfortable expressing himself in Mandarin. After a short discussion, we decided to conduct the focus group interview in Mandarin. I told the students that they could ask me to explain questions in English. I also told them that they could switch to English any time they wanted.

The students then explained why Mike could take a course in a different grade at his regular school. In the Chinese school, students should be at least in Grade 9 in their regular school to take credit courses. The classes in the Chinese school were divided by grades rather than students' language proficiency level. Although students were allowed to take a course in any grade level according to their proficiency, none of them would go to a lower grade than in their regular school so that they could get a credit. Once the students decided which class to attend, they could not go back to lower grades or retake the course in the future. Students who had recently immigrated to Canada usually tended to take a course in a higher grade because they had already learned Mandarin in their home country for many years and the textbooks used in the Chinese school were rather easy for them.

Parental Attitudes

Discussion in the focus group interview started from the topic on parental

attitudes towards first language (L1) maintenance and L2 learning. Mike reported that his mother talked to him about the importance of learning Mandarin at home. His mother believed that there would be a market for Mandarin in the future so she wanted her son to speak Mandarin fluently. Rachel commented that as she already understood the importance of Mandarin, her parents did not need to discuss this with her. All the participants' parents gave support to their children by sending them to Chinese school, helping them with homework, and buying them books or DVDs that could facilitate their Chinese language learning.

As Angela, Jane and Mike came to Canada with their parents after school age, their parents were concerned about their English proficiency as well as their Mandarin maintenance. Jane's parents sent her to ESL programs during the first couple of years when they came to Canada. Angela's and Mike's parents also asked them to improve their English proficiency. Angela complained that she was not allowed to go back to China during the summer because her parents wanted her to stay in Canada so that she would have more chances to learn English.

Students' Attitudes and Motivation

Students in focus group all held a positive view towards maintaining their HL. All the participants trusted that it was important for them to maintain and to improve their HL. When they were asked why it was important to learn their HL, the participants referred to future career opportunities and the ability to communicate with people who speak Mandarin. "Definitely it is important, because being multilingual is a crucial advantage in future careers in a diversified economy such as

that of Canada. I can also communicate to my family members and other people when I travel to China" (Rachel, focus group interview, May 2, 2009). The potential advantage of being able to speak more than one language and the competence to communicate with other Chinese people motivated the participants to learn their HL. Angela further explained that if she would have a chance to go back to China and get a job there in the future, she would like to be able to use Mandarin as fluently as people living in China. If she were to stay in Canada, she still wanted her Chinese to be good enough to communicate, although she may not learn ancient poems and idioms any more.

The participants also mentioned that their attitudes towards maintaining their HL were shaped as they grew older. "The longer I have been here, the more I want to maintain my HL. I never thought about this several years ago, but now I realize that it is important to me" (Jane, focus group interview, May 2, 2009). As they grew older, maintaining their HL became more and more important to them.

After discussing the importance of maintaining their HL, students also expressed their concerns about participation in the mainstream culture. The participants, especially those who came after school age, all tried hard to fit in the new environment when they came to Canada. They tried to make new friends and learn a new language. Sometimes this led to the loss of their heritage language and culture. Both Jane and Rachel stated that they once stopped speaking Chinese when they started to go to regular school in Canada. At that time, they could understand people talking in Chinese, but they did not know how to say a word in Chinese. They

did not want to speak Chinese, either. Jane commented that this was a result of wanting to fit in the new environment. This situation lasted for almost two years until they realized the importance of being able to speak one's HL.

When students were asked why they attended a weekend HL school, gaining a high school credit was cited as their first reason. A credit with high marks was essential for university entrance. As Mandarin was the participants' L1, it was easy for them to get high marks in the HL school. However, the participants also reported that some of their classmates came to the Chinese school just because of their parents' request. Those students were not highly motivated to learn Mandarin and they usually did not take active part in the class activities. In the Chinese school, students' Mandarin proficiency varied due to the length of time they stayed in Canada and their motivation to learn Mandarin. Students who recently came to Canada or had a high motivation to maintain their HL usually had higher Mandarin proficiency than others. Rachel added that some of her classmates might withdraw from the program the following year, because they found that it was harder and harder to get high marks. As their regular high school curriculum was already very intensive, she reported that they preferred to spend time on some other easier subjects.

The possibility of being with friends or making new friends with similar backgrounds through the class was also cited in the decision of attending HL school. In the Chinese school, students could meet a lot of Chinese people and make friends with similar background. As a newcomer, Mike commented that he felt more

comfortable in the Chinese school than in regular school because he was surrounded with people of similar background and did not have to speak English in the Chinese school.

Another point repeated by the students was "future career." They believed that learning Mandarin was important to their future and agreed with their parents that there would be a market for Mandarin in the future.

Classroom Activities

Although I did not have access to other classes in the Chinese school, students in the focus group described what they usually did during the class time. The student from Grade 10 listed their class activities as "reading texts, listening to old records, completing listening exercises, writing exercises, and contests with teams, sometimes a dictation or test, sometimes writing tasks, and sometimes talking about random things" (Rachel, focus group interview, May 2, 2009). According to the participant, these activities mainly focused on the texts and the exercises in students' textbooks. Students were asked to complete the exercises individually.

Participants from Grade 11 reported a similar routine in their class:

> We are asked to read the text and then the teacher will explain the meaning. After that we do the exercise in the textbook. When we finish, we can have free time. Sometimes we are also asked to make a dialogue according to what we have learned. (Jane, focus group interview, May 2, 2009)

Compared with Grade 10, the students in Grade 11 spent more time on completing exercises during the class time because their teacher also taught Grade 9. Due to the number of students in Grade 9 and Grade 11, students in these two classes had to share one teacher. Their teacher had to split the three-hour class into two parts and

went back and forth from one classroom to the other. She usually asked the students to read the texts and then she explained the meaning of the texts. Sometimes students were asked to make a dialogue according to what they had learned. When the teacher had to go to the other class, she asked the students to complete the exercises in their textbooks. The students could have free time after they finished the exercises.

One of the participants in the focus group used the word "boring" to describe the "free time" they had. "It's quite boring. When our teacher goes to teach the other class, we just talk to each other" (Rob, focus group interview, May 2, 2009). The participants found that they had not learned much Mandarin in the class, especially when their teacher was not in the classroom. Although there was a volunteer helping the teacher to supervise the class when she went to teach the other grade, he did not teach the students anything. He only gave students help when they had difficulty to complete the exercises in their textbooks. The volunteer was a Master's student from the University of Western Ontario, who spoke Mandarin as his first language.

The student responses illustrated a common routine of reading texts and completing exercises individually in all the classes, which provided them with the chance to practice reading and writing skills. However, the form of the target language used in these activities was usually restricted. The exercises that the students were asked to complete were often focused on vocabulary or grammar. Students also had the chance to practice listening and speaking skills in the classroom when they had dictation or made dialogues. Overall, the participants felt that they had more opportunities to complete written activities than speaking

activities, because some of their classmates spoke English all the time.

The difference between Grade 12 and other classes was that the other grades were more teacher-centered whereas the Grade 12 teacher usually divided his students into several groups and made them help each other to remember new words and to comprehend texts. The teacher applied various contests of spelling, translation or reading texts to motivate the students. Each week, the winning group got candy from the teacher.

Some participants commented that the classroom activities were sometimes quite boring and monotonous. In Grade 11, when the teacher was not there, the class was not disciplined and students often talked to each other. Most of the time, their conversation was off task and in English. There were also some activities that could arouse students' interests. Rachel commented that she enjoyed language contests because it was teamwork and fun for everybody.

During the interview, participants also discussed their textbooks and the diversity of language proficiency in their class. The students did not like their textbook very much. There were no color pictures to attract them and some of the topics were out of date. Mike complained that he had already learned everything in his class when he was in Grade 7 in Hong Kong. Rachel also felt that the textbook was too easy for her. However, there were many other students in their classes who could not use Mandarin fluently. Those students thought the textbook was difficult. It was a big challenge for teachers to teach a class with such diversity. Differentiated instruction was necessary in these classes.

Comments and Suggestions

When the students were asked how much help they got from the HL school, Rachel admitted that the previous HL school she attended had helped her more. She was younger at that time and had learned a lot of the basics she knew at the time of the interview. The current Chinese school had not helped her to improve a lot. However being in this environment every weekend helped to maintain her Mandarin. Jane believed that students could create opportunities to practice Mandarin for themselves in the Chinese school.

> I believe you get as much opportunities to speak Chinese as you give yourself. I personally enjoy chatting with the teachers in Chinese and so therefore I get more opportunities that way, but at the same time, if I didn't take that initiative, I would not be GIVEN these opportunities. (Jane, focus group interview, May 2, 2009)

Jane believed that she gave herself a lot of opportunities to practice listening and speaking skills by chatting with the teachers in Mandarin. She also suggested that students in the Chinese school should take advantage of this environment and speak more Mandarin in class to improve their proficiency.

The focus group interview ended with the students' suggestions to the HL school. They hoped that there would be more school activities, such as Chinese karaoke songs, and speech contests. These activities could provide them with more opportunities to practice Mandarin. They also hoped that there would be more interesting classroom activities, such as learning Mandarin by watching Chinese talk shows or some other TV programs. They wanted to learn their HL in a more interesting and pleasurable way.

Individual Interview with the Teacher

The semi-structured individual interview explored themes such as students' language proficiency, curriculum guideline, and teacher training. In the following part, I will first introduce the participant's background information and then present the data from the interview.

Background Information

Only the Grade 12 teacher responded to my request and participated in this research. The Grade 12 teacher was in his 40s. He immigrated to Canada with his family several years prior to the study. He used to teach in a university in China before coming to Canada. Mandarin was his first language. Before coming to Canada, he had one year experience teaching Mandarin as a foreign language in a college in the U.S. At the time of the interview, he was a certified teacher in Ontario and taught computer and math full time in a private secondary school in a city in southwestern Ontario. He was recruited by the Chinese school in September, 2008.

Perceptions on HL Maintenance

The Grade 12 teacher believed that maintaining their HL was very important to the students. Mandarin proficiency would benefit the students in their future life. Being able to speak Mandarin can help students access more information than people who do not speak Mandarin. He considered losing one's first language as a waste of resource. In the interview, the teacher commented:

> Mandarin is students' first language. If they lose their first language, it is a waste of resource. Compared with other languages, Mandarin is much easier for students to learn and to master. With this advantage, in the future, they can access more information than people who do not speak

> Mandarin. I believe that there will be more commercial connection between Canada and China. Mandarin proficiency will benefit students in their future careers. (Interview with teacher, May 9, 2009)

This point was echoed by students in the focus group. They also thought that learning Mandarin was important for their future career and believed that there would be a "market" for Mandarin in the future.

Curriculum Guideline

There is no standard curriculum guideline for the HL programs in Ontario. The Chinese school wrote its own curriculum map and presented it to the school board. The curriculum map contained objectives about what students should learn in each term, including vocabulary, sentence patterns, grammatical rules, etc. Rather than drawing up a curriculum guideline and then looking for suitable textbooks, the Grade 9 to 12 curriculum map used in the Chinese school was written based on the textbooks. The Grade 12 teacher was given the curriculum map when he first came to this school in September, 2008 and was requested to teach according to the guideline. He also got a supplementary guideline, which was written in detail on a weekly base. The curriculum guideline ensured the consistency of instruction in this school. When new teachers came to this school, they could easily find out what their students had learned in the previous years according to the curriculum map. However, if students transferred from one school to another, they would find that each school has their own standards.

Teacher Recruitment and Training

The school board did not interfere with teacher recruitment prior to September

2008. However, since September 2008, they decided to give priority to those teachers who had a teacher's certificate in Ontario regardless of their experience in teaching Mandarin before. The Chinese school changed teachers for Grade 9 to 12 according to this instruction. During the time of the study, both the Grade 10 and Grade 12 teachers were certified teachers and worked full time in regular schools. The principal was trying to recruit more teachers who had a degree in a related major.

All the teachers in the Chinese school had the opportunity to attend the training on professional development (PD) day. According to the Grade 12 teacher, the PD day he attended this year was not specific to HL teaching and learning, but just general lectures on classroom organization. The Grade 12 teacher thought that it was very important to be trained in Canada because the students in Canada were very different from those in China in preference for classroom activities, classroom management and ways of learning. Thus, teachers should know how to teach them accordingly. He found that using various activities was very important in the classroom. Teachers should use various activities to motivate students and to get them involved in their own learning. He enjoyed the lectures on PD day and found that he could always learn a lot from them. However, this one-day training was the only opportunity provided by the school board and did not concentrate on language teaching. The teacher was not educated to be a language teacher and thus, was not competent in theories and methodologies of language education. Although sometimes there were some training sessions organized for the Chinese HL

educators in cities nearby, not all of the teachers in the Chinese school had the opportunity to attend the training due to the limitation of school funds.

Classroom Organization

During the interview, the Grade 12 teacher emphasized that teachers should use what they had learned in teachers' college to organize their classes. He stated:

> You should use what you have learned in teachers' college to organize your class. The students here are totally different from those in China. You should know how to teach them. I think activity is very important in the classroom. You should use activities to motivate students, to get them involved in learning. (interview, May 9, 2009)

He mentioned the difference between the students in China and the students in Canada was that they learn in different ways. He believed that classroom activities are useful in teaching HL in the Chinese school. In his class, he tried to motivate his students by organizing various activities. He asked the students to analyze the Chinese characters. By telling a story of the character, students could remember how to write the character more easily. This procedure also helped students practice their listening and speaking skills. After being a teacher for many years, the Grade 12 teacher found that students were often highly motivated by group competitions. He arranged all kinds of contests helping students to learn. When he found that students got bored with the old games, he tried to create some new ones. Students practiced listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a pleasurable environment.

Due to their age at the time of immigrating to Canada or some other reasons, students in the Chinese school varied in their Mandarin proficiency. The teacher gave me an example to elaborate the huge discrepancy of Mandarin proficiency in Grade 12. On my last observation session in the Grade 12 class, the teacher asked the

students to sign cards for each other because they were graduating soon. He showed the students some example sentences about friendship written by famous people in history. Although these sentences are beautifully written, they are not related to students' daily life and not all of the students can understand them. Students had to sign each other's card in Mandarin. When they finished writing, the teacher collected all the cards and read them. He found that some students could write very beautiful sentences whereas, others could only write, "I love you." There were even students who did not know how to write "I love you" in Chinese and could only sign others' cards in English. To place all these students in the same class created a big challenge for the teacher.

In order to take care of those who could not speak and write fluently, the teacher spent a lot of time explaining the mean of new words and texts and practicing writing new characters in the classroom. He also prepared some extra work for highly proficient students. Students who completed the extra work could get bonus marks for their final score. The teacher had to prepare different material or teaching plan for different students. This increased his workload. Nevertheless, there were still some students who felt they could learn nothing in the Chinese school.

Assessment of Students' Progress

Every year, teachers in the Chinese school are required to provide the school board with evaluations for students' report cards. The students were evaluated by their homework, quizzes and exams. They were also asked to do a project on a topic of Chinese culture. The project accounted for 10% of the final mark, and

interestingly it had to be done in English because people in the school board could not understand Chinese. The Grade 12 teacher spent one Saturday afternoon explaining this project to the students and helped them choose their topics. The project was a 5-page paper introducing any topic that related to Chinese culture. Students could choose to write about anything in which they were interested, for example, a city in China, a famous person in Chinese history, or a kind of art such as Peking Opera.

Role of the HL School

As for the role of the HL school, the Grade 12 teacher indicated that the Chinese school does help the students to maintain their HL because it provided students with a place to learn their HL. He said in the interview:

> Of course the school helps students to maintain their Mandarin. The students came to Chinese school every Saturday afternoon. During this half day, they have to listen in Mandarin, read it, and speak it. Some students may not have many chances to practice Mandarin at home or in their regular school. The Chinese school provides them with a place to learn and to practice. (Interview with the teacher, May 9, 2008)

He believed that the Chinese school played an important role in helping children maintain their HL. It provided students a place to learn their heritage language and culture. The activities in the classroom helped students to improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Discussion

Cummins (1978) has suggested that many evaluations of bilingual education programs produce uninterpretable data because they fail to incorporate the possibility of the interactions between students' linguistic background, child input

and educational treatment into their research designs. He designed an interaction model to allow Child Input variables to be systematically related both to Background and Educational Treatment variables. The following discussion mainly focuses on the variables of the interaction model.

Motivation to Attend Chinese School

Perceptions and motivation have been reported to be important factors influencing language proficiency. This study revealed that many students in the Chinese school had a positive perception of their HL development. Eighteen participants (56.3%) believed that maintaining and improving their HL was essential to their future life. They desired to be fluent in Mandarin. Twenty-seven participants (84.4%) felt that Mandarin proficiency would help them become successful in their future career. "Future career" was mentioned by both the students and the Grade 12 teacher in the interviews as a significant factor. They all believed that China's economic growth and globalization would create career opportunities for individuals who are knowledgeable in English as well as Chinese. According to Dörnyei (1994), the potential gains of L2 proficiency falls under the category of instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is within the first level of his motivation theory. Learners' instrumental motivation can be developed by discussing the role L2 plays in the world and its potential usefulness both for themselves and their community (Dörnyei, 1994).

Participants in the focus group interview also commented on the importance of maintaining and improving their HL. They were motivated not only by the potential

advantage of being able to use Mandarin in their future careers but also by the possibility of going back to China. They wanted to be able to communicate with relatives or other people in China fluently. The four participants in the focus group all showed a high level of listening and speaking competence in Mandarin. However, not all the students in the Chinese school were motivated to maintain their HL. Neither did all the students have a high level of proficiency in Mandarin. According to the participants in the focus group, some students in the Chinese school attended this program because their parents wanted them to learn Mandarin. They did not enjoy the Chinese school and could not use Mandarin fluently either in speaking or in writing. The data from this study supported Kim's (1992) view that the students' attitudes and motivation toward learning and maintaining the HL influenced their HL proficiency.

During the interview, Jane emphasized the opportunities she gave herself to practice Mandarin. She enjoyed chatting with the teachers and learned a lot from the communication. Her experience echoed Macintyre, Clement, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) statement that a student with a positive attitude might find the language enjoyable because the development of linguistic competence is perceived as inherently interesting and challenging.

In the interview, participants also stated that they came to the Chinese school in order to get a high school credit with high marks. As Mandarin was the participants' L1, it was not very difficult for them to get high marks. The credit was essential for the university entrance. In Grade 12, some highly proficient students

asked for extra work in order to get bonus on their final marks. Dörnyei (1994) argues that individuals with a high need for achievement are interested in excellence for its own sake, tend to initiate achievement activities, work with heightened intensity at these tasks, and persist in the face of failure. In institutional/academic contexts, where academic achievement situations are very salient, "need for achievement" will play a particularly important role (Dörnyei, 1990). When students in the Chinese school were motivated by the need for high marks for university entrance, they made every effort to achieve their goals.

There was one problem that affected the students' motivation to learn Mandarin in the Chinese school. Students in the Chinese school were divided into different classes according to their age rather than HL proficiency. In one class, there were students who had received formal education in China before immigrating to Canada, who came to Canada before school age, and who were born and raised in Canada. Thus, there were usually several levels in each class and it was very hard for the teacher to take care of everyone in the classroom. When higher-level students already knew everything in their textbooks, lower-level students were still struggling with basic vocabulary. The former felt bored in class. The latter felt a lot of burden and might quit the HL school if they could not get a satisfactory mark to meet the requirements of the university entrance.

Classroom Practices

Students in the Chinese school were usually asked to memorize new words, read texts, complete exercises in the textbooks either individually or in group, or

translate texts during class time. This common routine reflected a focus on vocabulary and grammar rather than on communicative competence.

In Grade 12, the teacher spent a lot time on teaching new words every week. He tried to help students memorize characters. As Chinese writing is based on pictograms, Chinese characters provide learners with very little phonetic information. Many Chinese speakers and teachers believe that all characters must be learned by heart. It requires extensive memorization to build literacy. The "teaching the words" approach to learning Chinese has a long history and influences current teaching practices in schools in China as well as in Chinese HL schools in countries like Canada.

In order to motivate the students, the Grade 12 teacher divided students into several groups and asked the groups to compete with each other in the spelling contests. In Grade 12, group competition was frequently applied to make the class more vivid. Nearly 37% of the class time I observed was spent on group work. The Grade 12 teacher believed that he should organize various activities to motivate his students. Students not only competed in spelling contests but also when they were asked to read the texts and translate the texts. When they read texts, the group had to read clearly and chorally. The group who could read the fastest got points in the competition. In the translation activity, groups had to complete the task quickly and correctly. It was also the fastest group who got the points. By the end of the class, the winning group got candy as a prize. However, it is not how many activities they had but the nature of group work that can help students learn the language. Although the

spelling contest was fun, it is a controlled non-communicative activity. Through this activity, students could only learn how to write characters and how to address the strokes of each character.

In the literature on communicative language teaching, group work is considered to be essential in the development of communicative competence because in group work, learners are encouraged to negotiate meaning, to use a greater variety of linguistic forms and functions and to develop overall fluency skills (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995). However, the activities in the Grade 12 class mainly focused on vocabulary and meaning of the texts. These activities helped students to memorize new words and to understand the meaning of the texts, but they did not help students to remember how to use the new words and phrases to communicate. Students did not have many chances to practice using Mandarin in a meaningful context.

The interaction model proposed by Cummins (1995) encourages student-student talk in a collaborative learning context and emphasizes meaningful language use by students. Although the activities in the Grade 12 classroom provided students many chances to work together, the nature of the group work did not focus on communicative competence. As a certified teacher in Ontario, the Grade 12 teacher knew the importance of organizing various classroom activities to motivate his students. But since he was not trained as a language teacher, he did not know that the nature of the group work was even more important. The students enjoyed group work and competitions, but data from observations showed that students did not have many chances to produce meaningful sentences. During the observations, only

36.6% percentage of the students' utterances gave unpredictable information and 18.0% were genuine requests for information. Nearly half of the students' utterances were giving predictable information or pseudo requests for information.

The activities helped students to memorize how to write the new characters and the meaning of new words, but they did not have many chances to produce their own sentences in a meaningful context. They may not have known how to use the words properly. The teacher usually did not ask the students to discuss certain topics or compose any articles. What is more, even when the teacher gave students chances to practice their language skills, some of the students did not take advantage of these chances. According to my observations, the students in Grade 12 tended to use more Mandarin than English when they worked in groups.

In other grades, class activities focused on vocabulary and texts as well. Students were often asked to complete exercises individually. Sometimes, the teachers asked students to make dialogues according to the topic they learned. This activity encouraged students to use the language in a meaningful context. However, this activity never occurred in Grade 12 during my observations. Participants in the focus group also commented that if students took the initiative to communicate with teachers in Mandarin, they would benefit from the chance to practice their speaking and listening skills.

During the four-week observation, I coded 328 student utterances. Only 4.9% of student utterances were sustained, which consisted of at least three main clauses. 82.3% of student utterances were minimal such as two or three word phrases.

Students tended to produce short sentences or word phrases.

The interaction model also requires guidance and facilitation rather than control of student learning by the teacher (Cummins, 1995). However, the classes in the Chinese school were more teacher-centered. Most of the student learning was controlled by the teachers. The teachers chose topics from the textbooks to teach. The teachers decided which exercises in the textbooks the students should do. It was also the teachers who made decision on various classroom activities. Students had few chances to choose what to learn and how to learn. In Grade 9 and Grade 11, only when the class was taken over by the volunteer, students might have the opportunity to discuss topics in which they were interested with the volunteer. One of the participants in the focus group claimed that she benefited from chatting with the volunteer.

During the four sessions of classroom observations, I found that most of the topics or tasks in the Grade 12 classroom were also determined by the teacher or the text. Students were seldom involved in their learning as co-participants. The teacher had to give instructions according to the school curriculum map which was focused on vocabulary and grammar. The curriculum guidelines were based on the textbooks. Students reported that they did not like their textbooks very much. There were no attractive pictures. Some of the topics were out of date or not relevant to their daily life. The learning material and content of instruction could not motivate the students. Learning and teaching in the Chinese school focused mainly on the textbook. Students have no access to other learning materials in the Chinese school. Neither

did they have the chance to choose which topic to learn. Students need more reading material that can help them build competence in reading. They also need to be given the right to negotiate learning materials and classroom tasks. Spada and Fröhlich (1995) argue that if students are encouraged to become more involved in their learning as co-participants, and are encouraged to negotiate methods, tasks, materials and content of instruction, this will contribute more positively to their learning.

The way teachers taught Mandarin in the Chinese school was more like the structure-based grammar translation method than the communicative approach. The major focus of the grammar translation method tended to be on reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening. Vocabulary and the ability to construct correct sentences were given priority in the classes. Consideration of what students might do to promote their own learning had little or no place in grammar-translation theory (Griffiths, & Parr, 2001). However, building on the concept of communicative competence introduced by Hymes (1971), Krashen (1976) noted that language cannot be learned, but only acquired through natural communication. Communication between teachers and students in a meaningful context was lacking in the classes of the Chinese school. The way the teachers taught Mandarin was probably influenced by the way they learned English when they were students in China. As many teachers in the Chinese school did not have a degree in the field related to second language education, they might not be familiar with the other ways to teach language.

The teachers in the Chinese school all spoke Mandarin or Cantonese as their

L1. They believed that it was important for the students to maintain their HL. The teachers were passionate and motivated. Some of them had teaching experience in China, however, most of them were not certified teachers in Canada. Of the 19 teachers in this Chinese school, only two new teachers in Grade 10 and Grade 12 were certified teachers in Ontario. Both of them worked as full time teachers in a secondary school in the city where this study was conducted. There were also very few teachers who were familiar with the theories of language teaching and learning. It is very important to build the teachers' professional capacity. However, every year all the teachers in the Chinese school only had one day of professional development. Although there was some other training sessions organized for the Chinese HL educators in the nearby area, not all of the teachers had the opportunity to attend the training due to the limitation of school funding. In some informal talks with the elementary teachers in the Chinese school, I found out that as the host of these training sessions varied every time, the effectiveness of the training was also different. Sometimes the teachers did not benefit much from the training.

Teachers had limited access to methodology courses to learn how to organize the classroom activities and how to teach Mandarin as a second language. To be able to speak a language does not mean to be qualified to teach the language. The way teachers acquired Mandarin in China is far different from the way students learn it in Canada. The Grade 12 teacher thought that he was capable of teaching Mandarin because it was his first language. However, theory and method of teaching HL was important because teachers needed to know the differences between HL learners and

L1 learners and find out the most appropriate way to teach their students. Teachers should be equipped with theory and methodology of teaching a second language.

After reviewing several minority language education (MLE) programs around the world, Malone (2003) proposed several components for successful MLE programs in ethnic minority communities. One of the components was recruitment methods that bring motivated, knowledgeable and respected people into the program and build their professional capacity. More training should be provided to build the teachers' professional capacity. Thus, the classes in the Chinese school can be more effective and better facilitate students' learning.

Teachers in the Chinese school not only lacked professional training, but also faced a lot of challenges. One of the problems was the curriculum guidelines. There were no government-produced curriculum guidelines for all the HL programs in the province or in the city where this study was conducted. Appropriate curriculum outlines should be developed by professionals to better support teachers. As the current teachers in the Chinese school only got limited or no training in the field of L2 acquisition or HL education, it was very hard for them to develop an applicable and effective curriculum guideline.

The other challenge in the Chinese school was the diverse needs in each class. Students in the Chinese school came to Canada at different ages. As a result, their Mandarin proficiency varied. However, the Chinese school could only divide students into different classes according to their ages rather than their Mandarin level. Both the participants in the focus group interview and the Grade 12 teacher

mentioned the huge discrepancy of language proficiency in each class. This made the HL program even more difficult to work effectively. It was almost impossible for teachers to make a common program for learners with such diverse proficiency levels.

Language Use Inside and Outside of the Classroom

In Grade 12, more than 80% of the teacher's and students' utterances I coded during my observations occurred in Mandarin. However, as I did not code all the student-student interactions, I could not give an exact number to describe how much Mandarin they used to communicate. According to the fieldnotes I took, students tended to use much more English than Mandarin to talk to each other. One of the participants in the focus group commented that some of her classmates always spoke English in the class. After class, students used even less Mandarin to socialize. Almost half of the participants who did the questionnaires reported that they had never used Mandarin to talk to friends in Chinese school.

Even the students who had a high level of Mandarin proficiency tended to use English to talk to their classmates. English was the most common language among students. This was mainly caused by the huge discrepancy of Mandarin proficiency. Some of the students in the Chinese school had been living in Canada for a long time. After they attended schools in Canada, their English level gradually became higher than their Chinese level. As all the students in Chinese school can speak English, those who cannot speak Mandarin fluently preferred to use a language they feel more comfortable with. Students who have a high proficiency in Mandarin could not force

their friends to use Mandarin outside of the classroom. One of the students in the focus group told me that she would like to use Mandarin, but if her friends were talking in English, she could not jump in the conversation and speak Mandarin. In the interview, the student who came to Canada the previous year also expressed that he preferred to speak in Mandarin because his Mandarin was much better than his English. This supported Macintyre, Clement, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) statement that one's degree of L2 proficiency has a significant effect on his or her willingness to communicate.

As "talking and writing are means to learning" (Bullock Report, 1975, p. 50), students need more chances to practice speaking and writing Mandarin in the classroom to help them better converse with each other in Mandarin outside of the classroom. Teachers should also encourage them to communicate in Mandarin outside of the classroom. Generating a willingness to communicate is a crucial component of modern L2 pedagogy (Macintyre, Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels 1998). The authors claim that, in the past, emphasis on grammatical skill produced students with a higher linguistic competence but did not concentrate on the authentic use of the language. Current emphasis on communicative competence may pose a similar problem, producing students who are technically capable of communicating, particularly inside the classroom, but who may not be able to doing so outside the classroom.

Students should also speak more Chinese at home. In the questionnaire, the majority of the participants used both Chinese and English when talking to their

parents. However, to most of the parents, English was their L2. The use of English in the communication between parents and children may be interfered by parents' English proficiency. Parents should encourage children to speak more Chinese at home and try to provide them sources to learn.

The conclusion from the findings discerned from questionnaire, classroom observation, and interviews and some recommendations with respect to HL program development follow in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

At the onset of this study I set out to explore how a weekend Chinese school supports immigrant students maintaining their HL. I spent two months on the research site, applying multiple methods to find the answer to my research question. This chapter summarizes the research findings and presents recommendations for the HL program and provides directions for future research.

Motivation to Attend the HL School

The first sub-question of my study is, "What motivates the students to attend the HL school?" Many students in the Chinese school had a positive perception of their HL development. Most of the participants believed that maintaining and improving their HL was essential to their future life. They desired to be fluent in Mandarin and felt that Mandarin proficiency would help them become successful in their future career. It can be asserted that the positive views held by the participants were related to Canada's multilingualism and multiculturalism policies, and were also due to China's economic growth and globalization. Students were motivated to learn Mandarin because it would benefit their future life. One of the participants in the focus group claimed that the longer she stayed in Canada, the more she understood the importance of maintaining one's HL.

The students were also motivated by the need for a high school credit. Some of the students were driven to study hard because they wanted to get high marks, which was essential for the university entrance. However, there were also students who were requested to attend HL school by their parents. These students had little

motivation to learn Mandarin and regarded the Saturday HL school as a burden. They might have easily withdrawn from the program when they had difficulties because they were not interested in learning Mandarin.

Pedagogical Practices in the HL Classrooms

The second sub-question of my study is, "What pedagogical practices occur in the HL classrooms in this school?" There was a common routine of teaching and learning Mandarin in Grade 9 to 11 in the Chinese school. The activities that occurred most frequently in these classes were learning vocabulary, reading texts, explaining the meaning of texts, and completing exercises in the textbooks individually. These activities mainly focused on vocabulary and grammar. Sometimes, students were also asked to make dialogues or compose articles, which provided them with opportunities to practice using Mandarin in a meaningful context. However, students only had limited opportunities to do collaborative work in these classes.

In Grade 12, the teacher always divided the students into several groups and asked them to help each other. He held competitions between groups to motivate the students to take an active part in the class. He spent a lot of time on vocabulary learning and also asked the students to translate the texts to English in order to examine whether they understood the meaning of the texts. In group work, students got chances to practice speaking skills. However, the sentences produced by students did not contain much information gap. Nearly half of the student utterances provided or requested for predictable information. Also, although the teacher tried to organize

various activities to motivate the students to learn Mandarin, these activities were not necessarily "real life" activities, which could arouse students' interests and improve their communicative competence. What is more, in the group work, not all the students took advantage of these activities. Some of them kept talking in English and lost the chance to improve their communicative competence.

In the classes, students usually did not have chances to negotiate methods, tasks, materials and content of instruction. They had to follow teachers' instructions and complete the tasks assigned by the teachers. The students could not choose the learning materials or every week's topic. The textbooks were not attractive, but they were the only learning material for the students. There was no school library, nor did students have access to any reading material in the Chinese school. When students were not interested in the topics or class activities, they might feel bored and loose their enthusiasm to learn Mandarin.

Language Use Inside and Outside of the Classroom

The third sub-question of my study is, "How often do students use their HL inside and outside of the classroom?" According to my observation data in Grade 12, a large percentage of teacher-student interaction took place in Mandarin. However, when students worked as a group, they tended to use more English than Mandarin. Nearly half of the students who completed the questionnaires reported that they had never used Mandarin when they talked to their friends in the Chinese school. Although the students came to the Chinese school to learn Mandarin, English was still the common language they used to socialize.

Participants spoke English at home as well. Only 10 students (31.3%) used Mandarin or other Chinese languages exclusively at home. Among the 20 participants who had siblings, only 5 used Mandarin or other Chinese languages exclusively at home. Students should practice using Mandarin both inside and outside of the classroom in the real life context to internalize what they learned in the textbooks.

Conclusion

The broad research question I intended to explore was how the Chinese HL school facilitated maintenance of Mandarin. The results of this research revealed that many students in the Chinese school held a positive attitude toward HL maintenance. The students wanted to learn Mandarin because it would benefit their future life. They also wanted to get high marks for high school credit. The Chinese school presented a place for students to learn their heritage language and culture. When the students came to Chinese school every Saturday afternoon, they got opportunities to listen to Mandarin, to speak, read, and write it. Although students could not chose what to learn or how to learn, they were still given chances to practice four skills. Some highly self-motivated students took the initiative to chat with teachers or peers in Mandarin. Thus, they gave themselves more chances to use the language in a meaningful context. These students were more likely to succeed in maintaining their HL. Some students tended to use more English than Mandarin both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers should encourage students to use Mandarin exclusively not only in the classroom, but also in the corridor, or in gym with their

friends.

The results also showed that the Chinese school was still faced with many challenges and had room for progress. Students sacrificed their weekend to attend the HL program, however many participants reported that they did not enjoy the time they spent in the Chinese school. Wong Fillmore (1980) states that well-developed HL programs with teacher involvement, appropriate program content, supported L1 practice are all necessary for the minority mother-tongue to be maintained in a multicultural environment. Teachers should try different methods to motive their students. The great diverse of Mandarin proficiency in each class was a challenge to the teachers in the Chinese school. They should also try to meet the diverse needs of each individual. However, as most of the teachers in the Chinese school were not certified teachers in Ontario, they needed more access to professional training. The school board should provide more support. Learning material and program content also needs to be adjusted according to students' needs. Teachers should provide students with more opportunities to practice Mandarin in a meaningful context. With all these enhanced, the Chinese school can play a more effective role in helping immigrant students maintain and improve their HL.

Recommendations for HL Programs and Schools

Suggestions for Teachers and Schools

HL programs and schools can provide a place where the students can learn not only the language but also the importance of their culture and ethnicity. Although this study was conducted in only one heritage language school in a community in

southwestern Ontario, other HL schools can find similarities from the results I presented. The following suggestions are not only for one specific school, but rather, for all other schools who could also benefit from the suggestions.

To motivate the students to work hard at improving their skills, the teachers should make classes more interesting, more meaningful, and easier to understand by employing efficient methods. As the way of teaching and learning in Canada is very different from that in China, teachers should know the optimal way of class management in Canadian classrooms. Although currently the resources of HL education is very limited, teachers should try their best to provide students with appropriate learning materials, such as novels, music, TV dramas, which fit their language proficiency and can arouse their interest to learn. Teachers can also discuss with students the choices of teaching material to keep them interested.

Students need more chances to practice their HL in a meaningful context and in a pleasurable way. Fishman (1985) suggests that HL learning needs to be "rewarded" to the extent of one's psychological, intellectual, or material satisfaction so as to be successful in maintaining HL. Baker (2001) also states that making language development a pleasant, positive and enjoyable experience is one of the most important factors in raising a bilingual child. Therefore, HL schools should create a "pleasure, positive and enjoyable" environment for the students to help them maintain their HL.

HL schools should enroll more professional teachers who are familiar with L2 acquisition and HL education. If there are enough funds, more school activities, such

as speech competitions, traditional festival celebrations, should be organized to promote students' interest to learn their heritage language and culture and to provide them with more chances to speak and write. If the HL schools can raise more funding for the program, some scholarships could be issued to reward the students who made the greatest effort to maintain and improve their HL.

Suggestions for the School Board

Development of HL programs needs more serious commitment from the school board. Support from the school board should not just simply be in the form of teacher salaries. Although the Board presently provides for limited materials, resources, and salaries, it must also go beyond this initial stage of financial support and offer program support. What the HL educators and HL schools need most is more teacher training and appropriate curriculum outlines that can facilitate them to teach more effectively. Only this way can we ensure that every hour spent in a heritage language program is both a valuable and invigorating one. The developments of in-service programs focusing on topics such as class management, assessment and evaluation, motivational techniques, etc. are required on a regular basis. Teachers must have access to such programs in which a wealth of information can be obtained.

Furthermore, the minimal funding allotted to HL schools is insufficient for the realistic requirements of the program. The HL schools usually operate in rented spaces. There are a lot of restrictions of using, borrowing, or taking any consumable and/or non-consumable products from the home school. The program requires more

accessible facilities to help teachers to make the classes more interesting and effective. School boards should also provide HL schools with more learning materials and resources. Students need graded reading materials that can help them build competence and confidence in reading.

Support from Other Individuals or Entities

HL maintenance is a complicated task that cannot be fulfilled only by parents or the HL schools. When HL schools provide students with a place to learn their heritage language and culture, parents should also give support at home. Parents can spend more time with their children helping them to learn Mandarin. They should encourage their children to use Mandarin more often at home. They could also buy some books or video materials to facilitate their children's learning.

Governments and other institutions interested in sustaining HL must also be willing to invest in appropriate teacher education and in researching the best teaching methodologies. Investment in research, development of methodologies and in teacher development can ensure that the most effective HL pedagogies are utilized. HL programs need support at all levels from the individual to the government.

Suggestions for Future Study

The participants in the focus group interview in this research all had a positive view toward HL maintenance. Although they came to Canada at different ages, they had a high level of Mandarin proficiency. For those who had been living here for many years, the HL program helped them to some extent. However, I was not able to recruit students who had a low level of Mandarin proficiency in my study. Future

study can focus on the students in the HL schools who do not successfully maintain their HL to explore the reasons and to find out their needs so that the HL school can better help those students.

Also, I only got access to the Grade 12 class to conduct my classroom observations. Participants in the focus group described the way their teacher taught, but I could not get more detailed information on the language they use in these classes. It would be interesting to investigate different classes in different HL schools and compare the outcome of different pedagogical practices to find the best teaching methodologies.

It would also be interesting to inspect the HL program in lower grades. It is essential to arouse children's enthusiasm to learn their heritage language and culture at a young age. If they lose interest in the first several years in HL school, they may not keep learning and thus fail to maintain their HL.

Finally, I noticed that although students in the Chinese school did not often communicate in Mandarin, those who can speak Cantonese often talked to each other in Cantonese. Future study can examine if Cantonese is more successfully maintained than Mandarin and the reasons.

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Appendix I: Consent Form

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

LETTER OF INFORMATION (Student Questionnaire)

My name is Renjie Tang and I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the Chinese heritage language maintenance and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The aim of this study is to investigate how a weekend heritage language school supports students in maintaining their mother language.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about your language use and thoughts about maintaining the Mandarin language. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire will be administered in the classroom. You may also be asked to participate in a group interview with other students. If you wish to participate in the group interview, please contact the researcher directly.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information that could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes, field notes, and transcripts. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality in the thesis and any other forms of publication. All collected data will be destroyed after the research is completed. Your Mandarin teacher will not be informed as to whether or not you chose to participate in this study.

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Manager, Office of Research Ethics, the University of Western Ontario at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Renjie Tang at xxx or her supervisor, Dr. Farahnaz Faez at xxx.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

LETTER OF INFORMATION (Student Questionnaire/Observation)

My name is Renjie Tang and I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the Chinese heritage language maintenance and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The aim of this study is to investigate how a weekend heritage language school supports students in maintaining their mother language.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about your language use and thoughts about maintaining the Mandarin language. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire will be administered in the classroom. You will also be asked to allow the researcher to observe you in the classroom for approximately 4 weekends. The researcher will take notes on language use in the classroom. Only those students who agree to participate in the study will be observed, and no notes will be taken on students who do not wish to participate. You may be asked to participate in a group interview with other students. If you wish to participate in the group interview, please contact the researcher directly.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information that could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes, field notes, and transcripts. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality in the thesis and any other forms of publication. All collected data will be destroyed after the research is completed. Your Mandarin teacher will not be informed as to whether or not you chose to participate in this study.

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Manager, Office of Research Ethics, the University of Western Ontario at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Renjie Tang at xxx or her supervisor, Dr. Farahnaz Faez at xxx.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

LETTER OF INFORMATION (Student Focus Group)

My name is Renjie Tang and I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the Chinese heritage language maintenance and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The aim of this study is to investigate how a weekend heritage language school supports students in maintaining their mother language.

If you agree to continue to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 30-45 minute group interview. The interview will be conducted in the classroom or other places the group feels comfortable with. The interview will be audio-recorded with the permission of the group.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information that could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes, field notes, and transcripts. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality in the thesis and any other forms of publication. All collected data will be destroyed after the research is completed. Your Mandarin teacher will not be informed as to whether or not you chose to participate in this study.

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Manager, Office of Research Ethics, the University of Western Ontario at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Renjie Tang at xxx or her supervisor, Dr. Farahnaz Faez at xxx.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

By Renjie Tang
Faculty of Education at
The University of Western Ontario

CONSENT FORM (for students over 18 years of age)

I have read the Letter of Information, and have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

By Renjie Tang
Faculty of Education at
The University of Western Ontario

CONSENT FORM (for students under 18 years of age)

I have read the Letter of Information, and have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree that my child may participate in the study. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name of child (please print):

Signature of Child:

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print):

Signature: Date:

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

LETTER OF INFORMATION (Teacher)

My name is Renjie Tang and I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the Chinese heritage language maintenance and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The aim of this study is to investigate how a weekend heritage language school supports students in maintaining their mother language.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 30-45-minute interview. The interview can be conducted in the classroom or another place where you feel comfortable. The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission. When transcripts of the interview are completed, I will contact you and provide you with the transcripts to check for accuracy. You may make changes to the transcripts if you wish. You are also asked to allow the researcher to observe your language use in the classroom for approximately 4 weekends. Field notes of the observations will be taken by the researcher. Students whose parents had not consented to their participation in the study, will not be observed and no field notes will be taken regarding them.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information that could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes, field notes, and transcripts. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality in the thesis and any other forms of publication. All collected data will be destroyed after the research is completed. Your Mandarin teacher will not be informed as to whether or not you chose to participate in this study.

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Manager, Office of Research Ethics, the University of Western Ontario at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Renjie Tang at xxx or her supervisor, Dr. Farahnaz Faez at xxx.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Chinese language maintenance in a heritage language school

By Renjie Tang
Faculty of Education at
The University of Western Ontario

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Letter of Information, and have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Background information

The following questions are about your background. Please answer each question by filling in the blank or circling only ONE item.

1. Age: _____ years old
2. Gender: Male Female
3. How long have you been living in Canada? _____ years.
4. Do you have siblings? Yes No
   -If yes: Are you first born, second born, third born?
5. Which language do you use with your parents?
   Mandarin/other Chinese languages only,
   Mandarin/other Chinese languages and English,
   English only.
6. If you have siblings, which language do you use with them?
   Mandarin/other Chinese languages only,
   Mandarin/other Chinese languages and English,
   English only,
   N/A.
7. How many immediate family members are fluent in Mandarin? _____
8. How many times have you visited/stayed in China while you have been living in Canada?
   0-1 time 2-3 times 4-5 times 6-7 times 8 or more times
9. How long have you stayed in China if you added up all the times you were there while you have been living in Canada?
   less than 1 month 1-3 months 4-6 months
   7 months-1year 1or more years
10. How many years have you studying in a HL program? _____years.

Mandarin language proficiency and use

Please place a √ in one of the spaces below to indicate the extent to which the statement applies to you.

1. I can understand my relatives' conversations with other adults in Mandarin.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
2. I can understand Mandarin TV shows, videos, and movies.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
3. I can use Mandarin to talk about familiar topics.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
4. I can use Mandarin to talk about abstract concepts.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
5. I feel comfortable using Mandarin on phone conversations.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree

6. I feel comfortable using Mandarin in a formal context (e.g., presentations).
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
7. I do not make grammatical errors when I converse in Chinese.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
8. I can read Chinese textbooks that are appropriate to my grade level.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
9. I can read simple stories in Chinese
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
10. I can read short fiction/non-fiction in Chinese
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
11. I can read Chinese newspapers, magazines.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
12. I can search for information on the internet in Chinese.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
13. I can write short personal letters in Chinese.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
14. I can describe my past experience in detail in Chinese.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
15. I can write short essays expressing my personal preference and opinions in Chinese
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
16. I seldom make grammatical errors when writing the things mentioned in 13-15 above (e.g., short personal letters).
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree

Mandarin language learning motivation

Please place a √ in one of the spaces below to indicate the extent to which the statement applies to you.

1. Maintaining and improving Mandarin language proficiency is important to me.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
2. I want to improve my Mandarin to communicate better with my parents and relatives.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
3. I want to improve my Mandarin to communicate better with my significant other and/or friends who are native speakers of Chinese.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
4. I want to learn Mandarin so that I can learn more about my heritage.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
5. I want to learn Mandarin so that I can visit China some time.

Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree

6. Mandarin proficiency will help me become successful in my future career.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
7. I want to improve my Mandarin so that I can enjoy and learn more about Chinese dramas, movies, and music.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
8. I want to be fluent in listening to and understanding Mandarin.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
9. I want to be fluent in speaking Mandarin.
   Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
10. I want to be fluent in reading Chinese.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
11. I want to be fluent in writing Chinese.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
12. I want to use Mandarin throughout my life.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree
13. I want to be as fluent as Chinese living in China.
    Strongly disagree ___:___:___:___:___Strongly agree

Saturday school

Please place a √ in one of the spaces below to indicate the extent to which the statement applies to you.

1. I enjoy Chinese school.
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very much
2. I have many friends in Chinese school.
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very many
3. I often use Mandarin when I talk to my friends at Chinese school.
   not at all ___:___:___:___:___very much
4. I have many chances to practice Mandarin in class at Chinese school.
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very many
5. I like the textbook I use at Chinese school.
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very many
6. I am learning a lot of Mandarin in Chinese school
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very much
7. I am learning about Chinese culture in Chinese school
   Not at all ___:___:___:___:___Very much

COLT Part A (Spada & Frohlich, 1995)

Communicative Orientation of Languaeg Teaching Observation Scheme

School | Grade | Observer

Teacher | Lesson(min) | Visit no.

Subject | Date | Page

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANISATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS							
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics											Type				Source			
																										Text							
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different task	Same task	Different task	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Sociolng	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NS/A	Student-made
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33

Appendix III: COLT scheme

COLT Part B (Spada & Frohlich, 1995)

Communicative Orientation of Languaeg Teaching Observation Scheme

School | Date of visit

Teacher | Subject | Coder

TEACHER VERBAL INTERACTION																	STUDENT VERBAL INTERACTION																		
Off task	Target language		Information gap				Sustained speech		Reaction to form/message		Incorporation of student utterances						Discourse initiation	Target language		Information gap				Sustained speech			Form restriction			Reaction to form/message		Incorporation of student utterances					
	L1	L2	Giving Info.		Request Info.		Minimal	Sustained	Form	Message	Correction	Repetition	Paraphase	Comment	Expansion	Clarif. Request	Elab.request	L1	L2	Giving Info.		Request Info.		Ultra-minimal	Minimal	Sustained	Choral	Restricted	Unrestricted	Form	Message	Correction	Repetition	Paraphase	Comment	Expansion	Clarif. Request	Elab.request
			Predict.	unpred.	Pseudo requ.	Genuine requ.														Predict.	unpred.	Pseudo requ.	Genuine requ.													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

COLT Part B (revised)

Communicative Orientation of Languaeg Teaching Observation Scheme

School | Date of visit

Teacher | Subject | Coder

TEACHER VERBAL INTERACTION									STUDENT VERBAL INTERACTION												
Off task	Target language		Information gap				Sustained speech		Discourse initiation	Target language		Information gap				Sustained speech			Form restriction		
	Mandarin	English	Giving Info.		Request Info.		Minimal	Sustained		Mandarin	English	Giving Info.		Request Info.		Ultra-minimal	Minimal	Sustained	Choral	Restricted	Unrestricted
			Predict.	unpred.	Pseudo requ.	Genuine requ.						Predict.	unpred.	Pseudo requ.	Genuine requ.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Appendix IV: Focus Group Interview Questions

1. How confident are you speaking Mandarin?
2. What language do you use talking to your parents and siblings?
3. Overall, which language do you feel more comfortable with (including speaking, listening, reading and writing), Mandarin or English?
4. Do your parents talk about the importance of the Chinese language with you?
5. Do your parents ask you to speak Mandarin exclusively at home? Do they help you to learn Mandarin?
6. Why do you attend the HL school?
7. Is it important for you to maintain and to improve your HL?
8. Do you have many chances to talk and write in class?
9. Are there any classroom activities you enjoy a lot?
10. Do you learn much Mandarin in Chinese school?
11. How do you like the Chinese school?
12. To what extent do you think the Chinese school helps you to maintain and improve your HL?
13. Do you have any suggestions for the school?

Appendix V:Teacher Interview Questions

1. How long have you lived in Canada?
2. How long have you been teaching heritage languages?
3. What is the highest level of formal education that you have attained?
4. Where did you complete your education? (Home Country/Canada)
5. Have you received any teacher training education? (If yes, where? when?)
6. Do you have an Ontario teaching certificate?
7. Do you currently work as a teacher in the Canadian school system?
8. Have you received any heritage language teacher training?
9. Do you think that teacher education is important for heritage language teachers?
10. What kind of training would you like to see?
11. Should this training be language specific?
12. Do you think HL learning is important for the students? Why or why not?
13. How do you attempt to engage and motivate your students to learn their HL? What types of teaching methods do you use in teaching Mandarin?
14. How much time do students spend communicating in Mandarin during the class time?
15. Tell me about a lesson that really engaged the students and had them actively participating.
16. Describe the sorts of Mandarin resources you make available to your students.
17. Are there any government-produced curriculum guidelines for the HL program?

18. How do you evaluate your students?

19. Do you think teachers get enough support from both the local school board and the Chinese community?

20. Do you have any suggestions for the HL program?