# Insight from online immersive task-based innovative Chinese language teaching to teaching ELT

## Webinar handout by Weiqun Wang

### 1. Background: Challenges after Pandemic and AI Era

The post pandemic era is also the AI era. As the AI tech develops, we also need to make adaptations to our foreign language teaching. Chat GPT suggests that to do that, we need to:

1.Embrace technology

2. Develop digital literacy

3. Personalize instruction

4. Cultivate critical thinking and creativity

5. Foster cultural competence

6. Continuous professional development

### 2. What did we do?

In summer 2021, we employed a live streaming method to bring the classroom experience to real sites in China. By utilizing all five senses, we aimed to enable students participating in online classes from the UK to see, hear, smell, taste, and feel the touch of real China. Through the immersive approach, we sought to enhance their understanding of the Chinese language, contemporary China society, Chinese people, and their way of life.

During the classes, students in the UK attended online sessions via VooV, while the teachers were in China, live streaming their teachings from various locations in Shanghai. These locations included campuses, streets, libraries, restaurants, shopping centres, and other interesting places. Each class consisted of one Core Teacher and 4 Teaching Assistants (TAs) based in China.

TA1: Supports the delivery of the Core teacher's lessons, e.g To find pedestrians to interact with our students via camera.

TA2: Serves as the Technician responsible for operating the live streaming camera and mobile device. Ensures that the camera focuses on the locations mentioned by the Core teacher.

TA3: Assists the Core teacher and the team with preparations and provides post-class support; (e.g. Handle the communication with the live streaming venues and design the class)

TA4: Remains in the online classroom, providing linguistic and tech support and help interaction.

This was an intensive course. Here you can see an overview of the content and timetable.

|  | 9-12am(BST) Live Streaming | 1-2pm | 1-3pm (BST) Clinic Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 1** | Sites and topics/culture to help students familiarise with life and study in China, and meet local students and people. | **Lunch Break** | One-to-one clinic time for teachers to provide personalised support to students.  By appointment. |
| **Week 2** | Sites, topics/cultures to help students understand the history, transportation and famous people in Shanghai, China. | | |

**Before class:** Teachers will send the students possible related vocabulary, grammar, and potential tasks.

**In class:** Students will discuss the tasks and determine how to complete them, then guide the teachers to complete them. The teaching materials used are authentic items, including genuine leaflets, signs, people, buildings and relevant texts. For instance, in the context of going to a restaurant, the students will collectively decide which restaurant to visit. When the teachers provide the menu, the students will engage in discussions and make decisions regarding the dishes to order, including preferences for spicy or non-spicy options. Once the food is served at the table, the teachers and waiters/waitresses will explain the dishes and enable the students to observe them through the camera, perceiving their appearance, aroma, and taste, among other aspects.

**After class:** In addition to the post-class exercises, the entire chatbox history from the live streaming class and any additional vocabulary, grammar or materials mentioned will be sent to the students for revision. The recorded class video of the class will also be shared with students if available.

## 3. What did students say they improved?

Students had fun, were interested, and were engaged a lot. Feedback showed that their listening and speaking skills as well as the culture awareness competence were most rapidly improved.

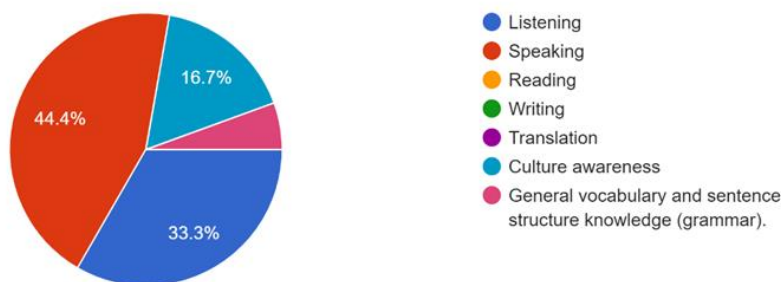Q: Which of your language skills have made progress?

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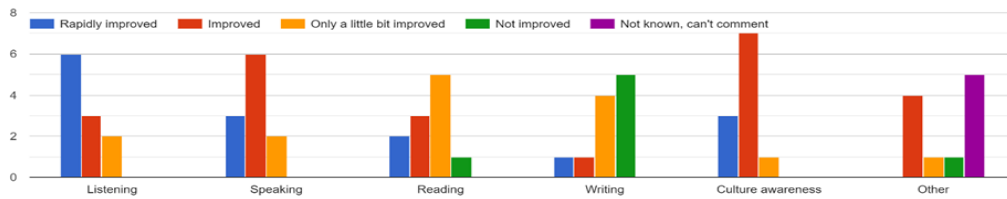


Q: Among all above skills improved, which is most rapidly improved?

Among all above skills improved, which one is MOSTLY improved ?
18 responses



Legend:
- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Translation
- Culture awareness
- General vocabulary and sentence structure knowledge (grammar).

## 4. Reflection: Features, insight and enlightenment

It is a digital and hi-tech rich environment in the class. The task-based teaching approach is clear in the 3 stages: pre-task, during/in-the task and after task is completed; The learning materials, topics, and materials are all authentic. The hybrid teaching and learning works well. The teaching is a group of teachers' collective teaching and preparation, and every one of them is very important. It has broken the space limit of the traditional classrooms and included global collaboration.

The interaction is multi-layered. It makes the traditional two-dimensional interactions between students and teachers, to at least 3 –dimensional—i.e. between students (S=S), between teachers (T=T), between teachers and students (S=T), as well as between students and teachers with the public or local people (TS=P) in Shanghai, China.

Although this was bespoke non-degree summer course, the course was just two weeks long and the scale was small, in future it has potential to be expanded to general degree courses and to a larger scale international teaching collaboration. It may be the direction of teaching/learning mode in future. This teaching model may be used in other foreign language teaching in future. Would you like to try it as well?

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A recording of Weiqun's webinar can be watched here:
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/news-and-events/webinars/webinars-teachers/ict-classroom-mini-event

www.britishcouncil.org                    www.teachingenglish.org.uk