

*Editorial*

## **Practice and Research on Chinese for Specific Purposes**

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During the past two decades, Chinese for Specific Purposes (CSP) has emerged as a new trend and quickly become a sub-field of International Chinese Education, while drawing increasing attention among Chinese learners as well as teaching professionals. A main reason for the increasing relevance of CSP is that many, if not all, Chinese learners, have more-or-less specific and sometimes immediate language needs that require more than generalized knowledge alone. The courses of CSP are designed to meet specified needs of the learner. Once a specific purpose has been identified, a well-designed CSP course aims to be built around three main components: (a) the acquisition of the Chinese language skills for the specific communication use; (b) exposing learners to Chinese cultures with focus on the specific area; and (c) fostering an appreciation of different ways of thinking when dealing with the specific subject. By striving for these outcomes, CSP courses can provide an invaluable alternative or supplement to general Chinese language courses.

This special issue of IJCLT focuses on research into different pedagogic approaches towards Chinese for Specific Purposes (CSP). There are a total of seven papers selected as the best submissions across a wide range of work. The following are summaries of these papers.

Lin Zhou, from UIBE, discusses issues with vocabulary in medical Chinese textbooks. Her paper is titled 中医汉语教材词汇选编的科学性问题研究 / A Study on the Scientific Issues of Vocabulary Selection and Compilation in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Textbooks. The study chose 8 representative textbooks in the field of teaching Chinese for TCM purpose, and used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse the selection and compilation of vocabulary from the following perspectives: size, allocation, repetition and interpretation/explanation. The study suggests that there should be more vocabulary in textbooks at an advanced level than at an elementary level and the repetition rate of new words should be increased too. The findings also provide a clear picture of how vocabulary of TCM can be explained to foreign learners from different cultural backgrounds and how to scientifically allocate new words in different types of textbooks.

Mien-Hwa Chiang, from University of Pennsylvania, looks at the teaching of Media Chinese. Her paper is titled 高年级媒体中文课的相关概念与教学 / Concepts and Practices in Teaching Advanced-level Media Chinese. In her study, she points out the benefits of a Media Chinese course cannot be overlooked despite challenges in teaching such a course, e.g. skepticism students hold towards the

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credibility of news media and their unfamiliarity of the Chinese news websites. The study proposes a CBI (content-based instruction) approach to organize the teaching around the content with the insights of multi-literacies theory, media literacy and news literacy education, as well as integrating the development of early and ecological environment of Chinese news media. The new model was piloted and received positive student feedback. The study concludes that a multi-perspective Media Chinese course, emphasizing on both language ability and media literacy, has an important and long-term impact on students' view of China and their China-related research skills.

Qian Liu and Xiaoying Yu, University of Michigan, investigate creative approaches in teaching an advanced Business Chinese course. Their paper is titled *游戏化课程设计及其在商务汉语中的综合应用 / Gameful Pedagogy and the Comprehensive Application of Innovative Pedagogy in Business Chinese Course*. This highly innovative methodological approach to teaching focuses on maximizing students' learning outcome by incorporating Gameful Pedagogy, Flipped classroom, Case studies, Project Based Learning and Task Based Learning, into course design and teaching practice in advanced Business Chinese class. The study finds that in a gameful curriculum, students' personalized learning experience has been enriched and their intrinsic learning motivation has been enhanced. The study recommends a combination of innovative teaching methods to help students bridge the gap between classroom and the real world.

Zhongqi Shi (University of Columbia) and Daoxiong Guan (University of California, Santa Barbara) carried out an investigation on how to improve the applicability and practicability of Business Chinese textbooks from the perspective of textbook content. Their paper is titled *基于三维调查的商务汉语核心教学内容探讨 / An investigation of core content of Business Chinese instruction – A three-dimensional perspective*. Based on the analysis of 15 representative textbooks in the field of Business Chinese, first they proposed a set of instruction contents including 12 broad topics and 118 sub-topics for general business purposes. Three groups of participants were invited to evaluate the usefulness and importance of those topics – teachers, students and business professionals. Through statistical analysis of the answers collected from 255 surveys, their findings provide a valuable framework of topics and contents to be covered in developing Business Chinese textbooks.

Martin Ward, University of Leeds, presents detailed findings from a case study looking at students' experiences and perceptions of translation training. His paper is titled: *A case study into student perceptions of the value of a practical Chinese to English translation module for professionalization and employability / 学生对实用中英翻译课于专业和就业能力影响之观点*. He identifies that to date, many UK Chinese undergraduate language degrees do not often match promises of professional employability for language graduates with relevant training within the degree curriculum. By bringing in a specific module for translation training, students were able to develop greater awareness of professional opportunities; Ward's paper provides an insight into why such training can improve student engagement, and suggests ways in which this type of practical training can be adapted for educators and curriculum designers more broadly.

Shan Wang and Jiuhan Yin, University of Macau looked at the teaching of nouns in legislative Chinese. Their paper is titled *立法汉语名词的多模态教学 / Multimodal Teaching of Legislative Chinese Nouns*. They highlight the challenges of teaching legislative nouns due to the abstract nature of those vocabulary. The study proposes a multimodal model to mobilize students' multiple senses in the learning process to improve the quality of teaching. The authors selected nouns from the Legislative Chinese Corpus to explore effective teaching of nouns of different semantic classes. By matching delivery method with the best mode of learning, for example visual and auditory modes, they create a multimodal context using a variety of meaning symbols. The study also provides insights into how to apply multimodality in the teaching Chinese for specific purposes.

Sijia Zhou, Ting Wen, Shu Deng, Xiaotong-Liverpool University, finish our special issue with another innovative pedagogic approach bringing insights from Corpus and Genre analysis common in English

for Academic Purposes (EAP), into work to improve Chinese for Academic Purposes (CAP). Their paper is titled *Applying Corpus-based Genre Analysis into the Teaching of Academic Chinese Writing / 基于语料库的体裁分析教学法在学术汉语写作课程中的应用*. They flag up problems faced by rapidly growing number of students who are now taking degrees in China, many of which require students to write research dissertations in Chinese as final year projects. Like all research writing, such dissertations require a well-structured clearly written Research Abstract (RA), and the authors aimed to see how well learners could master the structure moves and language required for RAs in Chinese. Following practices common in EAP, they created a training corpus of published RA writing, with which students were then trained to identify, for themselves, good practice in effective structure moves and appropriate academic phrasing, which they could apply in several drafting stages. Through this student-centered process-based teaching approach, the students' writing of their own RAs notably improved. The authors' explanation of how to use corpus analysis and genre analysis to boost Chinese Academic Writing skills in this way provides a valuable conclusion to our special issue on how to improve research and pedagogy in the expanding field of Chinese for Special Purposes.

We hope you will find useful insights for your own research awareness and practices, and welcome suggestions from readers on how this field can continue to evolve.

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**Clare Wright** gained her PhD in Second Language Acquisition at Newcastle University in 2010, and is now Associate Professor of Linguistics and Language Teaching at University of Leeds. She has won awards from Chinese and UK funding bodies for her work in applied linguistics. Her research and teaching focuses on issues in language pedagogy, particularly in learning Mandarin. She is founding co-editor of *International Journal of Chinese Language Teaching*.