

**The Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the
Use of Contemporary Chinese Popular
Literature in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign
Language:
An Empirical Study in an Australian University Setting**

Xiuming Chen

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School of Social Sciences
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Abstract

The thesis answers the question of whether *contemporary Chinese popular literature* provides linguistic, cultural and affective benefits for learners of Chinese (Mandarin) in an advanced language course of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFL) at university level. The theoretical approach of constructivism emphasizes the significance of authentic and relevant context, appropriate challenge and learners' positive affect during the process of learning, which provides the theoretical rationale for the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL.

Adopting an instructional model based on two constructivist approaches, reader response theory and schemata theory, an empirical study is conducted in an advanced Chinese language course at the University of Adelaide. Eighteen students participate in this one-semester study. Data includes tests, questionnaires, interviews, class transcripts, observations and assignments. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are adopted to arrive at interpretations. The results of the empirical study confirm that the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL is a proper, practical and productive concept. Most students enjoy the experience with *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this experimental course due to its instructional characteristics: authenticity and relevancy, appropriate linguistic challenge, multiple forms of presentation and representation, etc. Students' growths in language and cultural skills and positive affective attitudes are demonstrated in tests and questionnaires. Due to students' different language proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds, some pedagogical issues are raised from qualitative discussion, providing suggestions for similar research and practice. As a pioneer of relevant research, I conclude that the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced TCFL course has a promising future.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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List of Abbreviations

CAFSA	China Association for International Education (<i>Zhongguo gaodeng jiaoyu xuehui waiguo liuxuesheng jiaoyu guanli fen hui</i> /中国高等教育学会外国留学生教育管理分会)
CAS	Center for Asian Studies (<i>Yazhou yanjiu zhongxin</i> /亚洲研究中心)
CI	Confucius Institute (<i>Kongzi xueyuan</i> /孔子学院)
CLE	Constructivist learning environment
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
HANBAN	The Office of Chinese Language Council International (<i>Guojia Hanyu guoji tuiguang lingdao xiaozu bangongshi</i> /国家汉语国际推广领导小组办公室)
HSK	The Chinese Proficiency Test (<i>Hanyu shuiping kaoshi</i> /汉语水平考试)
PRC	People's Republic of China (<i>Zhonghua renmin gongheguo</i> /中华人民共和国)
TCFL	Teaching Chinese (Mandarin) as a Foreign Language (<i>Hanyu zuowei waiyu jiaoxue</i> /汉语作为外语教学)
TCK	The third culture kids
TCSL	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language(<i>Hanyu zuowei di'er yuyan jiaoxue</i> /汉语作为第二语言教学)
WCC	World Chinese Conference (<i>Shijie Hanyu dahui</i> /世界汉语大会)
ZPD	Zone of proximal development

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the chapter

This introductory chapter outlines the key issues related to the study undertaken for the thesis. After a brief background which provides the scope of the research undertaken, some significant terms in this thesis are defined and illustrated. This is followed by a statement of the purpose of the research. To develop the purpose, a set of research questions are posed. The chapter ends with a brief description of the organization of the thesis.

1.2 Background

With the dramatic development of the rapid growth of the Chinese economy, cultural diversification and globalization, a growing number of foreign language learners take Chinese as a second language or foreign language. According to the data from China Association for International Education (CAFSA) (*Zhongguo gaodeng jiaoyu xuehui waiguo liuxuesheng jiaoyu guanli fenhui*/中国高等教育学会外国留学生教育管理分会), there were 328,330 foreign students studying in the People's Republic of China (PRC) (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo*/中华人民共和国) in 2012 (CAFSA, 2012), nearly four times the number a decade ago (CAFSA, 2002). Outside of China, there were already about 40 million people learning Chinese and more than 2,500 universities in over 100 countries offer Chinese language courses in 2010 (HANBAN, 2010). In this context, Teaching Chinese (Mandarin) as Foreign Language (TCFL¹) has increasing importance in the 21st century. In order to meet the demand of learning Chinese, HANBAN (汉办), the Office of Chinese Language Council International (*Guojia Hanyu guoji*

¹ TCFL in this study also refers to TCSL, which means Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (*Hanyu zuowei di'er yuyan jiaoxue*/汉语作为第二语言教学) and 'Chinese' in this term refers to Mandarin, any dialects of Chinese are excluded from the term. TCFL was officially set up in 1951 but was suspended in 1961 due to the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and reopened in 1973 (Cheng, 2005).

tuiguang lingdao xiaozu bangongshi/国家汉语国际推广领导小组办公室), established the first ‘Confucius Institute’ (CI) (*Kongzi xueyuan*/孔子学院) in Korea in 2004. In 2011, there were already 357 Confucius Institutes and 476 Confucius Classes (*Kongzi ketang*/孔子课堂) in 104 countries (HANBAN, 2011). Another remarkable event in this regard is the ‘World Chinese Conference’ (WCC) (*Shijie Hanyu dahui*/世界汉语大会) which was held initially in 2005. All of these efforts reflect that the researches and practices on TCFL are thriving in recent years and show the tendency that TCFL would be developed in a global context in the recent future.

As one of the research interests in the field of TCFL, the selection and publication of teaching materials have been widely discussed for different teaching purposes in recent decades. Among these topics, According to Zhu, Z. P., Jiang, L. L., & Ma, S. Y. (2008), the past decade has witnessed a great change in the publication of TCFL teaching materials in their overall content and design. Literature, as one component in the TCFL curriculum, has also attracted an increasing.

The use of literature in the TCFL curriculum usually has three orientations: the linguistic-oriented one which focuses on developing language proficiency; the cultural-oriented one which aims to deliver cultural information; and the literature-focused one which permits the learning of literature knowledge and aesthetic appreciation. As an employee of CI at the University of Melbourne, Wang Y. (2008) finds that the wide range of literature-related teaching materials donated by HANBAN included “Chinese classical literature, Chinese modern literature and readings of Chinese literature and history..... (but) the contemporary literature was missing” (p.4). The set of HANBAN’s donated books strongly reflects the official intentions and aims of TCFL, which is “strengthening Chinese language promotion, to make Chinese language walk toward the world” and “facilitating other countries’ understanding of Chinese culture” (HANBAN, 2005, World Chinese Conference, cited in Wang, Y., 2008, p.11-12). Accordingly,

literature is displayed to foreign language learners as one component of Chinese high culture.

However, this practice of ‘export culture to outside world’ (*wenhua shuchu*/文化输出) (Wang, Y., 2008) has been widely challenged by researchers in the field of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) including TCFL. These researchers believe that culture is not simply a body of knowledge but rather a framework in which people live their lives and communicate shared meaning with each other. As Byram and Morgan (1994) define, culture includes seven aspects, i.e. “everyday activities”, “personal and social life”, “the world around us”, “the world of education, training and work”, “the world of communication”, “the international world” and “the world of imagination and creativity” (cited in Arabski & Wojtaszek, 2011, p. 265). The personal and social-pragmatic aspects of language and culture started to be increasingly emphasized. In the field of TCFL, researchers also suggested transferring the components of culture from ‘knowledge-culture-focus’ (*yi zhishi wenhua wei zhongxin*/以知识文化为中心) to ‘communicative-culture-focus’ (*yi jiaoji wenhua wei zhongxin*/以交际文化为中心) (Lü, B., 2006; Zhang, Z. 1990). To accompany the communicative approaches, researchers strongly recommend the integration of ‘authentic texts’ with social life and cultural information in foreign language classroom (Bernhardt & Berkemeyer, 1988; Vigil, 1987). ‘Authentic texts’ are defined as “unsimplified oral or written texts” or mostly commonly, as “texts created by and for native speakers” (Vigil, 1987, p.8). Consequently, literature, along with newspapers, magazines, brochures, maps, menus, radio broadcasts, etc. started to be integrated into FLT teaching materials as one component of authentic texts (García, 2007). As Amer (2003) points out, “the traditional structurally-based texts might not be sufficient for the demand” of foreign language learners while a syllabus that is focused on literary works such as authentic stories is able to provide a “motivating medium for language learning while fostering the development of the thinking skills that are needed for second language academic literacy”.

It seems there is some consensus that authentic literary texts other than classroom designed textbook texts should be teaching materials in teaching language, however, a lot of questions need to be addressed: What are the functions of literature that matter to language and culture teaching beyond the artificial text in traditional language textbooks? What are the roles of literature in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) especially in TCFL? What types of literature meet the demands of the current FLT especially TCFL in this communicative era? How these literatures reveal their prominence in language and cultural learning? As one of the pioneer studies on this research topic, this study will endeavor to answer these questions and open up new research perspectives for TCFL research.

1.3 ‘Literatures’ defined in this study

This thesis focuses on the role and functions of literature in FLT; however, the term ‘literature’ has a variety of definitions and a number of types and forms. In order to set a clear focus for the research, it is necessary to define ‘literature’ and its several types that relate to the key issues in this thesis.

1.3.1 Literature

The definition of literature is also a definition of literary work/text since “literature is the sum of actual (and perhaps possible) literary works” (Ohmann, 1971, p.1). For centuries, philosophers, literary figures, literary theorists, linguistics, anthropologist and sociologists amongst others have attempted to define literature. These definitions of literature vary in different times, different cultures and from different perspectives. However, each of them describes only one aspect of literary works so it is far from satisfactory (Wellek & Warren, 1963).

Narrowly speaking, literature is synonymous with ‘belles-letters’. It is essentially of an artistic character which possesses the purest and most beautiful literary forms to express emotions and imaginations (Bascom, 1874; Gayley &

Scott, 1890; Huxley, Huxley, Writer, & Huxley, 1970; Posnett, 1886; Xiao, T., 1986). More broadly speaking, literature includes that all the printed or non-printed writings in which human kind expresses the totality of human knowledge, learning and imagination (M. Arnold, 1974; Hallam, 1837; Vinet; Zhang, T. & Chen, P., 2003). I prefer to adopt the broader definition in my study but those works that are too expository, technical, scholarly or journalistic would be excluded from the scope of literature in this study.

With regard to the term ‘Chinese literature’, which is my focus, the scholars in the field of modern Chinese literature usually adopt a ‘four-type division approach’ (*sifen fa*/四分法) to define ‘literature’ to include ‘poem’ (*shige*/诗歌), ‘prose’ (*sanwen*/散文), ‘novel’ (*xiaoshuo*/小说) and ‘drama’ (*xiju*/戏剧) (Jia, Z., & Yu, Y., 1993). However, the meaning of ‘literature’ is dynamic with the changes of social and cultural environment. In the recent decades, with the development of technology, a variety of media tools have provided new platforms for the public to create literary works, which have greatly enriched the content and forms of literature. In literary studies, critics often assume that these public writings have not produced works that are deemed good enough to warrant closer scrutiny. However, these works more or less possess some literary merits. Thus these literary works being displayed through different media platforms are also considered as ‘literature’ and the discussion in this study focuses on the texts of these new forms of literature, e.g. the lyrics of pop songs, the screen script of film, etc.

1.3.2 Popular literature vs. canonical literature

There is a dichotomy of literature – often considered as ‘canonical literature’ and ‘popular literature’. ‘Canonical literature’, sometimes is called as ‘elite literature’, usually refers to “a body of written texts produced by a culture and highly valued within that culture over a period of time as part of its literary

heritage” (Sivasubramaniam, 2006){Sivasubramaniam, 2006 #37;Sivasubramaniam, 2006 #85}. ‘Popular literature’ is defined by “opposing to the difficult, complex literature of intellectually and culturally sophisticated elite” (Johnson, 1981). Usually, canonical/elite literature is more ‘difficult’, which cannot be understood without a considerable effort of attention and wide acquaintance with earlier literary cultures while popular literature is more ‘accessible’, and can offer immediate rewards to even the casual or uneducated reader (G. Marshall, 1995) {Marshall, 1994 #48;Barthel, 1994 #88}.

As one part of lowercase culture, popular literature shares many features with popular culture, i.e. “well liked by many people”, “inferior”, “deliberately setting out to win favour with the people” and “made by the people for themselves” (R. Williams, 1983, p. 237). The Britannica Online Encyclopedia defines popular literature as “those writings intended for the masses and those that find favor with large audiences” (Britannica Online Encyclopedia, 2011). Similarly, Johnson (1981) states, the audience for popular literature is “the most part in a broad social region located between illiterate peasantry and sophisticated upper class”. With different styles and forms, popular literature expresses different values and meets different needs from the vast audience, providing “a fascinating discovery of a richness and variety of material which seems to reveal a whole new range of insights into our culture” (Ashliman, 1971).

In Chinese academy, there are generally two translations on ‘popular literature’. Over a long history, ‘popular literature’ has been translated as ‘*su wenxue*/俗文学’ or ‘*tongsu wenxue*/通俗文学’, which literally means ‘vulgar’ and ‘understandable’ by the common. It is the opposite meaning of ‘elegant literature’ (*ya wenxue*/俗文学) or ‘pure literature’ (*chun wenxue*/纯文学). Until recently, ‘*liuxing wenxue*/流行文学’, which means “guided with popular interests”, “widely applauded” and “prevalent”, has been found as another translation of ‘popular literature’ (Zou,X., 2008, p.3). In addition, ‘popular literature’ is also sometimes known as other titles according to different perspectives of the features.

For example, from the perspective of a reader or audience, popular literature is defined as ‘mass literature’ (*dazhong wenxue/大众文学*), which is produced for mass consumption and is seen as “forms of public fantasy” and “a collective dream-world” (Storey, 2006, p. 9). It is the opposite meaning of ‘elite literature’ (*jingying wenxue/精英文学*). From the perspective of function, popular literature is claimed to be ‘entertaining literature’ (*xiaoqian wenxue/消遣文学*), which is the opposite of ‘serious literature’ (*yansu wenxue/严肃文学*). From the perspective of production methods, ‘popular literature’ is also known as ‘consumption literature’ (*xiaofei wenxue/消费文学* or *shangye wenxue/商业文学*).

It is complicated to define ‘popular literature’, so is the division of canonical literature and popular literature. It requires a range of value judgments (Storey, 2006) and it is transhistorical-flexible for all time. For example, William Shakespeare, a leading representative of canonical literature in English language, was very much as a part of popular as late as nineteenth century (Levine, 1988). The same point can be made about the literary works in Chinese culture. For instance, some Song lyrics (*Songci/宋词*) such as Liu Yong’s literary works could only be defined as popular literature at that moment. It was created for the ordinary people in the society. ‘The Dream of Red Chambers’ (*Hongloumeng/红楼梦*) was also regarded as popular literature in Qing Dynasty. However, they all have become ‘canonical’ in the present-age settings. As Eagleton (1996) states, there is no unchangeable and objective literature. Thus the definition of popular literature is changeable according to the changes of the readers’ tastes with the times. Some popular literature became canonical while some disappeared.

The flexible category not only happened diachronically, it seems more obvious in present-age settings. In recent decades, postmodernism has entered into the field of academic study of popular culture. In the context of postmodernism, it “no longer recognizes the distinction between high culture and popular culture” (Storey, 2006, p. 9). Accordingly, the border between canonical literature and popular literature also seems to be increasingly vague.

On the one hand, some well-known popular literary works started to be valued as canonical literature. Some scholars suggest that readers' reception and market success should also be considered in the selection of literary canon (Fan, Q. 2004). It has been implemented in some practice. For instance, Jin Yong's Kung Fu novels (*wuxia xiaoshuo*/武侠小说), which were regarded as popular literature, have been selected into the 'Collection of Literature Master's Works in 20th Century' (*Er shi shiji Zhongguo wenxue dashi wenku* /二十世纪中国文学大师文库) (Wang, Y. & Zhang, T., 1994); Cui Jian's lyrics of rock song 'Nothing to My Name' (*yi wu suo you* /一无所有) and 'the Space Here' (*zhe'er de kongjian* /这儿的空间) have been collected in 'Chinese literature Classics in 20th century' (*Bainian wenxue jingdian* /百年文学经典) (Xie, M., & Qian, L., 1996). On the other hand, some 'elite writer' who were known in the circle of pure literature, e.g. Wang Shuo and Liu Zhengyun, started to write a lot of popular literary works including screen scripts in order to meet the needs of mass readers.

No matter how complicated the definition of 'popular literature' is, in my study I will adopt Johnson's (1981) perspective to take the 'audience' or 'reader' as my primary consideration. Accordingly, the creation of literary works should be reader-oriented and the literary works should be widely-welcomed by the masses. With the development of different media platforms, the new, increasingly unified Chinese audience is not simply the old moderately literate audience, but is something unprecedented in China: a mass audience. Accordingly, an abundant of literary works can be categorized into the definition of 'popular literature', e.g. adventure novels, magazine fiction, love stories, film, radio and TV plays, etc. (Ashliman, 1971).

1.3.3 Contemporary Chinese popular literature

In Chinese academy, Zou, X. (2008) particularly defines *contemporary Chinese popular literature* as "popular fiction, popular music and popular film

and TV series”, which “originating from Hong Kong and Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s and developing in the 1980s and 1990s” (p.3). In this study, the concept ‘contemporary’ is narrowed down. In contemporary Chinese literary circle, Chinese literature was considered entering the New Period (1978-1989) (*xin shiqi/新时期*) and the period of the late 1980s and early 1990s was considered a transitional period of cultural transformation, in which “the dominant literary code has changed from the code of the New Period to that of the ‘Post-New Period’ (*hou xin shiqi/后新时期*) ” (Wang, N., 1995). In this period, literature is increasingly affected by contemporary commercialization and written for the sake of readers and market. In this study, the concept ‘contemporary’ mainly refers to the ‘post-new period’, which starts from the late 1980s and early 1990s. In this period, with the development of technology, literature has changed significantly and has “challenged textually driven cultural formations” (Koskimaa, 2007).

In the circle of elitist literature, rather than with ‘serious’ goal and master narrative, these previous ‘elite’ writers began to write popular works displaying immediacy of experience, petites histories and trivial ordinary life (Zhang, Y., 1992). In the face of an emerging popular culture, a lot of elite writers and scholars tried desperately to maintain their elitist stand; however, others were inclined to embrace the popular literary creation with the commercial orientation. The most significant representative was Wang Shuo, whose writing was known as ‘Hooligan Literature’ (*pizi wenxue/痞子文学*). His writings were full of vulgar language, parody and irony, showing his disdain on the discourses and values of elites.

In addition to elite writers’ orientation to popular writing, popular literature itself with its broader topics and media platforms is expanding its market in this new environment. In the middle and late 1990s, ‘anti-corruption literature’ (*fanfu wenxue/反腐文学*), ‘officialdom literature’ (*guanliao wenxue/官僚文学*), ‘migrant literature’ (*dagong wenxue/打工文学*) were prevalent, revealing some new social problems and showing people’s desire for ‘order’. In the meantime,

some overseas popular writings also had many readers, broadening their perspectives on the world, and with the development of means of mass media, a lot of popular literature was formed into audio-reader, film and TV series. ‘Film and television literature’ (*yingshi wenxue*/影视文学) became an efficient way to create and present popular literature in a new form. The reader can observe many postmodern elements through film and TV series, which strongly challenge high literature. At the turn of the century, the web became a significant tool to boost popular literature in addition to radio and TV. Consequently, lots of 70s generation and 80s generation writers (even some 90s generation) found their position in the field of Chinese literature. ‘Beauty writers’ (*meinü zuojia*/美女文学), ‘young adult literature’ (*qingchun wenxue*/青春文学) and ‘network literature’ (*wangluo wenxue*/网络文学) flooded the pop cultural market. In addition to some professional 70s generation and 80s generation writers, an increasing number of ‘after-hour’ web writers joined the creative team of popular literature. ‘Beauty writer’, represented by Wei Hui, Mu Zimei and Mian Mian, became a hot commercial brand together with ‘body writing’ (*shenti xiezu*/身体写作), in which the writers sell sex appeal along with their books. Despite its ‘gender consumption’, it more or less depicts the changing identity of Chinese women in the post-Mao era, associated with women’s liberation and their attitudes toward sexuality and marriage (Wang, Y., 2008). Instead of ‘beauty writer’s being criticized by conservative and mainstream figures, ‘young adult writers’, e.g. Han Han, Guo Jingming, Chun Shu, are being accepted in literary circles. Their coming-of-age writings not only display the confidence and independence of a young generation in current China, but also reveal the sensibility and frailty of the young (Zhang, Y., 2009). Along with the rise of ‘young adult writers’, a large group of writers, who are ‘after-hour’ Internet writers, have emerged. Online literature’s style, which tends to be free and lively, attracts more and more young readers. Popular Internet words are also updating fashionable language along with these popular web writings. On the other hand, an increasing number of ‘netizens’ wish to be ‘writers’ because writing expression has already become daily behavior

for many people. Accordingly, the popular writings of these Internet writers tend to reflect the latest social life and city trends in China.

As indicated in ‘Poetic Remarks of the Human World’ (*Renjian cihua/人间词话*), “a dynasty has its representative forms of literature” (*yidai you yidai zhi wenxue/一代有一代之文学*) (Wang, G., 2009, p. 33). In this telecommunication era, literature is no longer the traditional ‘literature’ but is evolving. In the current era, new reading modes integrating text, voice, image and video have entered the world of literature (Wang, J., & Liu, S., 2012; Xiao, L., 2006). Accordingly, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is more accessible to modern life, daily-life communication and language than that in any earlier periods (Chen, D., 2010).

In this study, I have space to consider three technology-based types of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, film and television literature, network literature and pop music literature, as representatives to explore the effectiveness and appropriateness of using them in TCFL. The examples and characteristics of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are reviewed in chapter 2.

1.4 The purpose of the study

In the digital communicative era, it seems that young students live in a popular culture saturated by music, movies, television, video games, the Internet, etc. Inside China, as one part of popular culture, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* provides young Chinese students with a new experience of reading. Both the content and forms of this type of reading arouse young readers’ interests. In the field of Chinese language education for native speakers, there were already some researches suggesting the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in teaching curriculum but nearly all of them point out that the standard of selection is very critical.

However, there were only a few researches concerning the functions of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in the field of TCFL. Due to this gap in

the current body of knowledge, the purpose of this research is to provide evidence and arguments that *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is a very useful instructional tool in an advanced TCFL class. Based on the discussion on how *contemporary Chinese popular literature* fits into TCFL from a constructivist perspective, the research aims to provide an empirical study to investigate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in the advanced TCFL class.

In this one-semester experimental course, both language and cultural growth of students are tested and their linguistic, cultural and affective responses to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are collected and analyzed. Also, this empirical study covers some relevant issues, e.g. the comparison of students' perceptions of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and traditional language textbooks; students' perceptions of instructional design, etc. In addition, the empirical study intends to provide a complete picture of the integration process as well as further information on the benefits and challenges of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in an advanced TCFL class.

1.5 Research questions

As a response to the above mentioned research purposes, the thesis focuses on a primary research question, which is “whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced TCFL class promotes students' language and cultural learning and arouse their positive affective attitudes”. The question is answered through the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data to test the effectiveness and appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. To make the research more manageable, these questions are broken into several smaller ones, with each answered in depth as necessary. The specific research questions are:

1. Whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promotes

students' language and cultural learning and motivates their learning.

(Quantitative question)

- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* result in a higher level of students' language proficiency including the abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing?
- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* result in a higher level of students' cultural learning?
- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* results in students' positive affective attitudes?

2. How do students respond to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* during the empirical study carried out in this research?

(Qualitative question)

- How do students respond in terms of language learning?
- How do students respond in terms of cultural learning?
- How do students respond in terms of affective factors?

In response to the qualitative question, some corresponding questions are addressed through qualitative analysis, including why does the use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promote (or not promote) students' language and cultural learning and arouse (or not arouse) their positive affective attitudes? How does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* affect students' language and cultural learning and affective attitudes? Also, there are some significant issues to be addressed in the thesis, i.e. the instructional characteristics of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*; the comparison between *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and other types of materials; the influence of students' own backgrounds, and the level of learners' competence in relation to contemporary literature texts; the pedagogical suggestions emerging from the course.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of nine chapters. Following this introduction, chapter 2

reviews the role of literature in TCFL over the past decades and illustrates the existing research on the use of literature in TCFL, followed by the outline of the problems faced with traditional language textbooks and canonical literature. Then *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, as a possible tool to address these problems, its content, characteristics and relevant research in TCFL, is reviewed. The final section highlights the significance of this study.

Following the chapter that provides the context for this study, chapter 3 presents the major theoretical approach underpinning the analyses of the use of *contemporary popular literature* in this study. A theoretical approach based on constructivism is established in order to provide the theoretical foundation for the analysis of how *contemporary popular literature* fits in an advanced TCFL class and offer two pedagogical approaches in empirical study.

Chapter 4 presents the methods and instruments adopted for the studies, including settings, participants, and instruments for data collection. The chapter concludes by identifying key issues for data analysis in empirical study.

The pedagogical design of an empirical course is described in chapter 5, including the process of text selection and an instructional model based on reader response theory and schemata theory proposed for the instruction in experimental course. The three-stage instructional procedures with several strategies and techniques are presented to demonstrate how *Chinese contemporary popular literature* can be applied into teaching practice.

The next three chapters (chapter 6, 7, 8) report on both quantitative and qualitative results of the empirical study and relate the data to the initially formulated research questions respectively: chapter 6 presents the results and analysis on language learning; chapter 7 on cultural learning and chapter 8 deals with affective factors. In each chapter, the quantitative results such as students' test results and self-evaluation are analyzed to test the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, followed by the qualitative analysis on students' perception of this experiment in order to test the appropriateness of the

use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced TCFL language course.

The final chapter (chapter 9) presents the conclusions arising from the research program as a whole, relating them to the aims and research questions posed in chapter 1 and provide the summary of my research findings of the study. It also presents implications for teaching and learning practice emerging from the research and provides suggestions for future studies.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Overview of the chapter

By reviewing the relevant literature, this chapter aims to provide a context for this study. The chapter firstly reviews the role of literature in TCFL over the past decades and then outlines the existing research on the use of literature in TCFL. Following the pedagogical and academic reviews, the chapter indicates the problems faced when using traditional language textbooks and canonical literature. As a possible alternative suggested in this study to address these problems, *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, with its content, characteristics and relevant research in TCFL, is reviewed. Based on the review of the literature, the significance of this study is highlighted in the final section.

2.2 The role of literature in TCFL

The role of literature in FLT including TCFL has experienced numerous variations over the past century. Broadly speaking, as Liddicoat and Crozet (2000) indicates, there are three main teaching paradigms for the use of literature in the FLT setting (cited in Carroli, 2005, p. 36): “teaching the canon (High Literature: the great texts of a nation), teaching language (literature as language samples: texts as tools), and teaching culture (literature as culture)”. According to Carroli (2005), the role of literature “developed chronologically but one did not necessarily efface the other” (p.36), which means that the three paradigms may coexist but usually one paradigm appears to be more significant than the others in a certain era. The first paradigm with its source in classical period “remained dominant beyond mid 1990” (Carroli, 2005, p. 36). At this stage, literary works widely used in most of the textbooks in FLT were those “famous, classic, award-winning” ones (Van, 2009). Accordingly, an elite literary ‘canon’ with its implicit moral and value judgment had been established (Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996). With

the use of grammar-translation approach, foreign language teaching (FLT) was focused on the translation of canonical literature and the study of grammatical and vocabulary features of these texts (Kramersch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992).

Since the 1950s and 1960s, however, under the influence of structuralism and the audio-lingual method with its oral laboratory drills, the teaching focus of FLT had “shifted from literature to linguistic and language” (Carroli, 2005, p. 15), bringing literature into the second paradigm: literature as language. In this paradigm, literature was against by many scholars because of its structural complexity, lack of conformity to standard grammatical rules, and remote cultural perspective (R. K. Kelly & Krishnan, 1995; Robson, 1989; Topping, 1968). As a result, non-literary texts that were organized by grammatical structure and presented through sentence patterns and short dialogues dominated the textbooks for the purpose of language acquisition². Literary texts, however, could only be seen as language samples in some advanced language textbooks (Liddicoat & Crozet, 2000).

Since the mid-1980s, influenced by post-structuralist theories such as reader response theory, the emphasis of literature study has “moved from form to content and discourse and from text to reader” (Carroli, 2005, p. 15). Meanwhile, as a reaction to the artificial texts used in traditional language textbooks, communicative-oriented approaches advocate the use of authentic materials in FLT. Consequently, literary texts gradually began to re-emerge from exile in language teaching materials as one type of ‘authentic texts’ (Ableeva, 2007; Kramersch & Kramersch, 2000) and ‘culturally authentic artifacts’ (Nostrand, 1989). As Belcher and Hirvela (2000) state, “the search for teaching materials that would elicit genuine, communicative discourse from language learners led the FLT field back toward literature because literary texts stimulate responses to interesting plots, characters, and themes”. In this context, a number of popular and pragmatic teaching resources have been published (Collie & Slater, 2004; Duff & Maley,

² In this study, this type of language textbooks is titled with ‘traditional language textbook’.

1996; Gajdusek, 1988; Gower & Pearson, 1990; Hill, 1986) that “cast literature in a teacher and student-friendly light that rarely was seen in the 1940s through 1970s” (Belcher & Hirvela, 2000). For the first time, literature was associated with ‘lowercase culture’ (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000). Instead of the literary masterpieces which were emphasized in the first paradigm, the literary texts within ‘lowercase culture’ have gained popularity with foreign language teachers, as (Maley & Duff, 1989) states “literature is back, but wearing different clothes”.

In accordance with the development of the three paradigms presented in FLT setting, the role of literature in TCFL saw a similar trend over the past decades, which can be shown through the examination of the widely used textbooks published in mainland China since 1950s.

2.2.1 Literature as canon in TCFL (1950s-late 1980s)

In the beginning of TCFL in the 1950s, the first set of textbooks was compiled for ‘Chinese language course for East European exchange students³’ (*dong’ou jiaohuansheng zhongguo yuwen jinxiu/ 东欧交换生中国语文进修*) (Lü,B., 2006). Literary texts were the main content in the textbooks for intermediate and advanced learners. Two reasons can be attributed to the dominant position of Chinese literary texts in intermediate and advanced language textbooks. On the one hand, the teaching aim in the early period (1950s and 1960s) was mainly to foster scholars in Chinese studies. Thus most of the students showed their enthusiasm in Chinese culture and literature. On the other hand, due to the newly establishment of the subject of TCFL, literary works, along with some folk stories and tales, became the first choice for the rush compiling of teaching materials.

It seems that the selection of the texts was also affected by the compiling of Chinese language textbooks for native speakers. For example, the introductions of the writers, their works and the knowledge about Chinese society are provided in

³ This course, which was offered in Qinghua University, was regarded as the starting point of TCFL in China.

every text. It reveals one of the functions of traditional Chinese language education: ‘knowledge transferring’. More significantly, the selected literary works in the 1950s and 1960s strongly reflect Chinese moral values, ideology and political intentions, e.g. the revolutionary idea of anti-feudalism. In these two decades, as Wang Y. (2008) states, literary texts were not only used as good examples for learning new vocabulary, sentence structure, syntax, and morphology, but also used to instill ideology into learners’ brains.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, influenced by the ‘reform and open up’ (*gaige kaifang*/ 改革开放) policy, TCFL textbooks became a tool to “permit Chinese cultural traditional to be lent/exported to the outside world (*wenhua shuchu*/ 文化输出)” (Wang, Y., 2008, p.2). Consequently, though literary texts were still used as the main content of intermediate and advanced textbooks, the political literary texts had been reduced. Instead, ‘the famous literary works written by famous writers’ (*mingjia mingzuo*/ 名家名作) had been included to show the national pride and splendid culture (Wang, Y., 2008; Zhang, M., 2011). The typical textbook was ‘the Selection of Literary Texts’ (*Wenxuan*/ 文选, hereafter ‘*Wenxuan*’), which was first published in 1979 by Beijing Language University (*Beijing yuyan xueyuan*/ 北京语言学院) and widely used in the 1980s. As G. Shi and M. Li (1987) calculate, among the 60 texts in this set of textbooks, there are 52 literary works, which account for 86.7% of all texts. Among these literary texts, modern fiction dominated the selections. Other literary forms include short stories, prose, political speeches, film scripts, folklore and extracts from novels and operas (modern and ancient). The selection was obviously according to the standard of ‘famous literary works by famous writers’ (*mingjia mingzuo*), including the literary works by influential writers such as Lu Xun, Zhu Ziqing, Ba Jin, Guo Moluo, Lao She, etc. Another example based on the selection of literary text was ‘Readings from Chinese Readers’ (Selections of Chinese Contemporary Writings’ (*Zhongguo xiandai zuopin xuanbian*/ 中国现代作品选编) (Beijing Foreign Language Press, 1982). A brief introduction of contemporary

literature also had been included in this textbook. It was noted in the preface that “the selection of texts should cover all the influential writers and works.” Obviously, the influence of the literary works was the primary consideration of the selection. The content of this textbook was compiled according to the list of famous writers.

To sum up, in the early stage of TCFL, literary texts dominated the intermediate and advanced TCFL textbooks. The selection retained strong political and doctrinal intentions. The standard of selection was always the ‘literary canon’; however, the definition of ‘canon’ differed according to different political and cultural contexts.

2.2.2 Literature as language resources in TCFL (late 1980s-early 1990s)

Since the late 1980s, the teaching content with focus of language teaching started to be emphasized in TCFL. One of the most typical examples was the re-title of the textbook ‘*Wenxuan*’. Although there were no significant changes in content, the title had been changed from ‘*Wenxuan*’ (1979) to ‘Intermediate Chinese Course’ (*Zhongji Hanyu jiaocheng*/ 中级汉语教程) (Chen, Z., 1987) and ‘Advanced Chinese Course’ (*Gaoji Hanyu jiaocheng*/ 高级汉语教程) (Jiang, D., 1990). The only difference is that the title ‘*Wenxuan*’ seems more literature-oriented and ‘course’ (*Jiaocheng*/ 教程) appears to be more language-focused. Not only the title but also the content of ‘*Wenxuan*’ was challenged in the late 1980s. In the field of TCFL, many scholars point out shortcomings of the overuse of literary works in the TCFL textbooks such as ‘*Wenxuan*’ (Shi, G. & Li, M., 1987; Wang, X. & Ni, M., 1991; Zhang, L., 1991). Consequently, textbooks like ‘*Wenxuan*’ started to give way to the textbooks compiled for the purpose of language teaching and more non-literary authentic texts without ambiguity started to replace the textbooks which mainly integrated literary texts. An examination of

the ten textbooks⁴ that widely used from 1986 to 1996 shows there were several trends of development in: content of literary text selection, source of selection and the form of compiling.

In the content of literary text selection, the ten textbooks could be categorized in three types: literary texts dominated textbook, virtually no literary text textbook and small amount literary texts textbook. The literary text dominated textbook had been published mainly in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Three of the ten textbooks were continuing to use literary texts as the main content of language textbooks, including ‘Intermediate Chinese Course’ (*Zhongji Hanyu jiaocheng/ 中级汉语教程*) (1987 – 1988) (Beijing Language University, 1987, 1988), ‘Advanced Chinese Course’ (*Gaoji Hanyu jiaocheng/ 高级汉语教程*) (1990) and ‘Intermediate Chinese Textbook’ (*Zhongji hanyu keben/ 中级汉语课本*) (1991) (Beijing Normal University, 1991). The first two textbooks belonged to one set of language textbooks. As mentioned above, the two textbooks were compiled on the basis of ‘*Wenxuan*’ but the compiling was more language-oriented than ‘*Wenxuan*’. Compared with ‘*Wenxuan*’, there were some changes in ‘Intermediate Chinese Course’ (1987 – 1988): firstly, the original texts had been adapted or rewritten in order to meet the demands of language teaching; secondly, many literary texts by contemporary writers (e.g. Zhang Jie, Jiang Zilong, Zhang Xianliang) and by non-famous writers and non-literature writers (e.g. Wu Jinliang) had been included. The change was more significant in ‘Advanced Chinese Course’ (1990). Most of the texts were still literary texts, however the ‘famous works by famous writers’ had been largely reduced. For instance, there were only 6 famous works in Volume 1, accounting for only 10% of all. In addition, many texts reflecting the real life of contemporary Chinese society had been included, e.g. ‘Tangshan Earthquake’ (*Tangshan da dizhen/ 唐山大地震*). The origins of selection were no longer only the collection of writer’s literary works; instead, most of the texts in

⁴ The textbooks examined in this study mainly came from the collection in Barr Smith Library in University of Adelaide and the library in Confucius Institution at the University of Adelaide. Although these textbooks could not cover all the intermediate and advanced materials, they could represent most popular textbooks in TCFL.

this textbook were selected from newspapers or literature periodicals. Among them, ‘People’s Literature’ (*Renmin wenxue/ 人民文学*) and ‘People Daily Newspaper’ (*Renmin ribao/ 人民日报*) were the most selected sources. The situation was similar in ‘Intermediate Chinese Textbook’ (1991). Although most of the texts were literary texts, only a small proportion of them were ‘famous works by famous writers’. In this textbook, a film script was selected as literary text, i.e. February in Early Spring (*Zaochun er 'yue/ 早春二月*).

With the emphasis on language teaching in this period, some textbooks were compiled for practical principle. Literary texts became an unnecessary component of text selection. This type of textbooks without virtually not literary texts included ‘Practical Chinese Reader’ (*Shiyong Hanyu keben/ 实用汉语课本*) (1991)(Liu, X., Deng, E., & Liu, S., 1991), ‘New Chinese Course: Context, Function and Structure’ (*Xin Hanyu jiaocheng: qingjing gongneng jiegou/ 新汉语教程: 情景功能结构*) (1995) (Li, X., Dai, G., & Guo, Z., 1995) and ‘A New Chinese Course Book’ (*Xinbian Hanyu jiaocheng/ 新编汉语教程*) (1996) (Huang, Z., 1996). These textbooks attached great importance to sentence pattern drills and the use of language. For instance, ‘Practical Chinese Reader’ (1991) aims at enabling the learner to communicate in Chinese for everyday purposes. This aim was to be accomplished by means of pattern substitution, grammatical analysis and various types of multiple-purpose exercises. As a result, most of the texts in these textbooks were written in the form of dialogues so as to facilitate the linguistic practice. There were nearly no literary texts in these textbooks. Literature had only appeared as a topic in dialogue, for instance, the text ‘We are Touched by this Play’ (*Women dou bei zhege huaju gandong le/ 我们都被这个话剧感动了*) in ‘Practical Chinese Reader’, ‘I Like Chinese Literature’ (*Wo xihuan Zhongguo wenxue/ 我喜欢中国文学*) in ‘New Chinese Course: Context, Function and Structure’ and ‘Visit the Cottage Thrice’ (*sangu maolu/ 三顾茅庐*) in ‘A New Chinese Course Book’, etc. In these texts, literary works were not learned as text but as a topic for communication.

The type of textbook with small amount of literary texts including ‘Intermediate Chinese Course’ (*Hanyu zhongji jiaocheng/汉语中级教程*) (Du, R., 1987), ‘Cross the Threshold of Chinese Reading—A Reading Skills Textbook for Students of Chinese as a Second Language’ (*Xiandai Hanyu yuedu rumen/ 现代汉语阅读入门*) (Chen, X., 1994), ‘Advanced Chinese Textbook’ (*Gaoji Hanyu jiaoxue keben/ 高级汉语教学课本*) (Liang, X. & Wang, X., 1995), ‘Bridge-Practical Chinese Intermediate Course’ (*Qiaoliang-shiyong Hanyu zhongji jiaocheng/ 桥梁-实用汉语中级教程*) (Chen, Z., 1996). With the aim to develop students’ language skills for communicative purpose, literary texts no longer dominated these textbooks but still accounted for a proportion of selection. More authentic texts with non-literary forms of writing were widely used, e.g. map, bus routine, telephone number, survey, report, letter, presentation, contract, report, advertisement, etc. In the selection of literary texts, stories adapted from original literary texts had been included. Most of these textbooks focused on the training of language skills for communicative purpose. For instance, in ‘Advanced Chinese Textbook’, with the compiling principle of ‘strengthening the practical value’, 70% of the selections were practical articles. Both of the introduction of writing skills and designing of exercise were oriented to practices.

In addition to some changes in the content of the teaching materials, the sources of the selection of texts also show some developments. In the TCFL textbooks before the late 1980s, most of the texts were selected from writers’ work collections and the official newspapers. However, in these textbooks (late 1980s-1990s), most of them were selected from some popular newspapers and periodicals, e.g. ‘Shen Newspaper’ (*shenbao/申报*), ‘Beijing Evening Newspaper’ (*Beijing wanbao/ 北京晚报*), Youth Weekend (*Qingnian zhoumo/ 青年周末*), South China Weekend (*Nanfang zhoumo/ 南方周末*), etc. It reflects the popularity, rather than authority, became one of the considerations when selecting texts.

A similar change was seen in the compiling forms of textbooks. As discussed in section 2.2.1, the selection of texts in the 1970s and 1980s was according to the

standard of ‘famous writers and famous literary works’. Consequently, writers’ names appeared to be prominent in the textbooks. However, writers’ names seemed disappeared from the table of contents in many TCFL textbooks in the 1990s. Instead, the framework of compiling was based on the components of language training. For example, in the ‘Advanced Chinese Textbook’ (1995), the content of this textbook was compiled according to the literary forms. In every lesson, the texts belong to the same literary form, e.g. interview, prose, fiction, contract, etc. In ‘Cross the Threshold of Chinese Reading –A Reading Skills Textbook for Students of Chinese as a Second Language’ (1994), the texts were compiled according to different items of reading skills, e.g. skimming, scanning, close-reading, etc.

To sum up, it seems that there has been an obvious decrease the proportion of literary works since the late 1980s. Some of the textbooks even totally eliminated literary texts. The position of literary texts used in language textbooks has been seriously challenged.

2.2.3 Literature as cultural discourse (since the late 1990s)

Since the late 1990s, literary text has returned to many intermediate and advanced TCFL language textbooks. In some language textbooks such as ‘Boya Chinese’ (*Boya hanyu*/ 博雅汉语) (2004-2008) (Li, X., 2005a, 2005b, 2005c), literary texts again dominated the intermediate and advanced sections but some changes occur in the content of these texts. According to the examination of fourteen influential TCFL textbooks in Gao, Z.(2010)’s from 1998 to 2008 (Gao, Z., 2010), several trends of development have been shown, where literature has been seen as cultural discourse to advance learners’ cultural awareness.

In the content of literary text selection, as discussed above, during the period of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the selection of literary texts had experienced a transformation from the principle of ‘famous writer, famous literary works’ to

‘components of language training’. Since the late 1990s, culture has become one of the most important elements when compiling textbooks. For instance, the teaching aims of the language textbook ‘Boya Chinese’ (*boya hanyu*/博雅汉语) is to “deepen students’ understanding of Chinese society and culture” and to “help students explore the cultural elements naturally including Chinese people’s values, the difference between ancient China and contemporary China, also the difference between Western culture and Eastern culture” (Peking University Press, 2005, p.4). Students are regularly placed in a real-life context to discuss the similarities and differences between cultural practices and perspectives. They are encouraged to express their views and opinions while considering the views and opinions of the others, and to think critically about issues.

In line with the above principles, the content of literary work selection focused on universal cultural topics such as family, occupation, education, love, friendship, life, nature, environment, customs, etc. More popular literary texts by contemporary writers have become the main content of selection. Some types of popular literature such as pop song lyrics and film scripts also have been included in textbooks, e.g. *Boya Chinese, New Practical Chinese Textbook IV (Xin shiyong Hanyu IV/新实用汉语 IV)*.

Among the intermediate and advanced textbooks examined in her survey, Gao, Z. (2010) lists some preferred writers by the editors. Among the contemporary writers, Bi Shumin, Ji Xianlin, Wang Meng, Xiao Fuxing and Yu Guangzhong were most frequently selected writers in TCFL language textbooks. Among these writers, Bi Shumin’s selection frequency was even higher than the others. Gao, Z. also found that the literary works in the popular periodical ‘Reader’ (*Duzhe*/读者) was most widely selected. The commonality between Bi Shumin and the ‘Reader’, as Gao, Z. (2010) states, include: “the writing of selections is easy for reading”, “most of the selections are stories with a simple story line and attractive plot” and “the topic of these selections focuses on human nature and universal culture, without political intention or characters of a certain period”.

In this manner, the content of literary texts, rather than the fame or language components, became the focus of literary text selection. However, because of the different focuses of the compiling editors, the content of literary texts can be quite different from one another. Generally speaking, an increasing awareness of cultural elements in TCFL pedagogy can be observed (Wang, Y., 2008). This tendency had already begun in the late 1990s but seems to have become more obvious in the 21st century.

Similarly, change has also taken place in the sources of text selections since the late 1990s. The rise of mass media provides wide choices for text selection. The survey by Gao, Z. (2010) shows that in most of the texts in recent intermediate and advanced textbooks, more popular newspapers and periodicals and some new media platform (i.e. Internet) have become the source of selection, e.g. ‘Xinmin Evening Newspaper’ (*Xinmin wanbao*/ 新民晚报), ‘Life Week’ (*Sanlian shenghuo zhoukan*/ 三联生活周刊), ‘Reader’ (*Duzhe*/ 读者), ‘Youth Literary Digest’ (*Qingnian wenzhai*/ 青年文摘), Chinese Youth Reading Website (*Zhongguo qingnian dushu wang*/ 中国青年读书网), etc. With the expansion of multiple platforms for literature spreading, more channels are likely to become the sources of text selection in TCFL textbooks.

In addition, the frameworks of textbook compiling also show some new orientations. Different from the compiling forms of TCFL textbooks from 1950s to early 1990s, textbooks have been compiled according to topics since the late 1990s, e.g. ‘Boya Chinese’ aims to “provide the well-selected universal topics and some topics reflecting Chinese tradition and reality”. ‘Jiayou-Chinese for the Global Community’ (*Jiayou Zhongguo*/ 加油中国), guides students through an appreciation of sports, food culture, fashion, hobbies, Chinese family, etc. The cultural-topic-oriented compiling form of language textbooks is attracting an increasing awareness in the recent decades.

To sum up, some significant trends have been shown in the selection of literary texts in TCFL since 1950: the content of literary work transferred from

famous literary texts with political and moral education values to literary texts with language teaching values, then to literary texts with cultural discourses; the sources of text selection transferred from ‘elite media’ such as literature book, authoritative newspaper and periodicals to ‘mass media’ such as popular newspaper and periodicals and the Internet; and the forms of compiling transferred from ‘famous writers and literary works’ to ‘components of language skills’, then to ‘cultural topics’.

As discussed above, the role of literature in FLT including TCFL has experienced three paradigms over time: literature as canon, language and culture. Instead of canonical literature dominating the first paradigm, literary works within ‘lowercase culture’ and popular media started to be used as one category of authentic material to advance learners’ language proficiency and cultural awareness. These changes have paved the way for literature’s return to TCFL classrooms, indicating the possibility and practicability of the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL.

2.3 An overview of research on the use of literature in TCFL

As discussed above, there has been an increasing awareness of the significance of integrating literature in FLT including TCFL classrooms. At the academic level, the relevant research is also attracting interests in the recent decade although it is still fairly limited. The existing research publications on the use of literature in TCFL mainly deal with the following three research questions: whether to use literature in TCFL textbooks, what types of literary works are suitable for TCFL and, how to teach literary texts in TCFL? In another word, the benefits and limitations, teaching content and teaching approaches are discussed in the relevant research. Among the three topics, the first question will be discussed in section 2.4.2. Thus, this section presents the research on teaching

content (types of literary texts) and teaching approaches.

2.3.1 Teaching content (types of literary texts)

As a response to the second question, a number of papers and theses suggested certain types of literary works as teaching materials for TCFL. These include ‘short short story’ (Wu, S., 1988), children’s literature (Jiang, Z., 2012; Wang, M., 2011), classical poetry and prose (Jin, X., 2012; Qi, X., 2012; Yu, C., 2011; Zhang, X., 2007), classical vernacular novel (Zhou, P., Wang, Z., & Hu, L., 2008), contemporary Chinese literature (Gu, L., 2004; Wang, Y., 2008), etc.

As discussed in above sections, the use of literature in TCFL textbooks showed a transformation from canonical literature to literature within ‘lowercase culture’. Meanwhile, however, canonical literature is still defended by some TCFL researchers. The rich cultural connotations are the primary consideration in the integration of classical literature (Lü, W., 2010). Qi, X. (2012) points out that the aesthetic imagery in Chinese classical poetry bridges the differences between Chinese literature and world literature. Jin, X. (2012) and (Yu, C., 2011) suggest the use of classical Chinese poetry for its strong sense of rhythm and deep culture. Zhou, P. & al.’s (2008) proposal to incorporate the classical vernacular novel into TCFL also aims to help foreign language learners to better understand Chinese traditional culture. However, these researches still reflect the strong intention to ‘export the culture to outside world’ (*wenhua shuchu*/文化输出), which was from the perspective of Chinese authority rather than foreign language learners. For instance, in the abstract of his thesis, Qi, X. (2012) states, “In modern times, Chinese classical poetry needs to open to the world. And the world needs to look into the Chinese classical poetry”. Jin, X. (2012) also expresses the similar intention, suggesting “imparting cultural knowledge” to learners. It seems that canonical literature is still suggested to “display the glories of Chinese civilization” (Wang, Y., 2008, p.2).

Different from the traditional perspective of text selection in TCFL, some

overseas Chinese scholars suggested a number of literary texts that do not normally find their way into selections for foreign language learners. Gu, L. (2004) suggests the use of ‘Soul Mountain’ by Nobel Prize Winner Gao Xingjian as a piece of world literature with Chinese characteristics. Wang Y. (2008) includes different types of literary works, e.g. the works written by marginalized contemporary Chinese writers such as Wang Lili, avant-garde and even proscribed writers, such as Weihui, some native English-speakers’ works on their Chinese experiences, etc. Her aim is to enhance students’ intercultural communicative competence.

In addition to the above two types of literature, children’s literature also gained some attentions in recent years. In her M.A thesis, Jiang, Z. (2012) considers children’s literature as an appropriate material in TCFL. Her research objectives focus on children learners, rather than adults. Wang, Y. (2011) also suggests the use of one type of children’s literature-nursery rhyme to help TCFL learners to experience the target culture. Although children’s literature is considered as one type of popular literature (Ashliman, 1971), this study mainly discusses the popular literary texts created for adults and young adults.

2.3.2 Pedagogical approaches

Over a long period, research was focused on the appropriateness of using literature for language teaching (Wang, Y., 2008). Until recently, the pedagogy to literary texts started to be widely discussed. Under the influence of Western language pedagogies, many modern literary theories, theories of cultural studies and foreign language approaches have been introduced to the teaching of literature in TCFL. These teaching approaches include ‘Intercultural approaches’ (Byram, M., Nichols, A., & Stevens, D., 2001; Li, L., 2003; Wang, Y., 2008), ‘Reader response approach’ (Ali, S., 1993; Thomson, 1987 ; Gu, L., 2004), ‘Multimedia teaching approaches’ (Chen, F. , 2013; Li, C., 2010; Tu, W. 2002),

‘Reading aloud approach’ (Zhang, X., 2007), etc.

In this section, ‘intercultural language approaches’ and ‘reader response approach’ are the main focuses of discussion since the two approaches provide pedagogical suggestions for the empirical study of the thesis.

Intercultural language approaches

Intercultural language approaches have gained popularity in the research of literature teaching in foreign language curricula. Many scholars have regarded the cross-cultural perspective as a basic quality for a teacher of TCFL. Wang Y. (2008) proposes a new reading practice in TCFL, which she terms as ‘Intercultural thematic reading approach’ (*kuawenhua zhuti yuedufa/跨文化主题阅读法*). This reading practice aims to develop a students’ cultural understanding of China and Chinese people, improve their **intercultural competence**⁵ without abandoning the purpose of learning of Chinese language. Wang Y. describes the approach as follows:

The intercultural thematic reading approach is an approach that endeavors to decode literature by means of the identification and exploration of these topics and “social-cultural knowledge” which I will term-“intercultural themes”. The intercultural theme refers to any cultural elements that are found to be of significance in intercultural communication (p.161).

In her thesis, Wang Y. (2008) applies the ‘Intercultural thematic reading Approach’ by using a variety of materials, including texts that are cultural-focused and some native English-speakers’ works on their Chinese experiences. Prior to Wang’s research, Li, L. (2003) proposes an approach of intercultural interpretation

⁵ Intercultural competence (intercultural communicative competence) is seen as a combination of valuable knowledge and skills. Byram (1997: 34) specified the competence by five so-called *savoirs*:(1) Knowledge of self and others; of how interaction occurs; of the relationship of the individual to society; (2) Knowing how to interpret and relate information; (3) Knowing how to engage with the political consequences of education; (4) Knowing how to discover cultural information; (5) Knowing how to be: how to relativise oneself and value the attitudes and beliefs of the other.

in literature teaching of TCFL. She suggests three methods of interpretation, including ‘language decoding’, ‘meaning transmitting with words’ and ‘thinking demonstration’. ‘Language decoding’ is to interpret the meaning of words literarily in the context; ‘meaning transmitting’ with words is to read between lines and interpret a hidden meaning in words and ‘thinking demonstration’ is to examine the cultural phenomenon hidden in the meaning of words. According to Li’s interpretation, the three approaches can be equivalent to three well-known teaching terms: grammar, meaning and spirit of articles.

Reader response approach

Reader response approach has been widely used to teach literature in FLT settings, however, it has seldom been used in TCFL. Gu, L. (2004) applies this approach into the teaching of modern Chinese literature to non-Chinese Western readers. In her research paper, a literary analysis is performed on Gao Xingjian’s novel ‘Soul Mountain’ in terms of universal themes and local Chinese cultural characteristic embedded within the novel. A reader response approach to literature teaching has been proposed by designing a six-step instructional model. According to Gu, L.’s (2004) research, reader response approach offers the possibility for the learner to be totally involved in text interpretation based on their own life experiences and past knowledge, and thus helps students improve their language skills and promote their cultural understandings. Her practice has opened a new view on the use of literature in TCFL.

The above mentioned approaches proposed in the recent decade seem to be in accordance with the role of literature in current TCFL, which is ‘cultural discourse’. They may shed light on the possibilities of enhancing the role of literature in FLT.

2.4 Limitations in traditional language textbooks and canonical literature

In the development of the three paradigms of the use of literature in FLT, two types of teaching materials have been challenged: traditional language textbooks and canonical literature. The first type of materials refers to the widely used non-literary textbooks compiled for the specific purpose of language teaching. With its roots in structuralism and audio-lingual teaching approach, the type of language textbooks influenced and is still influencing the design of language textbooks in FLT. Due to its lasting influence, this type of textbooks is titled with ‘traditional language textbooks’ in this study. The second type of teaching materials refers to the elitist, remote, deviant canonical literature that dominated the early stage of FLT (including TCFL). The limitations in the two types of teaching materials are briefly reviewed in this section, providing the rationale for the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL.

2.4.1 Limitations in traditional language textbooks

The traditional language textbook, with its emphasis on the acquisition of linguistic components of target language, usually arranges the teaching content “in strict conformity to the complexity of the grammatical knowledge” (Lin, X. 2008, p.7) and the various functions of language. As discussed above, such type of language textbooks attaches importance to the substitution of sentence patterns, the drilling of functional items, the analysis of grammatical structures and forms, etc. Therefore, the artificial texts are particularly created to facilitate the display the linguistic points. Lin, X. (2008) outlines several hypotheses that underlying the design of traditional language textbook:

1. Language is made up of by a set of limited rules which can be combined together to produce meaning;
2. Linguistic rules can be mastered and accumulated one by one;
3. Once a language form is mastered, it can be used

automatically in the real communication out of class. (p.7)

These hypotheses separate holistic linguistic knowledge into several isolated components. This has been proved to be incorrect, as Richards and Rodgers (2001) argue “language is a system for the expression of meaning” (p. 161). Also, in these hypotheses, the language forms are overemphasized but the language use has not attracted much attention (Lin, X., 2008). Thus, “the correspondence between ‘pedagogic’ language” and “‘real world’ language”, is totally neglected (M. N. MacDonald, Badger, & Dasli, 2006). In addition, the role of learner including his or her emotions is ignored in these hypotheses. Therefore, the design of traditional language textbooks is often criticized for its lack of authenticity, lack of real challenge and ignorance of the role of learner.

Lack of authenticity

According to Gómez and Fernando (2012), there are still a lot of textbooks lacking authentic language and cultural information in current FLT situation. M. N. MacDonald et al. (2006) and Berardo (2006) complain the “artificial” and “unvaried” language, including the perfectly formed sentences, used in these non-authentic texts. He points out that due to the overemphasis on linguistic forms, a series of “false text indicators” are created in these textbooks. As a challenge toward the “deviance from the actual life and world (Lin, X., 2008, p.52), an increasing number of researchers are suggesting integrating authentic materials to develop learners’ language knowledge and cultural awareness (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984; Carrell, 1984; García, 2007). ‘Authenticity’, according to McDough and Shaw (1993), is termed as:

Loosely implies as close an approximation as possible to the world outside the classroom, in the selection of both language material and of the activities and methods used for practice in the classroom. (p.43)

Therefore, in the current FLT setting, the teaching content in traditional language textbooks, with non-authentic linguistic and cultural components, is suggested giving way to the authentic text, which is “real, meaningful, interesting,

culturally appropriate, and available” (García, 2007, p. 21).

Lack of necessary challenge

Due to the specific purpose for language teaching, the design of traditional language textbooks often arranges its contents of lessons according to the grading of linguistic difficulties. Consequently, artificial texts are made up with restricted syntax and vocabulary (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984; Carrell, 1984; García, 2007). These kinds of textbooks “lack natural redundancy and multiple contextual cues for comprehension” (Gómez & Fernando, 2012), thus, failing to provide students with the actual encounter in target language (Stryker & Leaver, 1997). Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that offering learners with challenges is necessary and significant in the process of learning. However, with the use of traditional language textbooks, foreign language learners usually stay in a ‘comfortable zone’, hardly accessing the linguistic and cultural complexity and flexibility that an authentic encounter has. Therefore, the lack of necessary challenges, especially the real-world challenge, is another limitation of traditional language textbooks.

Negligence of the students’ emotions

The third limitation in a lot of traditional language textbooks is the negligence of students’ emotions. With the focus on the teaching of linguistic knowledge and skills, many textbooks take “a structural analysis of the language as their sole frame of reference”, without the consideration of learners’ interests and needs on the topics and content (Lin, X. 2008, p.7). In the current FLT setting, the consideration of learners’ needs and interests are advocated by researchers (Littlewood, 2001; Nunan, 1999; M. Williams & Robert, 1997). As M. Williams and Robert (1997) suggests, language course and materials should “make the subject relevant to the learner”, “involve their feelings and emotions” and “create

a sense of belonging”, etc. (M. Williams & Robert, 1997, p. 38).

To sum up, the limitations of traditional language textbooks that widely used in FLT including TCFL setting mainly include the lack of authenticity, lack of necessary challenges and ignorance of learners’ emotions. These limitations lead to the challenges of the use of traditional language textbooks in linguistic, cultural and affective aspects. In linguistic and cultural factors, traditional language textbooks fail to provide authentic linguistic and cultural components and necessary challenges. In the affective factor, learners’ interests and emotions are neglected.

To address these challenges, authentic texts are strongly recommended in FLT. As one type of authentic texts, literary texts have been used in FLT for a long time, however, there are still some challenges faced with the use of literary texts, mainly canonical literature.

2.4.2 Limitations in canonical literature

In the field of FLT, there have been many scholars who support integrating literature (Carter, 2007; Dupuy, Tse, & Cook, 1996; Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996; Gillian Lazar, 1996; McCloskey, 1998; Muyskens, 1983; Povey, 1972). They believe that literature and language teaching are complementary to each other. For instance, Povey (1972) states that, “literature will increase all language skills and extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax”. Parkinson and Thomas (2000) hold a similar view, stating that literature provides language learners with examples of good writing so as to improve their writing skills. Also, many scholars attach importance to the relationship between the teaching of literature and culture (Henning, 1993; McKay, 1982; Povey, 1972). Literature is believed to provide sources with ‘dimension of depth’ (Stern, 1987) and a full and vivid cultural context (Parkinson & Thomas, 2000), thus, enhancing students’

understanding of another culture (McKay, 1982). As Henning (1993) states, “literature is one feature among many in the culture domain that provides what one might call ‘added value’ beyond the level of language acquisition”. In addition, some scholars also point out that literature enables to arouse students’ motivation and interests to interact with a text (Lazar, 1993; McKay, 1982). In the field of TCFL, as reviewed in section 2.3.1, there are also many researchers in the past and today who defend and advocate the use of literature in TCFL. They agree that the use of literature does help students improve their language proficiency, understand the cultural values and arouse their curiosity and interests.

The research above has acknowledged the benefits of using literature in FLT including TCFL from linguistic, cultural and affective perspectives. It seems that these benefits of literary texts are likely to address the challenges faced with the traditional language textbooks. It is the feature of literature providing learners with authenticity, complexity and interests. However, not all literature is suitable for FLT. Canonical literature, which was prevalent in FLT, has been challenged since the 1950s by the academic world. Interestingly, opponents held totally opposite arguments but with same perspectives, outlining the linguistic, cultural and affective problems students may encounter with use of literature, mainly canonical literary texts (García, 2007).

The linguistic problem

Opponents point out that literature which is “elitist, remote, deviant” (Gilroy & Parkinson, 1997), should be isolated from language learning. Foreign language learners “lack the linguistic preparation necessary” (García, 2007) to access literary texts (Friedman, 1992; Martin & Laurie, 1993). As Baker (1998) states, “if the lexicon and grammar structures of the reader are not extensive, reading comprehension is very difficult or impossible” (cited in García, 2007, p.4).

Many scholars in English as Foreign Language (EFL) such as Topping (1968) and Robson (1989) argue that literature should be excluded from the foreign language curriculum because of its structural complexity and its unique use of

language, contributing little or nothing to help students to acquire linguistic competence and become competent users of the target language. Similarly, Marckwardt (1978) states that it is meaningless for students to learn over-used vocabulary and expressions since it does not contribute to communication.

Linguistic problem has also upset some TCFL scholars. Shi, G., & Li, M. (1987) posit that language learners have not reached the ‘competency threshold’ which the understanding of literary works requires:

After preliminary study, most students will only have grasped 2,500-3,000 items of vocabulary and about 150 items of grammatical use, which is not enough to understand most literary works (cited in Wang, Y., 2008, p. 17).

Other scholars also hold that literature teaching is not beneficial to the improvement of students’ linguistic competence. Wang, X. and Ni, M. (1991) claim that literary texts could not undertake the task of training comprehensive linguistic skills since there is an excess of new vocabulary and abstract concepts in literary texts that would set barriers for student’s linguistic acquisition. From the approach of generative grammar, Zhang, L. (1991) remarks that the linguistic form and meaning in literary works, which are different from that in non-literary works, is hard for a native speaker to understand, let alone a foreigner.

As García (2007) concludes, the linguistic challenge in reading literary texts mainly canonical literature includes “a competency threshold has not been reached”, “ the input is incomprehensible” and “the tasks required are overwhelming” (p.4).

The cultural problem

In addition to the linguistic difficulty, many scholars concern learners’ lack of necessary cultural preparation to manage canonical literary texts (Friedman, 1992; García, 2007a; Martin & Laurie, 1993). As García (2007) states, canonical

literature is always plagued with ‘Big C⁶’ or ‘high culture’ such as “culturally based knowledge”, thus it is quite complex and difficult for foreign language learners to handle (p. 5). The opponents of integrating literature in FLT also argue that the remote cultural perspective which needs explanation does not contribute to the development of communicative competence (Marckwardt, 1978; Robson, 1989; Topping, 1968). In TCFL, students have also been found to lack cultural preparation to access literary texts. As Shi, G., & Li, M. (1987) state,

Students can learn Chinese ‘culture’ through literary reading. However, without basic understanding of the texts, it is too much to expect the development of cultural understanding to occur as a result of this process (cited in Wang, Y., 2008, p.18).

Wang Y. (2008) also outlines that some canonical literary texts with strong Chinese political and cultural ideology are not suitable for the selection of texts for foreign language learners. In the same manner, Liu, X., Deng, E., and Liu, S. (1991) believes that it is no need for common language learners to learn canonical literature, especially the literature of classical periods.

The affective problem

Linguistic and cultural problems in the use of literary texts in FLT including TCFL has also led an affective problem to language learning, affecting students’ motivation, attitude, interest and self-esteem (Cho & Krashen, 1994). The study of canonical literature will cause students frustration and anxiety, decreasing their learning interests and attention span (García, 2007; Saito, Garza, & Horwitz, 1999; Sellers, 2000; Shi, G. & Li, M., 1987; D. N. Young, 1999). According to ‘affective filter hypothesis’ (Krashen, 1985), language acquisition will be impeded when

⁶ Culture is separated into two general categories: “High Culture” or “Big Culture” and “Low Culture” or “Small Culture”. “High culture” is seen as the set of cultural products, mainly in the arts, literature, etc. held in the highest esteem by a culture. It is also defined as “culturally based knowledge” García (2007: 5). It is contrasted with the “Low Culture” or “Small Culture”, that are more relevant to daily life. Low culture is a term for some forms of popular culture that have mass appeal.

affective filter is up. Krashen (1985) also highlights the importance of creating a ‘non-threatening environment’ for foreign language acquisition. However, the linguistic and cultural challenges that are beyond students’ competency thresholds inevitably will provide a threatening environment. Therefore, the study of canonical literary texts might “reduce lower-division students’ confidence to fully understand them” (García, 2007, p. 6).

Similar to the limitations within traditional language textbooks, the use of canonical literature has been found some inappropriateness in linguistic, cultural and affective factors. The most significant difference between the two types of teaching materials is that traditional language textbooks lack necessary challenges while canonical literary texts offer over-loaded challenges.

In this context, the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, with its linguistic, cultural and affective appropriateness, is suggested in this study. As illustrated in section 2.2, in the recent decades, literature started to be associated with ‘lowercase culture’ and literary texts were used as culturally authentic texts in FLT. As one component of ‘lowercase culture’, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is likely to address the problems that faced with both traditional language textbooks and canonical literary texts, possibly leading to “a positive swing back to using literature” (Riverol, 1991) in TCFL.

2.5 Overview of contemporary Chinese popular literature and relevant research in TCFL

To explore the appropriateness of using *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, the content and characteristics of this type of literature and the relevant research in TCFL are briefly reviewed in this section, providing the context for this study.

2.5.1 Content and features of contemporary Chinese popular literature

Content of contemporary Chinese popular literature

As introduced in chapter 1, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this study covers a variety of popular literary works in the ‘post-new period’ (since the late 1980s and early 1990s), including ‘hooligan literature’, ‘beauty literature’, ‘network literature’, ‘young adult literature’, etc. In this section, three technology-based types of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* (i.e. ‘film and television literature’, ‘network literature’ and ‘pop music literature’) are used as representatives in this research.

Film and television literature (yingshi wenxue/ 影视文学)

As an important branch of contemporary literature (Cui, J. 2012), ‘film and television literature’ is regarded as a new literary type that connected the traditional literary writings with new-rise film and television art (Liu, L. , 1990; Xu, J. 2012). On the one hand, ‘film and television literature’ shares the basic components with most traditional literature, including plot, characters, structure, narrative pattern and aesthetic pleasure (Cui, J. 2012); on the other hand, it involves audio and visual designs, providing audiences with fresh reading experiences. Since the late 1980s, ‘film and television literature’ has experienced unprecedented growth. Various types of film and television dramas that cover every walk of life from ancient to modern times gradually “occupy the pre-eminent place in contemporary cultural entertainment” (Lu,S.H, 2000).

It is widely accepted that whether a movie or TV series is successful or not largely depends on the screen scripts (He, X., & Gong, G. , 2002; Pan, W., 1998; Qin, F. 2007; Xu, J. 2012). Since the 1990s, some writers in the literary circle such as Wang Shuo have joined the team of screenwriters, creating such top-rated television series as ‘Yearnings’ (*kewang/渴望*) and ‘Stories of the Editorial Office’ (*Bianjibu de gushi/编辑部的故事*). The interaction between literary writing and

screen script writings has greatly enhanced the popularity of Chinese literary works and writers. Through the platform of film and television, many canonical literary works and elitist writers have expanded their impact through this platform. Meanwhile, an increasing number of popular literary works and their writers, many of them are amateur writers, have gained popularity, e.g. ‘Snail Dwelling’ (*woju/蜗居*) by Liuliu, ‘New Era of Marriage’ (*Xin jiehunshidai/新结婚时代*) by Wang Hailing’ou and ‘Struggle’ (*Fengdou/奋斗*) by Shi Kang. Many of these works display the hot social issues and people’s living conditions of current China, arousing collective emotions and responses of mass audience (Xu, J., 2012). Due to the popularity on screen, the screen scripts or original novels of some film or TV series are published with screen photos; many of them became best-sellers in book form (Qin, F., 2007).

In recent years, a new form of film appeared with the rise of new media. With the popularization of electronic devices, both professional and non-professional people are able to make a video by camera, mobile phone or DV, thus, everyone can become a screen writer, a director and a movie maker and they also can share with others through new media. The so-called ‘micro-film’ (*wei dianying/微电影*) is usually displayed through computer or mobile phone. The length of a micro-film generally spans from 30 seconds to 10 minutes, no longer than 30 minutes (Wang, H. & Ran, X., 2012). Beside its short length, a ‘micro-film’ always has a relatively simple plot and characters and covers the latest social and cultural topics (Wang, H. & Ran, X., 2012). For example, the micro-film ‘Old boys’ (*Lao nanhai/老男孩*) reflects the lives and dreams of modern Chinese youths. Along with feature films, micro-films are a good source to display contemporary China and the life of Chinese people.

To sum up, the rise of ‘film and television literature’, with its audio and visual advantages and broad and updated topics, brings keen interest and new aesthetic pleasure to readers.

Network literature (wangluo wenxue/网络文学)

As a new form of literature, ‘network literature’ is difficult to define. Broadly, all literary works being displayed through the network are ‘network literature’; generally defined, ‘network literature’ refers to original literary works created through computer and published on the Internet; more narrowly, ‘network literature’ covers the hypertext literary texts or multimedia production, which only relies on the network (Ouyang, Y., 2008). The second definition is adopted in this study.

China’s online publishing has its origins in the 1990s by a group of overseas Chinese students and the popularity of ‘network literature’ starts with the famous novel ‘Flying Dance’ (*Diyi ci qinmi jiechu/第一次亲密接触*) by Taiwanese writer Chih-Heng Tsai in 1998 (Liu, K., 2011). From that time on, the term ‘network literature’ became a new type of Chinese popular literature, attracting countless readers and writers. The composition of writers in ‘network literature’ is quite different from traditional writings. Instead of professional writers, the majority of these Internet writers have their own occupations and major in a non-literary field and most of them are young people (Ma, J. 2012; Zhou, Z., 2009). The Internet has provided a lot of young writers with the chances to display their literary talents. For instance, ‘under the banyan tree’ (Rongshuxia/榕树下), a literary website created in 1997, has generated a lot of biggest names in contemporary Chinese literary world, e.g. Han Han, Ning Caishen, Murong Xuecun. With different backgrounds and experiences, their writings bring broader perspectives of life, society and culture to readers. Meanwhile, there is a large team of overseas Chinese Internet writers, including Shao Jun, Tu Ya, Ai Mi, etc (Ma, J., 2012), whose writings concern the life of overseas Chinese immigrants and their intercultural experiences abroad.

Over the last decade, ‘network literature’ has rapidly developed, and there is now a range of writers working on a variety of genres, e.g. love, urban, kung-fu, campus, career, fantasy, royal palace, time-travel, etc, bringing contemporary

literature into a new world and catering for the different tastes of mass readers. The writing bar has been lowered, thus, everyone with a literary aspiration can share their works in web space with other readers, no matter what level of education or occupation they pursue. Through the platform of the Internet, readers' comments and responses are often involved in the creation of plot and characterization in 'network literature' (Jin, F. , 2013).

Along with the wide use of 'micro-blog' (weibo/微博), 'micro-fiction'(weixiaoshuo/微小说), as an emerging form of 'blog literature', has become a new fashion for Internet users. The breakout of micro-fiction originated from the 'first micro-fiction competition' held by Xinlang.com in 2010. With an upper limit of 140 characters, authors are required to share an original micro-story through micro-blog, by integrating basic components of traditional fiction, e.g. characters, plot, settings (Li, C., 2010; Meng,W., 2011; Yang, H., 2011). With the use of limited simple words, micro-fiction always leaves readers with 'blanks' to fill in from their own imagination and life experiences. Due to its technological support, micro-fiction is considered as a convenient means for people from every walk of life to display their life style and express feelings in the fast-paced urban culture (Meng, W., 2011). Accordingly, micro-fiction covers a variety of social and cultural topics e.g. 'Conscience' (*Liangxin/良心*) and 'City management' (*Chengguan/城管*) ironically reflects the social problems and 'Telephone' (*Dianhua/电话*) reveals young people's ignorance of parental love.

In addition, as a product of the network, SMS literature (*duanxin wenxue/短信文学*) and multimedia literature (*duomeiti wenxue/多媒体文学*) also belong to the category of 'network literature' and has become increasingly popular in recent years. The rise of 'network literature' attracts the attention of the traditional publishing industry and film and TV industry. Many popular online literary works have been published as printed books. Also, as mentioned above, films and TV series adapted from network novels have become very popular. Therefore, 'network literature' is considered to promote the development of contemporary

literature in two ways, as Zhou, Z. (2009) states on the one hand it attracts more lovers of literature. Without constraints of time and space, they can read their favorite works online and interact with the writer; on the other hand, it fosters a large number of grassroots writers. Their writings and their perspectives have enriched the content and forms of contemporary literature.

Popular music literature (yinyue wenxue/音乐文学)

The rise of ‘network literature’ has impacted the development of contemporary Chinese novels, while lyrics of pop music, to a certain extent, supplement the composition of contemporary poetry. Lyric, as the soul of a song, is a special form of literature (Xia, Y., & Xu, F., 2012). Since the late 1980s, there has been a big change in pop music. In 1986, Cui Jian, who is labeled ‘the father of Chinese Rock’, performed ‘Nothing to My Name’ (*yi wu suo you/ 一无所有*), arousing emotional responses of millions of Chinese people. The lyrics of a lot of his songs touched the heart of mass audiences by expressing collective feelings after decades of so-called ‘revolution’.

Since then, pop songs started to become an important component of people’s entertainment. Different from the songs that were prevalent before the 1980s, which were usually great narrative songs covering the topics such as patriotism or homesickness, the current composition of pop music is more concerned with personal life and feelings, so much so that love songs dominate the pop song market. From the classification of pop songs on some major music websites⁷, one of the most important classification method is according to different moods, e.g. ‘happy’ (*xiyue/ 喜悦*), ‘sad’(*shanggan/ 感伤*), ‘lonely’(*jimo/ 寂寞*), ‘missing’(*sinian/ 思念*), ‘romantic’ (*langman/ 浪漫*), ‘touching’ (*gandong/ 感动*), ‘nostalgic’ (*huaijiu/ 怀旧*), and ‘encouraging’ (*lizhi/ 励志*). A song can represent one mood, tells a story and is likely to soothe one’s emotion. Undoubtedly, the tune of a song is critical in arousing one’s emotion but lyric is also an important component.

⁷ E.g. baidu.com, 9ku.com

In addition, like ‘network literature’, people from every walk of life can create songs of their own with the assistance of easily-handled song-maker software. The rise of new media provides these amateur singers and lyrics writers with a platform to display their talents. Currently, ‘network song’ (*wangluo gequ*/网络歌曲) has already become one of the important components of Chinese contemporary pop songs. These amateur lyric writers, with their different backgrounds and life experiences, display the sweet and sour of life of different social groups, e.g. ‘I’m a Migrant Worker’ (*Ge shi nongmingong*/哥是农民工) by Dajun, ‘Little White-collar’ (*Xiao bailing*/小白领) by Zhang Erfeng.

Characteristics of contemporary Chinese popular literature under postmodernism

As the type of popular literature in post-new period, contemporary Chinese popular literature has obvious postmodern characteristics. Originating from the Western capitalist countries in the 1950s and 1960s, ‘postmodernism’ has become a worldwide cultural trend. As a style of culture, ‘postmodern’ is defined as:

Contemporary movement of thought which rejects totalities, universal values, grand historical narratives, solid foundations to human existence and the possibility of objective knowledge (Eagleton, 2003, p. 13).

It is a “new sensibility” (Sontag, 1966, p. 296) that “revolts against the canonization of modernism’s avant-garde revolution, revolt against what is seen as the cultural elitism of modernism” (Storey, 2009, p. 182). Accordingly, the ordinary life and demands of some groups in society (i.e. the working class, female, black, etc.) have been considered and displayed. Under this impact, the literature has transferred from ‘higher than life’ to ‘real life’. The ‘high seriousness’ of the great modernisms became an ‘essential triviality’ (Jameson, 1991). Jameson (1991) also outlines four basic features of postmodernism, including the death of subject, the lack of depth, the disappearance of a sense of history and the abolition of distance.

Since the 1980s, China has been influenced by postmodernism. On the one hand, it is being used to revolt against the hegemony of Western modernism discourse and protect national cultural identity (Wu, G., 2004); on the other hand, the marginal groups in Chinese society have been concerned. The study of literature in the context of postmodernism era has attracted a lot of scholars in Chinese academy. According to Huang, H. (2002), there are five cultural features of postmodern literature, as he calls ‘post-literature’ (*hou wenxue*/ 后文学):

The formation depends on a sufficient supply of social life resources; expansion of literature population in whole nation; the restricted spreading channel in the ‘period of canonical literature’ has expanded to a variety of channels for infinite spreading; the popularization of writers so that everyone can become a writer; reader’s attitudes and methods have a lot of changes, transforming from ‘aesthetic reading’ to ‘entertaining and efferent reading.

In light of postmodernism, some features specifically within in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are reviewed in this section.

Composition: reader-centered

Since the 1980s, the socialist market economy has gradually changed the environment of literature composition, leading to a change of writers’ values and attitudes. The market-oriented awareness decided by readers’ wills has affected writers and their writings, the role of reader became the primary consideration in the process of literature production (Fan, Q., 2004). Literature was forced to enter the market and undergo a transformation. As a result, literature is inclined to perform as a commodity to provide entertainment and re-composition, and is criticized by many scholars for reducing the level of works of art. However, it does narrow the gap between literature and the general public. Literature no longer belongs to intellectuals and elites; instead, everyone can be reader as well as writer.

Due to readers’ participation, more experiences and emotions are reflected in literary works. Writers have had to change their previous attitude that only

concerned themselves; instead, they start to consider readers' feelings, expectations and responses. Some scholars called it 'kitsch', which means to cater for most people's interests. For instance, Wang Shuo's writings, both novels and films, have won favour among the public. His literary works were always catering to readers' tastes and the demands of the market, as he stated,

My novels were written for certain types of readers, e.g. 'Masters of Mischief' (wanzhu) was written for urban young men; 'Die Satisfied' (guobayin jiu si) for fresh university female students; 'Playing For Thrills' (Wanr de jiushi xintiao) for highly-educated people; 'I am your papa' (wo shi ni baba) for intellectuals who worried about the fate of their country (cited in Zou, X. 2008, p.267).

Compared with some professional writers in literary circle, amateur network writers seem more concerned about readers' responses, caring more about size of audience and how well the books sell (Liu, K., 2011).

Narrative language: colloquial and mixed

In the division of canonical literature and popular literature, the elegance of language is an important measure. Most of the canonical literature uses elegant and seldom used literary words and expressions. Thus it requires readers' high reading ability, setting barriers for many low-education people. However, the language expressions used in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are usually quite direct, colloquial, understandable and relaxed, even vulgar, revealing one feature of postmodernism that is of 'disenchantment'. Ordinary language is used to display the life of ordinary people, shortening the distance between reader and characters of a novel. As Meng, X. (2009) states, "the introduction of colloquial language into literature.....makes language more vivid and authentic and arouse readers' life feelings". In many *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, especially network fiction, sentence structure is very simple, mainly using 'loose sentence' and short sentences. Authors set one sentence as one paragraph, which decreases readers' reading difficulty and enhances their reading confidence (Liu, K., 2011).

Another feature of language components in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is ‘mixed’. Zou, X.(2008) uses the word ‘square language’ (*guangchang yuyan/广场语言*) to describe this feature of language. The term originated from Bakhtin's theory of carnival. According to Bakhtin (1984), life of the ‘carnival square’ is

Free and unrestricted, full of ambivalent laughter, blasphemy, the profanation of everything sacred, full of debasing and obscenities, familiar contact with everyone and everything (p.129-130).

Thus the language in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* is also free and unrestricted, integrating dialect, slang, jokes, folk songs, doggerel, allegory, jingles, terminology, classical poems, pop song lyrics, Internet language, foreign language, etc. (Meng, X., 2009; Zou, X.,2008). Also, the writing forms such as parody, pastiche satire and collage are often used in *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, creating a humorous, entertaining and relaxed context for readers. In some popular literature, especially in ‘network literature’, many new words and expressions have been created. Internet language became an extension of modern Chinese language and many of the words have become popular expressions in daily communication (Liu, K.,2011). With the feature of postmodernism, the language of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is mass popular language, which is vivid, rich and relevant to current social life and culture.

Narrative perspective: ordinary and fundamental

In the postmodernism context, writers not only pay more attention to the ordinary people and marginalized classes than before but also try to understand their viewpoint. In most canonical literature, writers usually write literary works from an elite perspective, overlooking people’s life and keeping a critical distance (Storey, 2009). However, in *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, the authors have become the spokesmen of fundamental class, marginal people and disadvantaged groups (e.g. migrant workers, unemployed people), writing of their

life details and current situation. In fact, many of the writers themselves originated from these social groups, and recorded their real life through literary works. This popular trend in literature writing was titled with ‘fundamental writing’ (*diceng xiezuo*/底层写作). As many scholars state, the topic and content of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* shows the status of ordinary people and reflects their awareness (Fan, Y., 2011). This feature has been highlighted by Zou, X.(2008) as follows:

Rather than ‘heavy’ dogmatism, Chinese popular literature emphasizes on relaxed entertainment; Rather than enlightenment, writers of Chinese popular literature enjoy ‘life of the carnival square’ with readers; Rather than ‘the other shore’ (*bi’an*/彼岸), popular literature pay much attention to ‘current moment’ (*dangxia*/当下) (p.34).

Such trivial details and ordinary scenes of daily life, like the direct narrative language, make readers feel a sense of familiarity and belonging. They incline to find their own life and themselves in these popular literary works, which arouse their reading interest and emotional responses.

However, much of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is not without its dangers and problems. The most serious problems are the lack of adequately trained personnel and the absence of established techniques in examination and evaluation (Ashliman, 1971). Well-selected popular literary texts will help students improve their linguistic competence, cultural understanding, and arouse their reading motivation, but the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* into the foreign language classroom requires very careful and deliberate selection.

2.5.2 Research on the use of popular media in TCFL

As discussed in section 2.2, some types of popular literature such as pop song lyrics have already been integrated into TCFL at the practical level. However, at the academic level, most of them were considered as popular media to support

language teaching (Chen, F., 2013; Li, C., 2010; Tu, W., 2002). Few of them were studied as literary texts although some of the research paid attention to the literariness of these new forms of literature. Due to its relevance to this study, the research on the use of popular media in TCFL, mainly focused on film, TV and pop song, is reviewed in this section.

Research on the use of film and TV series in TCFL

In recent years, an increasing number of studies have integrated film and TV series into the TCFL curriculum (Cao, L., 2011; Chen, N. & Xu, X. 2011; Li, J., 2009; Shan, Y., & Chen, J., 2010; Zhang, M., 2011). The training of listening and speaking skills is the primary aim of the use of film and TV series, which are regarded as authentic language resources in a communicative context (Li, J., 2009; Li, J., 2012). In light of the research of Treicher (1967)⁸, some papers supported the integration of films and TV series in the training of linguistic skills by emphasizing the significant role of vision and sound (Wang, H. & Ran, X., 2012; Zhang, M., 2011). Li, J. (2012) highlights the use of films and TV series to promote students' learning of 'tacit knowledge', which "can only be revealed through practice in a particular context and transmitted through social networks".

Culture is another reason for the integration of film and TV series in TCFL. As Li, J. (2009) states, film is the bridge for cultural communication. It can help students learn about Chinese culture, and also the customs of Chinese people and their thinking processes. Cao, L. (2011) also mentions this attribute of film and TV series, suggesting that learning Chinese through film helps students learn to use different language in different cultural contexts. Similarly, Li, C. (2010) highlights the "cross-cultural social meaning" of film. He discussed the cross-cultural aspects of contemporary society through the analysis of cultural differences through film. Zhang, M. (2011) shows how students can be taught to "explore and discover the Chinese cultural mind" by "employing a variety of situated activities" through films. Chen, N. and Xu, X. (2011) suggested the

⁸ Treicher's (2001) experiments show that 83% of information is acquired via vision, 11% via hearing, 3.5% via olfaction, 1.5% via the tactile sense, and 1% via the sense of taste.

integration of films with strong historical elements, e.g. ‘Confucius’ (*Kongzi/孔子*), ‘the Forbidden City’ (*Gugong/故宫*) and ‘Farewell, My Concubine’ (*Bawang bie ji/霸王别姬*). He believed that these movies can encourage students to think about Chinese ancient culture, including the thought processes and life style of ancient Chinese people and so help students better learn Chinese history. Besides linguistic and cultural benefits, most studies describe films and TV series providing a relaxed and comfortable environment for students’ language learning, decreasing their anxiety.

Some researchers discuss the selection of films and TV series. Shan, Y., & Chen, J. (2011) suggest three principles in the process of selection: “select different films and TV series for different teaching purposes, language proficiency, and different aspects of culture”. Chen, N. & Xu, X. (2011) consider suitable film and TV series to be those with “a salient theme, complete storyline, beautiful theme music and deep cultural background”.

Most of the above discussed films are feature-films. One problem is the class time is usually not long enough for the use of the full-length films (Li, J., 2009). Some scholars suggested using film footage rather than the whole film in class but that creates another problem, which is the incomplete storyline of a film. As a response to this problem, two papers were published to suggest the use of ‘micro-film’ in TCFL (Li, J., 2012; Wang, H. & Ran, X., 2012; Zhang, M., 2011). Compared with the film and TV series spread in traditional media platforms, micro-film is “shorter in length, quicker in spreading and wider in topics” (Zhang, M., 2011). Accordingly, it can provide students with “the updated Chinese language context, the study method that close to life and imperceptible cultural transmission”.

Research on the use of pop song in TCFL

In the same way as the use of film and TV series, many scholars suggested

the integration of Chinese pop songs in TCFL. Pop song is believed to “supply authentic and natural language for students, which gives them exposure to the target language and enables them to learn the language effectively in a relaxed environment” (Hayes, 2009). Wang, Y. (2011) specifically indicates the benefits of the use of ‘Sinicism’ (*zhongguo feng*/中国风) songs, e.g. help students appreciate culture and history. Similarly, Xu, L. (2012) and Long, Y., & Lei, Y. (2007) believe that the use of lyrics of pop songs can effectively enhance students’ learning interests and also train their listening abilities, enlarge their vocabulary, strengthen grammatical points, and expand their cultural knowledge. Hayes (2009) also considers the value of Chinese songs in TCFL classrooms, presenting several specific teaching activities and online tools to illustrate how songs can be used in a language classroom.

As Wei, S. (2012) concludes, the integration of music, film and TV series supplement the traditional teaching materials. He considered “it necessary to increase the proportion of the use of music and film in TCFL materials” but “the use of music and film could never replace the traditional teaching methods”.

To sum up, *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, represented by ‘film and television literature’, ‘network literature’ and ‘pop music literature’, has several postmodern characteristics: reader-oriented composition, colloquial and mixed language and ordinary and fundamental narrative perspective. The current trend of the use of these popular works in TCFL has several characteristics: firstly, most of the researchers suggested using them as supplementary materials and multimedia tools to support language teaching. Nearly none of the materials were considered as main teaching materials for TCFL and few of them were studied as literature. Secondly, most of these works integrated in current syllabus are created by a small group of Chinese people, usually elites, thus they may not be able to reflect the language and culture in all walks of life. Especially, the ‘culture’ discussed in these papers tends to focus on the components of ‘high culture’ (e.g. history, customs) rather than ‘lowercase culture’ that are more relevant to daily

life. Finally, the literature, displayed on new media such as Internet which reflects more lowercase culture in all walks of life, has not attracted much attention.

2.6 Summary and the significance of the study

The review of relevant literature provides the context for this study at both pedagogical and academic levels. Research gaps are identified and the possible contributions of this study are suggested. Generally speaking, the use of literature has experienced prosperity, decline and resurge with the changing roles (i.e. canon, language and culture) in FLT including TCFL over the past decades. At the pedagogical level, the text selection of literature shows a trend that transfers from canonical literature to literary texts with language teaching values, then to literature within ‘lowercase culture’ and popular media. At the academic level, an increasing awareness of integrating literature has been aroused in TCFL in the recent decade. A variety of literary types and cultural-oriented approaches have been suggested in TCFL. Some literary works within popular media also attract much attention although they are not categorized as literature in these researches. The situation at both pedagogical and academic levels indicates the possibility and practicability of the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL. In addition, the review of the limitations within traditional language textbooks and canonical literature calls for an alternative tool to address the linguistic, cultural and affective problems. The research on the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* as one possible alternative becomes necessary and significant. Some people may argue why not use other types of authentic texts (e.g. newspaper, map, magazines, maps) to address these limitations. While the advantages of other types of authentic texts are not denied, in this study the focus is on literary texts. Also, there are a lot of *contemporary Chinese popular literary works* including a variety of text types, providing learners with opportunities to access more authentic texts.

Although the use of literature in TCFL has attracted an increasing awareness in the academic field, both the quantity and quality of the research are fairly limited. Several research gaps have been identified from the existing research. Firstly, the benefits of the use of certain types of literature have been discussed; however, the theoretical and empirical studies are far from satisfactory. Among these researches, most published works only cover theoretical discussion; few of them provide empirical studies and pedagogical applications. For instance, Wang Y. (2008) suggests a set of contemporary literary works according to her theoretical findings but the effects of the use of these materials have not been demonstrated in her study. Similarly, Gu, L. (2004) designs a teaching syllabus based on reader response approach but did not provide empirical findings. Besides the two studies, there are more researches just providing general statements by giving some examples of literary works, without any theoretical unpinning. Secondly, much existing research still advocate Chinese literature with a strong intention to export high culture to outside world. The ‘culture’ discussed in these researches focus on ‘high culture’; however, the ‘lowercase culture’ that are more relevant to daily life is much neglected. Thirdly, in the research of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, most of the researches outline the benefits of the use of film, television and pop songs as supplemental materials to support language and cultural teaching. Nearly none of them use these sources as main teaching materials. The role of popular media, rather than the nature of literary texts, has been emphasized in these researches. Also, the theoretical and empirical studies in these researches are fairly insufficient. Finally, there is little research on the integration of ‘network literature’ such as network fiction and SMS literature as teaching resources. Also, some new types of popular literature that are displayed on new media such as micro-film and network song have not attracted much attention in current TCFL research field. It is largely because of the quality of these works are not guaranteed. Undoubtedly, there are large amounts of ‘network literature’ of very low quality; however, there must be some meaningful and significant work and as discussed in section 2.4, this type of

popular literary works is an unexplored treasure that displaying ‘lowercase culture’ in all walks of life of current China. Thus, with an open mind and careful selection criteria, this type of literary work should be considered as resource in TCFL teaching materials.

Recognizing the research gaps in the current body of knowledge, this study aims to provide a rationale for the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* as an instructional tool in an advanced TCFL class. Accordingly, this study suggests the use of several types of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* that within ‘lowercase culture’ and popular media in TCFL. It is likely to provide an alternative for the text-selection of TCFL teaching materials and enhance the role of literature in the current TCFL setting. In addition, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL are illustrated and demonstrated by providing profound theoretical unpinning and reliable empirical study. Constructivism, with its view of learning, provides theoretical rationale to support the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. In light of constructivism, an instructional model based on reader response theory and schemata theory is suggested for the teaching of literary texts, and an experimental course is conducted in an advanced TCFL course at an Australian university, providing both qualitative and quantitative data to complement the discussion of theory.

It is necessary to clarify again, this study does not mean only *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is suitable to be selected as advanced TCFL teaching materials, but aims to provide new scope and perspective for research on the use of literature in TCFL.

Chapter 3 The Theory of Constructivism and the Use of Contemporary Chinese Popular Literature in Classroom Learning

3.1 Overview of the chapter

In this chapter, a theoretical framework based on constructivism is established to approach the empirical study of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in foreign language classroom. This approach is discussed in terms of three issues: the theory of constructivist learning, the rationale for the use of *contemporary popular literature* in a foreign language classroom, and an instructional model based on two constructivist teaching pedagogies that are used in this study. This chapter provides the theoretical foundation for this study, and offers some pedagogical suggestions for the empirical study undertaken in this research.

3.2 Overview of constructivism

In the field of psychology, there has been a significant shift: from behaviourism to cognitivism and now to constructivism (P. A. Cooper, 1993). All of the three psychological paradigms have a great impact on the perspectives of the nature of human learning. As one of the most influential views of learning since the 1980s (Applefield, Huber, & Moallem, 2001), constructivism stems from the field of cognitive science, particularly research by Jean Piaget (Fosnot & Perry, 1996).

3.2.1 The concept of constructivism

According to Gruber & Voneche (1977), the term ‘constructivism’ most probably is derived from Piaget’s reference to his views as ‘constructivist’ (cited

in Applefield et al., 2001). Piaget and Cook (1954) develop the cognitive theory of development in opposition to behaviourism. The behaviourist theory posits that knowledge exists separately from the background of the individual learner and highlights the stimulus-response learning process. In its deviation from the objectivist tradition of behaviourism, Piaget and Cook (1954) believe that learning is not simply copy of reality; instead, it is a process of constructing individual interpretations on the basis of an interaction between surrounding environments. Accordingly, knowledge is derived from a process of meaning-making. As Fosnot and Perry (1996) conclude,

Rather than behaviors or skills as the goal of instruction, cognitive development and deep understanding are the foci (of constructivism); rather than stages being the result of maturation, they are understood as constructions of active learner reorganization. Rather than viewing learning as a linear process, it is understood to be complex and fundamentally non-linear in nature (p.10-11).

Since Piaget's research, constructivist theories on learning have been developed by countless researchers. The constructivist perspectives on learning have become increasingly influential in the recent decades.

3.2.2 Constructivist learning theories

Of the different approaches and perspectives emphasized by different constructivist researchers, there are two broad orientations of constructivism: individual-oriented constructivism and social-oriented constructivism. Individual-oriented constructivism is represented by the work of Piaget (1954) and G. A. Kelly (1955), while social-oriented constructivism is represented by Lev Vygotsky's (1978) and Jerome Bruner's (1978) research.

Individual-oriented constructivism

As a cognitive theorist, Jean Piaget began to develop a cognitive theory of development in the 1920s, which is regarded as the origin of contemporary

constructivism. Thus the work of Piaget and his followers is also known as ‘cognitive constructivism’. Piaget’s observations of children’s learning process led him to conclude that the intelligence of human beings presents “a remarkable continuity with the acquired or even inborn processes on which it depends and at the same time makes use of” (Piaget, 1950, p.21). According to Piaget, the efforts made for the “remarkable continuity” is called “adaption”, a process in where learners deal with new knowledge or information (Wadsworth, 1996). In this process, learners organize and construct their perceptions of new knowledge based on cognitive schemata or mental structures, involving two complementary processes: assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is the process of interpreting new situations, knowledge or information in terms of individual pre-existing cognitive schemata. As Piaget (1970) states,

No behaviour, even if it is new to the individual, constitutes an absolute beginning. It is always grafted onto previous schemes and therefore amounts to assimilating new elements to already constructed structures (p. 707).

According to Piaget, when human beings encounter a new situation or information, they tend to refer to previously learned information and familiar situations in order to make sense of the new information or situation. This is assimilation, a process of “integrating external elements into evolving or completed structures” (Piaget, 1970, p.706). Different from assimilation, accommodation refers to the process of altering one’s pre-existing schemata in order to fit in the new situation or information. As Piaget (1970) points out, accommodation involves “any modification of an assimilatory scheme or structure by the elements it assimilates” (p.708). It allows the transformation of structures as “a function of the new elements encountered” (Block, 1982). Although assimilation and accommodation appear to be opposed to one another (Piaget & Cook, 1954), they are two sides of the same coin of adaptation (Block, 1982). As Piaget (1970) remarks, assimilation is “subordinate to the situation with the accommodations it entails” and accommodation is “subordinate to the already

existing structures to which the situation must be assimilated” (p.709). Therefore, the equilibration between assimilation and accommodation is important in the process of adaptation, helping a person strive for a state of mental balance between individual background and the outside world. Generally speaking, Piaget’s cognitive theory of development emphasizes learners’ previous background and personal involvement in the construction of the environment.

Similar to Piaget’s focus on personal construction, G. A. Kelly (1955) develops personal construct psychology, further strengthening the worldview of individuals. He proposes that people organize psychological experience by developing bipolar dimensions of meaning, which is ‘personal construct’. As a radical constructivist, G. A. Kelly (1955) defines a personal construct as “a way in which things are like and yet different from others” (p.104). According to Kelly, everyone interacts with the ‘reality’ from a unique perspective; therefore, knowledge is a construction of a variety of ‘realities’ through different experiences and actions (Chiari & Nuzzo, 2003) and the possibilities for conceptualizing events are infinite (G. A. Kelly, 1955). As two representatives of early research on personal constructivism, both of the two researchers emphasize the role of personal efforts and previous individual’s knowledge. However, their emphasis upon individual development led them to overlook the significance of the social environment for learning.

Social-oriented constructivism

Different from Piaget and Kelly’s theories that focus on the internal construct process, social constructivism emphasizes the social, cultural and environmental influences on the construction of meaning during one’s learning process (Kozulin, 1999). According to social constructivism, knowledge is initially constructed in a social context and is then taken up by individuals (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999; Cole, 1991; Eggen & Kauchak, 1999).

Social constructivism stems from the work of Vygotsky, a remarkable Russian psychologist who emphasizes the social environment as a facilitator of learning and development. Vygotsky developed many widely known concepts and theories, strongly influencing contemporary social constructivism. The learning theory of Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the social, contextual nature of learning, stating that children acquire new knowledge and information through meaningful interactions with environment. According to Vygotsky, “a child’s cognitive development arises in social interaction with a more able member of society” (Storch, 2005, p. 154), which means that “learning is the internalization of the social interaction” (Storch, 2002, p.121). Therefore, learning is not a separate activity undertaken for its own purpose, but a process of products of the social structures, which are embodied in the social practices of the society (Lave & Wenger, 1991, cited in Galbrith et al, 1999). Different from Piaget’s work that focuses on observing individual children in isolation, the real classroom contexts were involved in Vygotsky’s study. For Vygotsky, children’s cognitive development was seen as the result of interaction with the social context. In addition, Vygotsky posits that social interaction enhances learning in two other ways: the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and Scaffolding (Dixon-Krauss, 1996). Vygotsky’s (1978) ZPD has been defined as:

The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (cited in Hickmann, 1985, p. 237).

According to ZPD theory, there are two developmental levels applicable to the learner, the actual level and the potential level of development (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). The actual development level is defined as the level which is determined by what the learner can do alone, and the potential level of development is described as something established by observing what the learner can do when assisted by an adult or more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1978). Also, the potential level of development characterizes psychological functions that have not

yet matured enough to enable the child to perform independently. However, it is possible for him or her to achieve beyond his or her “actual development level” and reach “the potential level of development” through “adult guidance” or “collaboration with more competent peers” (Hickmann, 1985, p. 236).

In Vygotsky’s study on children’s development, ‘scaffolds’ is another significant concept. It was at first described by Vygotsky (1978) in reference to how adults introduce children to cultural norms (cited in Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p.52). Vygotsky suggests that a learner can accomplish more challenging tasks through ‘scaffolds’, e.g. teacher’s guidance, assistant materials, collaboration with more capable peers, etc. Eventually, learners are able to perform the task independently without ‘scaffolds’ (Vygotsky, 1978). The concept of ‘scaffolds’ was followed by Jerome Bruner, who popularized this as “a metaphor for a mother’s verbal efforts to maintain conversation with a child” (cited in Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p.52). Ratner and Bruner (1978) also apply the metaphor of scaffolds to Vygotsky’s theory of ZPD to develop the concept of ‘scaffolding’, which refers to a temporary support that lifts the learner from ‘actual developmental level’ to ‘potential developmental level’.

The major difference between the individual-oriented constructivism and social constructivism is one of focus. Individual-oriented constructivism emphasizes on the ways in which meaning is constructed in an individual mind, while social-oriented constructivism focuses on how the development of knowledge has been determined in a social and cultural context. Despite of different focuses, both approaches share a common ground: believing that new knowledge or meaning is actively constructed in the human mind and providing similar implications for learning (e.g. learner-centered methods, teacher as a facilitator, the significance of real context). These implications are examined in the following section.

3.2.3 Constructivist learning environment

From the constructivist perspective, an individual's view of the world within a real context plays an important role in the constructing of knowledge. Influenced by the constructivist point of view, a constructivist learning environment (CLE) has been developed filling the gaps in traditional instructional models. In traditional foreign language classroom, as discussed in chapter 2, students are passive recipients of knowledge and the role of the teacher is imparter. Reflected in teaching materials, traditional language textbooks arrange the teaching contents in strict conformity to knowledge, especially grammatical knowledge. In this mode, the students' affective factors (e.g. learners' needs, motivation, self-confidence and anxiety) and external factors affecting student learning (e.g. learning environment, social and cultural background) have been ignored.

Different from the beliefs and practices in traditional class, the making of meaningful connection between new knowledge and prior knowledge is encouraged in a CLE. According to Jonassen (1994), several characteristics of CLE have been proposed:

- 1) Provide multiple representations of reality.
- 2) Avoid oversimplification and represent the complexity of the real world.
- 3) Emphasize knowledge construction instead of knowledge reproduction.
- 4) Emphasize authentic tasks in a meaningful context rather than abstract instruction out of context.
- 5) Provide learning environments such as real-world settings or case-based learning instead of predetermined sequences of instruction.
- 6) Encourage thoughtful reflection on experience.
- 7) Enable context- and content- dependent knowledge construction.
- 8) Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation, not competition among learners for recognition.

The implications of this list for education, along with other research findings, provide some instructional suggestions for foreign language teaching. Several

main points are summarized as follows:

Classroom as a social context

According to social constructivism, classroom is a social context in which language is purposefully and meaningfully used. Students tend to receive socio-cultural knowledge and make meaning through the interaction in a social group (Wentworth, 1980). Fairclough (1992) and Breen (2001) suggest that the construction of social relationships through discourse and classroom interaction is able to produce academic and social knowledge. Mician (2006) proposes that language is learned by participation in language mediated speech and literacy activities. He posits that language learning is not only the process of mental development, but also can be integrated with social and cultural process. Accordingly, students gain the experience of interaction in target language and establish a relationship between social practice and language use, which enhance students' abilities of comprehension and participation in communication (Mician, 2006). Furthermore, Krashinsky in his book "Context and Culture in Language Teaching" (1993) has also elaborated this importance of social and cultural process in language learning. Therefore, a constructivist approach of classroom teaching puts collaboration and mutual exploration at the top of the list. As Duffy and Jonassen (1992) state, learners with different backgrounds should collaborate in tasks and discussions to achieve a shared understanding in a specific field (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992). A lot of constructivist learning approaches emphasize interactive learning (e.g. reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, problem-based instruction, and scaffolding).

Learner as active constructor

In contrast to traditional views that see learning as the accumulation of facts, constructivism believes that learners are actively constructing their own personal understandings and meanings of new knowledge and environment from their own experiences. Accordingly, learners become the center of learning and their

personal backgrounds and experiences appear to be crucial throughout the process of learning. As Wertsch (1997) states, personal background facilitates the shaping of learners' knowledge and truth. Constructivism also strengthens the uniqueness and complexity of learners (Wertsch, 1997). Therefore, teachers should take consideration of individual learner's previous experience, background, culture, etc., encouraging his or her construction and reflection of the new knowledge through the association with his or her previous experiences. In addition to the focus on learners' personal experiences, constructivism also stresses the importance of learner's social interaction with others, especially more knowledgeable people. The emphasis of learning, therefore, transfers from the teacher and the textbook to the learner (Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 2000).

Teacher as facilitator

In a constructivist approach, teachers are no longer the supplier of knowledge, instead, they have to adapt to the role of facilitators (Cobb & Bauersfeld, 1995). As a facilitator, the teacher should create an environment for learners to achieve their own conclusions rather than provide them correct answers, and should interact with learners, instead of giving a monologue (Rhodes & Belamy, 1999). Through interaction, teachers should encourage learners to discover, criticize and clarify the similarities and differences between the new and old knowledge, thus, supporting learners become active constructors of new knowledge and experience.

According to Thirteen Ed Online (2004), a contrast between the traditional classroom and the constructivist classroom is presented below:

The Traditional Classroom	The Constructivist Classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Begins with parts of the whole—emphasizes basic skills · Strict adherence to fixed curriculum · Textbooks and workbooks · Instructor gives/students receive · Instructor assumes directive, authoritative role · Assessment via testing/correct answers · Knowledge is inert · Students work individually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Begin with the whole – expanding to parts · Pursuit of student questions/interests · Primary Sources/manipulative materials · Learning is interaction – building on what students already know · Instructor interacts/negotiates with students · Assessment via student works, observations, points of view, tests. Process is as important as product · Knowledge is dynamic/change with experiences · Students work in groups

Table 1: Comparison of traditional classroom and the constructivist classroom

According to the review above, constructivism suggests a learner-centered environment that focuses on learners' personal background and collaborative learning. In this learning environment, teaching materials are an important component. As mentioned in above table, textbooks and workbooks are used in a traditional classroom while primary sources and manipulative materials are used in a constructivist classroom, providing a rationale for the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in foreign language classrooms. In the next section, more rationales from constructivist perspectives are provided to support the argument of this thesis.

3.3 Constructivist rationale for the use of contemporary popular literature in TCFL

As reviewed in the last section, according to the constructivist approach (both individual and social constructivism), knowledge is not passively received but actively constructed from a process of meaning-making of the real experience of human beings (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Vygotsky, 1978). The constructivist

teaching takes initiative for students' own learning experience, involving their prior knowledge and experience to create new knowledge or experience. In the current educational arena, the constructivist views of learning have gained wide application by researchers and instructors (Applefield et al., 2001). The influence of constructivist view has also been revealed in an increasing number of school textbooks (M. Thompson, McLaughlin, & Smith, 1995), which are self-directed, innovative and drawing upon visual and audio materials. Inspired by the constructivist views of learning, a variety of implications have been suggested for FLT, including textbook design.

In traditional language textbooks, artificial texts are created for foreign language learners, with the purpose of offering language knowledge (e.g. grammatical knowledge, sentence structure) to learners. Against such practices, constructivist learning theory suggests creating an authentic context for learners. The content of a textbook is no longer just the knowledge passed to students by an instructor; instead, it becomes the object of meaning construction and a real context for problem-solving. Therefore, there are several requirements for the design of foreign language textbooks, which are in accordance with the features of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. These requirements include authentic and relevant context, appropriate challenge and positive affect.

3.3.1 Authentic and relevant context

The authenticity of materials and context appears to be one of the most important elements in a CLT. Many constructivist theorists believe that learning is context dependent. Especially, social constructivist researchers view context “as central to the learning itself” (McMahon, 1997). They posit that the social and cultural context provides opportunities for authentic and meaningful learning, as Dunlap and Grabinger (1996) state, “skills and knowledge are best acquired within realistic contexts” (p.667). Therefore, knowledge should be constructed in authentic experiences that are more real than artificial ones (Doolittle, 1999).

According to the principle of authenticity, teaching materials for foreign language learners should reflect the authentic language and culture of the target language, thus, authentic texts should be considered for the textbook design. In addition to advocate the use of authentic texts, constructivist learning theory also suggests providing multiple resources, offering multiple paths and solutions (Squires, 1999; M. F. Young, 1993), rather than adopting single textbooks. In recent decades, the integration of technology into teaching (including FLT) has caught an increasing attraction by constructivist researchers (Clark, 1994; Hannafin, Hill, & McCarthy, 2002; Jonassen, 1994; Nanjappa & Grant, 2003; Swain & Pearson, 2001). As Jonassen (1994) suggests, a CLE should “provide multiple representations of reality”, representing the “complexity of the real world” and avoiding “oversimplification”. Therefore, constructivist theorists recommend integrating a variety of materials (e.g. audio, video, and web) into teaching, providing a more realistic context for learners. In the interpretation of ‘authenticity’, Jonassen (1999) suggests assigning real-world task for learners and stressing the personal relevancy of the learning tasks. He remarks that if an authentic task is personally meaningful to the learner, he or she is more likely to be interested and engaged. Therefore, personal relevance of the content is also one consideration of textbook design. Inspired by the above constructivist beliefs, the teaching materials for foreign language learners should be authentic texts that reflect authentic language and culture. In addition to the print text, a variety of authentic materials should be integrated to provide learners with a real context. As one type of authentic texts, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* with rich, fresh and natural resources that reflect the language and culture of current China, is likely to meet this requirement of teaching materials when creating a CLE. The authenticity of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is reflected in the following aspects: authentic words and expression, diversity of literary styles, audio-visual assistance, authentic and relevant culture.

Authentic words and expressions

As discussed in section 2.5, the words and expressions in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are usually direct and colloquial, which helps in creating an authentic communicative context for foreign language learners. In many popular literary texts such as film scripts, ‘dialogue’ is a common discourse. In reading such texts, students are able to learn many useful and practical words and expressions that are prevalent everywhere (i.e. real context, Internet) in contemporary China, especially among young people. Compared with the word choices in most traditional language textbooks, the language components in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* appear to be more up-to-date and fashionable, reflecting some new changes of Chinese language and culture in recent periods. Influenced by multiculturalism and globalization, the ‘borrowing’ of words and expressions from other sources are widely used in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, e.g. foreign language, dialect, slang, classical language, joke, religious expressions, etc. Many of them have gained popularity and influence among Chinese native speakers. Sometimes it sounds weird if someone still uses ‘outdated’ expressions. In a lot of popular literary texts, different ‘borrowed’ words and expressions have often combined together to create special effects, called a ‘collage’ of language. This feature of language components in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* is able to arouse students’ motivation and interests in language learning and lead to the enhancement of their language and cultural awareness (Pang, L. 2011). To sum up, rather than using the language components that are ‘out of fashion’ in many traditional language textbooks, the authentic and lively words and expressions in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* provide channels for foreign language students to communicate with Chinese native speakers.

Diversity of authentic literary styles

Due to the diversity of backgrounds and imaginations of popular literature

writers, there are not only varieties of language collage in *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, but also lots of ‘collage’ of authentic literary types, e.g. advertisement, interview, weather broadcast, exam questions, letter, pop song, etc. The ‘collage’ of literary styles, like the language ‘collage’, makes the literary texts more vivid and interesting. In this way, it is more acceptable and attractive for students to access specific forms of some authentic literary styles in popular literary texts, than learning them separately. After the analysis of the ‘collage’ of literary styles, a teacher can also introduce students to original authentic writings. Guided by the teacher, students are able to practice writing the authentic texts or re-writing them according to the requirements of different literary forms (Bi, S., 2008).

Authentic audio-visual materials

In traditional language textbooks, most texts and audio-visual assistant materials (e.g. tape, CD, video) are made up for the purpose of language teaching. Consequently, the language speed in these materials is usually very slow and the scenario in the videos seems to be unrealistic, which impede the creation of a CLE. However, modern technology facilitates the expansion of channels for ‘readers’ to access literature, from ‘reading’ literary texts to ‘watching’ and ‘listening’ to literary texts. In this high-technology era, there are a lot of *contemporary Chinese popular literary works* that have been presented and/or represented in audio-visual forms. Through ‘watching’ and/or ‘listening’ to literary texts, it makes possible for students to promote the learning of listening and speaking abilities. It has been widely accepted for a long time that film and TV series are able to provide a real context of target language. In this context, students try to ‘catch’ the authentic language expressions in film or TV series, enhancing their listening ability. Also, they can listen carefully and imitate the pronunciation, tones and patterns of the characters (Wang, Y., 2008), which facilitate improving their oral skills. With the electronic developments, many ‘silent’ literary works are transferred to audio and

visual versions, i.e. audio book, radio novel, TV novel, TV poem, TV prose, etc. The different display platforms, with image, voice and background music is likely to help students comprehend the original texts, and create an authentic environment for foreign language learners. In this way, students have an opportunity to encounter a real context without entering China.

Authentic and relevant culture

The cultural challenges faced with the use of literary texts in foreign language teaching focus on remote, unfamiliar and irrelevant cultural backgrounds, hindering student's language and culture learning (see section 2.4). The context of most canonical literature is far from current society, and thus requires a lot of explanatory notes. These kinds of cultural knowledge are beneficial for foreign language learners, helping them better understand of China's tradition and history. However, it does little to help those students to communicate with people in current society, which is most students' learning purpose. In the field of TCFL, many scholars suggest that the introduction of Chinese culture should emphasize contemporary culture (Li, M., 1990; Li, Q., 2011; Tang, L., 2011). As discussed in section 2.5, the writings in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* concern the lives and values of ordinary people, especially grassroots groups and young people. The trivial details and ordinary scenes in daily life offer readers a sense of familiarity and belonging, arousing their reading interests and emotional responses. In current foreign language classrooms, most learners learn Chinese for more practical purposes. The culture displayed in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is useful for their communicative purposes. Also, most learners in university are young, so that the lifestyle and values of young people reflected in much *contemporary popular literature* tend to attract their learning interests.

In such an authentic or situated learning environment, foreign language learners are invited to encounter an applied setting that similar to the target culture (J. S. Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989) and engage in problems occurring in a

real-world environment. *Contemporary Chinese popular literature* provides a variety of choices for text-selection due to its authenticity and relevancy. However, the constructivist principle should be considered in text selection from the wide choices: the texts should reflect the real world, provide multiple representations and involve learners' needs and interests.

3.3.2 Appropriate challenge

Another constructivist implication for FLT is Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). As "a range of social interaction between an adult and a child" (Morrow, 2005, p. 77), ZPD theory suggests that adults need to "keep tasks within children's ZPD slightly higher than the level of independent functioning in order to provide challenge and for learning to occur" (Belsky, 2006, p. 19). Therefore, ZPD theory suggests two issues: first, the challenge is necessary and important in process of learners' learning so that the complexity should be considered for creating a challenging learning environment, which is not often seen in traditional language textbooks; second, the challenge should be appropriate, which means slightly beyond learners' actual development level.

In the field of foreign language acquisition, Vygotsky's ZPD influenced Krashen's theory of comprehensible input (Belsky, 2006). According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis, the comprehensible input is a little beyond language acquirer's current competence level (Krashen, 1985). He uses 'i' to represent students' current competence level, and 'i+1' to represent the comprehensible input. Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis argues that the lack of comprehensible input leads to students' attitudes (e.g. anxiety, frustrated, nervous, angry, stressed), which function as an affective filter, preventing students' efficient language input. Therefore, in order to lower learners' affective filter, the comprehensible input in teaching materials is very important.

The use of literary texts in FLT, as reviewed in chapter 2, was blamed for ‘incomprehensible input’ and ‘impractical expressions’. Over-loaded new vocabulary, characters, and complicated grammar and sentence structure were out of reach of student’s ‘competency threshold’ (García, 2007), setting barriers for their linguistic acquisition. Also, the elite, remote, deviant, not authentic literary language and expressions contribute little or nothing to communication. The linguistic difficulties and cultural unfamiliarity in many literary texts, especially in canonical literature, result in a decrease of students’ learning motivation and interests. These challenges can be addressed by many *contemporary popular literary texts*.

As discussed above, language and expressions in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* seems to be direct, colloquial, understandable and relaxed, even vulgar. Even with limited linguistic proficiency, it would not hinder students’ reading comprehension because there must be “bit of language that is heard /read” (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 200). The sentence structure in popular literature is also simpler than that in canonical literature. In many popular literary texts, the writer usually uses ‘loose sentence’, which is one that starts with the main point and “may be brought to a close in two or more places and in each case make complete sense” (Starch & Elliott, 1912). Compared with ‘periodic sentence’, which is less common and harder to understand, ‘loose sentence’ is shorter, more flexible and vivid, resembling the way we speak in daily life. In some forms of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* (i.e. lyrics, SMS, poem, etc.), sentence structure is fixed. According to the analysis of one sentence, it is easy for foreign language learners to catch the meaning of the following sentences, at least knowing the grammatical structure and function of a word. These linguistic features of popular literature are likely to provide ‘comprehensible input’, which is slightly ahead of a learner’s acquired linguistic knowledge (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Krashen & T. D. Terrell, 1983). Therefore, the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is not only able to enhance students’ comprehensibility of

language input, but also encourage their wills to express and communicate and promote their language output (Yang, X., 2004).

Apart from the appropriateness of linguistic challenge, the cultural challenge in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* also appears to be appropriate for foreign language learning, as discussed in above section. Different from much Chinese canonical literature that display behaviors and ideology in certain historical periods, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* reflects the lifestyle and thoughts of contemporary Chinese people from the perspective of ordinary people, especially young people, thus, decreasing the cultural difficulties while access literature. In addition, the variety of representation forms of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to help students overcome cultural unfamiliarity and enhance their cultural understanding.

In summary, both ZPD theory and Input Hypothesis emphasize that the appropriate challenge promotes students' learning and development. It seems that traditional language textbooks lack the complexity of learning environment to provide enough challenges for students, while the canonical literature provides overwhelming challenges, resulting in the lack of comprehensible input. Consequently, the *contemporary Chinese popular literature* with appropriate challenges is a possible alternative for TCFL. Of course, a careful selection according to the theories and teacher's involvement as a facilitator is significant in FLT.

3.3.3 Positive affect

A constructivist perspective on learning also recognizes the inseparability of affective and cognitive factors in students' learning process (Op't Eynde, De Corte, & Verschaffel, 2001). In Piaget's (1981) book, he regards the cognition and affect as "two sides of the same coin" and he points out that there is "constant interaction between the affectivity and intelligence" (Piaget, 1981, p. 25). As

Piaget (1981) states:

It is impossible to find behaviour arising from affectivity alone without any cognitive elements. It is equally impossible to find behaviour composed only of cognitive elements. It is obvious that affective factors are involved even in the most abstract forms of intelligence. For a student to solve an algebra problem or a mathematician to discover a theorem there must be intrinsic interest, extrinsic interest, or a need at the beginning. While working, states of success or failure may occur; and finally, the student may experience aesthetic feelings stemming from the coherence of his solution (p. 2).

According to Piaget's argument, the affective factors of learning such as 'intrinsic interest', 'extrinsic interest', 'aesthetic feelings' are integral parts of learning and problem solving. Affect plays a significant role in determining learners' intellectual efforts, influencing the rate of learners' knowledge development. As an advocator of Piaget's theory, Bruner (1990) also emphasizes the significant influence of the affective factors on cognition and the interrelationship between them, stressing the encouragement of learners' 'intuitive thinking'. He suggests that only if learners have positive affect (e.g. feel self-confident) they are able to relate their meaningful interpretation to the coherent knowledge of the world.

M. Williams and Robert (1997) also believe that learning is a process involving both affective and cognitive factors. They argue that personal feelings and relevancy on the creation of new understandings are critical in the learning process. Accordingly, it is important to integrate learners' thoughts, feelings, emotions, and life contexts into learning process. M. Williams and Robert (1997) present a framework of motivation, which fits within a social constructivist framework:

Motivation may be construed as a state of cognitive and emotional arousal which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal or goals (p.120).

They also propose an interactive model of motivation (Figure 1) (William & Burden, 1997, p.122):

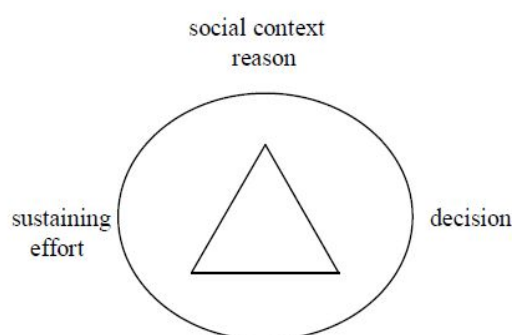


Figure 1: William & Burden's interactive model of motivation

As displayed in this figure, the model of motivation includes 'reasons for doing something', 'decisions to do something', and 'sustaining the effort'. According to the interpretation by Artamonova (2002), "this model cannot be linear since as it exists in a social context", which influences choices made at different stages. William and Burden (1997) also consider the internal and external factors affecting learners' motivation. The internal factors include arousal of curiosity, optimal degree of challenge, personal relevance, feelings of competence, self-worth concern, realistic awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses, etc. while the external factors include teachers, peers, mediated learning experience, the learning environment, resources, etc. Williams and Burden (1997) also point out that the two types of motivation (i.e. internal motivation and external motivation) cannot be easily separated since learning is affected by the mixture of the two types of motivation.

As discussed above, it seems that constructivists attach importance to the role of affect in the process of learning. In the field of foreign or second language acquisition, there are also a number of researchers (J. Arnold & Brown, 1999; Dornyei & Skehan, 2003; Hutchinson, 1987; Krashen, 1985), acknowledging the significance of affective factors in foreign language learning. One of the most significant researches is Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, as mentioned

above. According to Krashen (1985), affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence, anxiety and empathy are able to promote or delay second language acquisition. Learners with low anxiety, high motivation and self-confidence have a low affective filter, enhancing students' second language acquisition.

According to the constructivist view on the role of affect, it seems that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to encourage students' positive affect in the process of learning. As reviewed in section 2.4, the affective challenges faced with the use of literary text in foreign language teaching refer to the negative affective responses to literature reading, e.g. anxiety, frustration, fear, loss of interest, etc. When the affective filter is up, language acquisition will be impeded (Krashen, 1985). Thus the affective element is an important component in foreign language teaching. *Contemporary Chinese popular literature*, which has a diversity of form and content, is likely to address these challenges in several ways: decrease students' affective frustration, enhance their learning interests and motivation and encourage their language output.

Decrease affective frustration

This aspect has been discussed briefly in the last section, i.e. *contemporary Chinese popular literature* with appropriate challenge/comprehensible input is able to lower students' affective filter and promote their language acquisition. As discussed above, the decrease of linguistic difficulties in *contemporary popular literature* is able to enhance students' reading confidence and relieve their affective anxiety and frustration. As Feng, X. (2007) states, one reason that popular literature is acceptable is that it is very comprehensible. In terms of culture aspect, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* concerns trivial details of ordinary life, rather than abstract meanings. The decrease of difficulties in cultural components in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is also possible to eliminate their fear in learning foreign language (Fu, X. 2009).

Enhance students' learning motivation and interests

According to Williams and Burden (1997) and J. Arnold and Brown (1999), motivation can be classified into two categories: extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation, affected by internal factors and external factors respectively. The use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to enhance student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Relevant and interesting content: enhance intrinsic motivation

Breen (1987) recommends that the selection of teaching materials should consider students' emotion, attitude and experience. As discussed above, the content and topics in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are more relevant, practical and interesting than those in canonical literature and traditional language textbooks. In the field of language teaching for Chinese native speakers, some scholars hold that the integration of excellent popular culture (including literature) into Chinese language courses, believing that it will arouse students' motivation and enthusiasm in acquiring knowledge and language learning (Fu, X., 2009; Guan, M., 2008; Zhang, L., 2011). As Zhang, L. (2011) states, it is a facilitator for transferring Chinese language learning from 'exam Chinese' (*yingshi yuwen/应试语文*) and 'classroom Chinese' (*ketang yuwen/课堂语文*) to 'life Chinese' (*shenghuo yuwen/生活语文*). Similarly, in the field of TCFL, the cultural authenticity and relevance of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is also likely to encourage foreign language learners' reading and arouse their reflections.

Rich and attractive forms: enhance students' extrinsic motivation

Compared with natural acquisition, classroom learning requires stronger extrinsic motivation. Foreign language learners incline to show more enthusiasm in learning when the learning forms are varied and interesting. As discussed in section 2.5, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has been connected with many popular platforms, e.g. TV, film, music, Internet, mobile phone, etc. In this telecommunication era, most of the current students use them every day. If literary

texts are displayed through these platforms, students no longer feel unfamiliar and fear in reading literature. Moreover, these ‘young’ and fashionable media will arouse students’ learning motivation (Wang, Y., 2008; Fu, X.2009). As discussed in last two sections, the audio-visual materials accompanied with much contemporary Chinese popular literature facilitate creating an authentic context for foreign language learners and help them comprehend the texts. Another important function of the audio-visual materials is able to attract students’ learning interests and attention. For example, learning linguistic knowledge (e.g. grammar, rhetoric) is a boring task in language learning; however, if students learn it through pop song lyrics, or SMS, it will be an attractive task, increasing students’ enthusiasm (Duan, M., 2010). As Domoney and Harris (1993) state, popular music is able to strengthen students’ learning motivation in language teaching (p.235). The access to *contemporary Chinese popular literature* through TV series or films creates a relaxed and comfortable communicative environment, which is able to encourage students to involve themselves in this atmosphere. As Song (2010) indicates, it will help backward students overcome their ‘learned helplessness’ and enhance their learning confidence.

As discussed above, from the constructivist view of learning, it is appropriate to use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in foreign language teaching. In a successful foreign language classroom, textbooks are critical, so are the teaching pedagogies. In the next section, two teaching approaches based on constructivism are discussed.

3.4 Teaching pedagogies in a constructivist approach

As discussed in the last section, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has many benefits for foreign language teaching, e.g. linguistic appropriateness, cultural relevance, affective interests, etc. Thus *contemporary Chinese popular literature* with these features provides a variety of resources for compiling TCFL

language textbooks. In order to take full advantage of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, teaching pedagogies that correspond to constructivist approach should be adopted in class. As reviewed in chapter 2, many traditional teachings ‘close’ the text: only one correct understanding can be accepted. These approaches have some advantages in helping students learn new words, sentence structure, text structures and cultural and literature knowledge, however, the knowledge students acquire is dead: knowledge is just knowledge, like a book remaining on the shelf. Students still cannot use the knowledge in a real context. Influenced by post-structuralist theories, of which constructivism is one, the trend of literary criticism shows a transformation from author-centered and text-centered to reader-centered. Similarly, a constructivist approach presents a trend that transfers FLT from teacher-centered to student-centered. In this study, an instructional model, which is based on two pedagogies, reader response theory and schemata theory, that have strong connections with constructivism, is applied to facilitate the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, enhancing students’ cognitive and affective learning.

3.4.1 Reader response theory

Reader response theory is one of the most important schools of literary criticism with an emphasis on readers and their experience of literary works. Begun in the 1960s and 1970s, in work by N. N. Holland (1975), Fish (1980), Iser (1978), Barthes (1967) and others, the theory views the reading process as a transaction between the reader and the text in which the reader, with his or her past experiences, beliefs, expectations and assumptions, interacts with the perspectives in the text (Ali, 1993). This theory recognizes the reader as an active agent who imparts ‘real existence’ to the work and completes its meaning through interpretation. Learners are encouraged to fill in the unwritten portions of the text, its ‘gaps’ or areas of ‘indeterminacy’ by their own compositions according to their past experiences, beliefs, expectations and assumptions (Carson, 1993; Fish, 1980; Iser, 1978). Reader response theory focuses on championing the reader’s role as

an active participant in the composition of meaning while reading a text, and describing the intricacies of readers' involvement with the text (Hirvela, 1996). All of these beliefs and arguments are in accordance with the constructivist view of learning, which strengthens the construction of knowledge based on one's own experience. Similar to social constructivism, reader response theory also emphasizes the importance of the interaction with social and cultural environment. According to J. Marshall (2000), responses are "socially constructed, made up of interwoven assumptions and linguistic formulations that have histories in particular cultures and that carry those histories with them when they are spoken by particular readers" (p.388). Rosenblatt (1978, 1995) and Hade (1992) also state a reader's stance is determined not only by a particular individual, but also by the social and cultural context. In addition, like the role of teacher as a facilitator from the constructivist viewpoint, reader response theory proposes that a teacher's role is to help students in their individual transaction with the text (Rosenblatt, 1978). The aim of application of reader response theory in the literature classroom is to encourage students to respond to the text and freely express their own ideas and personal reflections, opinions and feelings (Amer, 2003), so the teacher can accept "multiple interpretations" of a text rather than just one "correct interpretation" (Rosenblatt, 1995). In this context, students become the masters of the classroom.

In recent decades, reader response theory has had a growing influence on EFL literature classes (Carlisle, 2000). Some scholars state that the reason for literature's return to EFL recently is the development of reader response theory (Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996). In this context, several activities and techniques such as reading logs (Benton & Fox, 1985; Carlisle, 2000), response journal (Sheridan, 1991), critical questioning and writing (Hirvela, 1996; Probst, 1994), self-questioning (Davis, 1989) have been designed to implement reader response theory in literature classrooms. Thomson's (1987) 'developmental model of a reader response approach', integrating six-level responses (literary understanding, empathy, analogy, interpretation, evaluation and recognition) also gained

popularity in FLT, which influence the establishment of an instructional model in this study.

As discussed above, reader response theory provides more space for readers to explore the blanks in the literary texts and to respond freely with own their emotions, feelings and opinions, which encourages students' affective development. However, in a foreign language classroom, not every student can achieve the level that he or she can express freely in a second language. For those who are at the beginning of study or who have no confidence to speak due to the lack of vocabulary and cultural knowledge, reader response theory may not be a perfect teaching pedagogy. Instead, learning new vocabularies, sentence structures, text forms appear to be the most important tasks for such students. Thus schemata theory is recommended to be included to help students overcome such linguistic challenges.

3.4.2 Schemata theory

Schemata theory is an important theory in cognitive constructivism as developed by Jean Piaget. The concept of schemata (also known as 'scheme' and 'schema') was firstly proposed by Immanuel Kant (Kant, Guyer, & Wood, 1998), defining schemata as a procedural rule, whereby non-empirical concept is associated with an object's mental image. This concept was applied to the field of psychology by Bartlett (1932), whose experiment indicates that most people are inclined to memorize what is similar to their personal experience. In the late 20th century, Bartlett's theory of memorizing was developed to the modern schemata theory (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Piaget, 1977; Rumelhart, 1980). According to Rumelhart (1980),

Schemata can represent knowledge at all levels-from ideologies and cultural truths to knowledge about the meaning of a particular word, to knowledge about what patterns of excitations are associated with what letters of the alphabet (p.41).

Similar to reader response theory, Rumelhart also argues that text has no meanings; meanings are constructed through the interactions between the previously existing schemata and the new schemata. There are many different ways of classifying schemata (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Fillmore, 1981; D. Holland & Quinn, 1987). One of the most popular is Cook's (1997) trichotomy, which is used to establish an instructional model in this study. According to Cook (1997), the three schemata include world schemata, text schemata and language schemata. Among the three schemata, world schemata refers to readers' knowledge of shared concepts in a given culture, text schemata deals with the text structures in different genres and language schemata involves vocabulary, grammar and sentence pattern. At an early stage, schemata theory was applied in the area of first language learning. With the development of FLT theories, schemata theory was developed into the FLT area and the intercultural area. In the literature classroom, story schemata theory arouses much attention in EFL (Amer, 2003), which aims to help students comprehend a text according to certain story grammar (Cooper, 1986). Another important concept of schemata theory in FLT is bottom-up reading and top-down reading process. According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983), bottom-up reading process is a traditional method, whereby the reader comprehends a text from words, phrase, sentence, paragraph to text; while the top-down reading process focuses on general information such as themes, structures and titles (Coady, 1979; Goodman, 1967). Rumelhart (1994) suggests an interactive process involving both top-down and bottom-up processes, which is advocated by many researchers (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Cook, 1994; Nunan & Carter, 2001; Henry George Widdowson, 1983).

As discussed above, schemata theory appears to be an appropriate teaching pedagogy in helping students with their improvement of cognitive learning, developing their linguistic skills and cultural knowledge. However, some scholars point out the limitations of Schemata theory. As Miall (1989) argues, "the purely cognitive models.....cannot account either for the indeterminacy of literary texts

or for the variety of different and often conflicting readings that result from the same text.” He suggests that readers’ affective response should be involved in the process of schemata composition to provide “self-referential recourses” and “the main vehicle for anticipation” and “transfer feelings across domains”. By linking reader response theory to schemata theory, it is possible to sketch a new model for teaching literary texts.

As discussed above, the two constructivist teaching pedagogies, schemata theory and reader response theory, share some common features: both of them emphasize readers’ previous experience and background knowledge. They are also complementary to each other with different foci: the former focuses on students’ affective learning (e.g. emotions, critical thinking) and the latter one emphasizes their cognitive learning (e.g. vocabulary, text structure) (Ali, 1993; Miall, 1989); the former one focuses on process and the latter on product (Trachte, 1997). Neither should be ignored in foreign language classroom. An instructional model, which is a merger of reader response theory and schemata theory, is established and suggested to support the teaching of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this study. In chapter 5, this instructional model, with concrete instructional strategies, is presented, showing how *contemporary Chinese popular literature* can be fit in pedagogical application.

3.5 Summary

This chapter outlines a theoretical framework based on constructivism to provide a rationale for and approach the empirical study of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced TCFL class. As reviewed above, constructivist approaches, both individual-oriented and social-oriented ones, posit that new knowledge or meaning is actively constructed in the human mind. Accordingly, a constructivist learning environment (CLE) is proposed, involving learners’ personal backgrounds and collaborative learning. CLE also

suggests offering multiple resources and manipulative materials with authentic and relevant content, appropriate challenge and positive affect. It provides a rationale for the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, whereby the linguistic benefit, cultural benefit and affective benefit are all reflected. The linguistic components in contemporary Chinese popular literature are authentic, relevant, comprehensible and practical, providing comprehensible input, real context and training of overall linguistic skills for foreign language learners. The cultural components in contemporary popular literature are also authentic and relevant, reflecting the real life of the ordinary people from all walks of life in contemporary China and displaying cultural issues especially lowercase culture. In addition, the appropriate challenge in linguistic and cultural components of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to decrease learners' affective frustration. The relevant and interesting content is likely to enhance students' intrinsic motivation and the rich and attractive forms may enhance their extrinsic motivation.

To accommodate the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in empirical study, two constructivist approaches, reader response theory and schemata theory are suggested. Both approaches strengthen readers' previous experience and background knowledge; the former focuses on students' affective development and the latter emphasizes their cognitive growth. A new instructional model, integrating both approaches, is established and suggested for the empirical study of the research. This instructional model with several instructional techniques will be presented in chapter 5. To approach the experimental results, the methodology for the empirical study, including setting, participants, data collection and data analysis, is elaborated in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Overview of the chapter

In order to find out whether the use of contemporary literary texts benefits the learning of Chinese in linguistic, cultural and affective factors, an empirical study is undertaken at an Australian university. This chapter presents the methodology design for the empirical study, comprising four components: the setting, participants, data collection and data analysis.

4.2 Setting

The research is conducted at the Center for Asian Studies (CAS), University of Adelaide. The Centre has experienced a considerable growth in student enrolments since the late 1980s. For students wishing to proceed from little or no knowledge of Chinese language to linguistic competence within the context of a Bachelor of Arts degree, there are four levels of language courses offered by the Centre, including Level I, Level II, Level III and Level IIIS, with two semesters (A & B) at each level. The final level's class is purposefully sampled because students at this level of proficiency are supposed to have the linguistic and cultural knowledge necessary to appreciate and understand literary texts. Only non-native speakers of Chinese⁹ are allowed to enroll in this course. In previous years, Level IIIS course usually uses traditional language textbooks such as New Practical Chinese IV & V (*xin yongshihanyu*/新实用汉语), whereby literary texts account for none or little proportion. To support my research project, CAS approves my application of carrying out the empirical study in Chinese IIISA course.

⁹ Non-native speakers of Chinese' in this study includes students who have non-Chinese background and students with Chinese background but born and/or grow up outside of a Chinese language community. In this empirical study, some Chinese background students may have some speaking ability in a Chinese dialect (e.g. Cantonese) at home but English is their native language.

In the University of Adelaide, an academic semester covers twelve weeks¹⁰. The specific setting for this empirical study is the Chinese IISA class of semester 1, 2013, with three hours each week (two successive hours on Mondays and one hour on Tuesdays). The first week is arranged for course instruction and pre-test, and the last week for review and post-tests. Also, there is one public holiday during this academic semester, losing two contact hours. Thus the actual teaching time is nine weeks (27 contact hours). Classes are conducted in two different classrooms, both equipped with computer, overhead projector, white board, DVD player, etc. Tables and chairs are arranged laterally in the classroom. Also, there is a large space in the front of the classroom. Chinese (Mandarin) is used in the classroom most of the time, though occasionally English is used to explain or clarify some ideas in the text. As a whole, the class is conducted in a cordial and friendly environment.

4.3 Participants

Before conducting the study, I obtain approval from the Low Risk Human Research Ethics Review Group, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty of the Professions. At the beginning of the course, I distribute the consent form¹¹ to students and ask students' permission for collecting data in this study. In accordance with the ethics approval, any participant data gathered in this empirical study is de-identified: codes are used to represent students (e.g. S1, S2, S3) in this study.

Before selecting teaching materials and designing a syllabus, it is indispensable to have a good understanding of students' background information and learning interests. Thus, a pre-questionnaire¹² is carried out with all enrolled

¹⁰ More weeks involving examination are arranged in a semester, but for Chinese advanced language courses the examination is usually conducted within twelve weeks.

¹¹ A blank sample of consent form is included as Appendix 1.

¹² See Appendix 2a.

students three months before the experiment started¹³. All students' responses to the learning interests are considered for the decision of text selection (see section 4.4). According to the 18 participants' responses to the pre-questionnaire, their basic information, including age, gender, first language, origin, major, study years of and reasons for Chinese learning, is accessible in the table presented in Appendix 3. In this table, students' language proficiency is also presented. Although enrolling in the same course, the gap of students' linguistic competence is wide. According to students' final scores in language course Chinese IIIB of 2012, the students are divided into three subgroups: high language proficiency group, intermediate language proficiency group and low language proficiency group. High language proficiency group students are those who had the final score over 85/100 ; intermediate language proficiency group students are those who had the final score between 70/100 to 85/100; and low language proficiency group students, are those who had the final score between 50/100 to 70/100.

Among these participants, ages range from eighteen to twenty-eight years old, plus one student who is forty-five. There are thirteen female students and five male students. Except for S13, all participants identify English as their first language; eight of them also speak their background languages at home (four spoke Cantonese, two Italian, one Hokkien and one Spanish). Among these students, seven are Australian background students; five have a Chinese background (including Hong Kong); two originally come from Italy and one each from Bolivian, Korea, South Africa, and Britain.

The majority of the students specialize in the majors of humanities such as law, international relations, languages, management, education, arts, commerce, etc.; one student major in Science. Most of the students (fourteen) are enrolled in Chinese language course as a minor major. Chinese seems to serve as a tool for their career. Similarly, the majority of the students (fifteen) regard 'finding a job' as their main reason for Chinese study, revealing their practical intention of

¹³ The pre-questionnaire is carried out in November, 2012 (during summer vacation) (November, 2012)

Chinese language learning. Besides the reason of career, students are also attracted by culture (twelve students), language (eleven), family background (five) and Chinese people (one).

Most of the students have learned Chinese (Mandarin) around 3-6 years, with three students who learning Chinese for over eight years (including eight years). However, the table reflects that the language proficiency is more relevant with students' background than the length of study. In this class, there are five high language proficiency students, ten intermediate language proficiency students and five low language proficiency students. Three of the high language proficiency students have Asian background (two Chinese and one Korean) and all of the low language proficiency students are English background students (four Australian and one British).

In addition to the student participants and me, who participate as a course instructor, four other experienced Chinese language teachers are involved in the study. One of them involves in the decision of text selection, one observes the class, and the other two participate as markers in order to ensure reliability and consistency.

4.4 Data collection

In this empirical study, the process of data collection is as follows: before the project begins, a pre-questionnaire and a pre-test are conducted with the participants; during the project, the data collected includes class transcripts, students' assignments, and observers' reflections; At the end of the project, I apply a post-questionnaire, a post-test and an interview with the participants. Thus the main tools used to collect data are questionnaires, tests, interviews, class transcripts, class observation and assignments.

4.4.1 Questionnaires

As one main type of data collection instruments, a questionnaire, providing a function of measurement, may contain rating scales, check lists, projective techniques, attitude scales, etc. (Oppenheim, 1992). It usually involves “predetermined questions presented in written form focusing on particular topic or area, seeking responses to options, personal opinions, judgments, or beliefs” (Burns & Grove, 2010). As mentioned above, there are two questionnaires conducted with the students in this study: pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire.

Pre-questionnaire

The design of the pre-questionnaire in this study follows Dörnyei and Taguchi’s (2010) model for foreign language research. There are two parts containing in this questionnaire: the first part collects data on participants’ basic information including their gender, age, biographical background and linguistic background; the second set of questions covers students’ participants’ learning interests, which provide recommendations on the selection of topics and literary texts.

Post-questionnaire

The post-questionnaire is also participant’s final evaluation of the whole course. This questionnaire includes more open-ended questions than the pre-questionnaire. The evaluation covers three sections: one about participant’s perceptions and attitudes toward the whole course, e.g. reading passages, visual-audio materials, assignment, classroom activities; and the second part is about each participant’s self-evaluation of their improvement or lack of improvement in four linguistic skills and cultural learning throughout this experiment with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. Also, each student’s evaluation on the affective factor of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this course is included in this section. The third section involves the comparison of the

use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and traditional language textbooks, students' possible long-term effects and their suggestions and additional comments on the course.

The pre-questionnaire takes about five minutes to complete and the post-questionnaires about ten minutes. Both questionnaires are presented in Appendix 2. The results of the questionnaires help to evaluate the students' attitudes toward the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in language courses and also provide many useful pedagogical suggestions.

4.4.2 Pre-test and post-test

The pre-test and post-test are applied in order to test the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in students' language and cultural learning. Pre-test is arranged in the first week of the course and post-test in the last. Both tests comprise four parts: listening, speaking, reading & writing and culture. The listening tests adopt HSK IV listening test paper, taking 20 minutes. In oral tests, students are asked to give a 5-minute presentation according to the given titles. Based on the reading of a short story, students' growths in reading & writing and cultural skills are tested by two essays: the first one is an interpretation of the story and the latter one is an intercultural comparison of the theme. The two short stories with similar topics are selected from 'Collection of Gratitude Story for Primary School Student' (*Xiao xuesheng ganen gushi quanji/小学生感恩故事全集*) (Teng, G., 2006). Based on the examination of linguistic (i.e. word count, amount of new vocabulary, complexity of sentence structures, theme), the difficulty levels of the two stories are considered counterbalanced, which is confirmed by two other Chinese language teachers at CAS. The assessment measurement of all tests is discussed in the section of data analysis. Questions of both tests and samples of students' answers are presented in Appendix 5.

4.4.3 Class transcripts

Except for the above written documents, 25% of the lessons are audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. Students' oral responses, including group discussion, class discussion, questions, role play, etc., are examined and analyzed. Students' performance, their reactions to the selected literary texts and classroom atmosphere are also can be explored through the examination of the class transcripts. In the transcripts, 'T' represents for 'teacher' and the codes of students (e.g. S1, S2) are presented when they answer individually in most cases. If a group of students or the whole class respond together, I use 'S' to represent many students. The transcripts are written in Chinese because most of the language used in this course is Chinese.

4.4.4 Class observation

In qualitative research, 'observation' provides "a holistic perspective of the observed phenomenon" (García, 2007, p.65). In addition to class transcripts, an experienced teacher-researcher of TCFL is invited to attend the class as an outside observer. The observation notes from a teacher-researcher perspective are written to describe the classroom activities, students' performance, their emotions, classroom atmosphere and observer's own feelings and comments. The notes are elaborated within 24 hours after each class so as to remember the details of events and reduce contamination (Burnaford, Fischer, & Hobson, 2000; Merriam, 1998). These random notes are sorted according to different texts, making them easier to be checked. The observation notes of an outside observer make the results of the study more objective.

4.4.5 Assignment

In the experimental course, students are assigned homework every week. There are usually two parts of the assignment: review and preview. In the review part, students are expected to review the vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, the content of the text through a variety of tasks such as making sentence, using new words to create a story, summary, re-telling the story, creative writing, etc. The review questions encourage students to read the texts thoughtfully, beyond the literary meanings. Thus a lot of cultural questions are integrated to encourage students' cultural learning and intercultural comparison. In the preview part, students are asked to study new words, new expressions, and new sentence structure by themselves. Instead of giving a vocabulary list as in most traditional language textbooks, students are required to make their own vocabulary list according to the given questions. In addition, students need to comprehend the text with the associated questions. Usually, the preview tasks are only conducted for longer and more complicated texts. Each student hands in nine assignments in this semester. Each week, students hand in the assignment to me in the first day of teaching and I return them to students on the second day of the lesson so students could get feedback quickly. All of the assignments are photocopied and collected for analysis. A sample of assignment with student's answer is attached in Appendix 6.

4.4.6 Interview

As one of the most common forms of qualitative data (Merriam, 1998), interviewing is also involved in this study to supplement the data collected from questionnaires. The details of experiences and reflection of the interviewees are explored in the interview (Seidman, 1998). Although the design of pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire has already covered a wide range of holistic feedback questions, students sometimes are reluctant to provide details with

regards to their answers. Many of them just give a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer, rather than explained ‘why’. An interview, therefore, becomes necessary and important. On an individual basis, the data about students’ personal experience with the learning of contemporary *Chinese popular literary texts* are accessible.

The face-to-face interview is carried out at the end of the semester in my office. My intention originally is to interview in English because I think students can speak more freely. However, many students (e.g. S4, S6, S10) suggest that they prefer to do it in Chinese since they want to have opportunities to practice spoken Chinese and to test how their Chinese has improved. Finally, I adopt their suggestion to conduct a Chinese interview with students but I tell everyone: if they fail to remember some words or sentence, they are allowed to transfer to English. Three weeks before the end of the semester, I send them a list of open-ended interview questions. Guided by these questions, students are requested to speak freely, honestly and elaborately in the interview. The interview of each student takes about ten minutes. All interviews are audio-recorded and transcribed. The interview questions are listed in Appendix 7.

4.5 Data Analysis

The large amount of collected data, as discussed in previous section, is analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In this section, the procedures, the validity and reliability of the data analysis are discussed.

4.5.1 Quantitative analysis approach

A quantitative analysis approach is used to answer the first research question in this study: whether the use of *Chinese contemporary popular literature* promotes students’ language and cultural learning and arouses a positive affective attitude? As a response to this question, two parts of data are analysed: tests (pre-test and post-test) and post-questionnaire.

Pre-test and post-test

As presented in section 4.5, pre-test and post-test are carried out to test students' growths in reading & writing, listening, speaking and cultural skills. The difficulty levels are proved counterbalanced and question types are same in both tests; however, the assessment of students' answers to reading & writing and cultural questions appear to be challenging since there are no exclusively correct answers for such tests¹⁴. As a quantitative approach, "the complexities of translating a qualitative contribution into a numeric value" need to be carefully considered (Urlaub, 2008, p.77), thus the well-design of assessment scale appears to be significant. In order to compare students' improvement degrees in different skills, all tests (including listening test¹⁵) are marked with a five-level assessment scale. The rating rubrics for each skill are established by fitting the existing measurements of language and cultural skills into my study.

In terms of the assessment of reading and writing skills, Urlaub (2008) designs a four-level rating rubric based on Perry's model of intellectual (Perry, 1970, 1981). Since the question types in my experiment are similar with Urlaub's (2008), I adopt his rating rubric and make some modifications to make it more specific and directly related to my study. Compared to the evaluation of students' reading and writing skills, it seems more complicated to assess students' outcomes of cultural learning, especially through only one small question. Thus the assessment of students' cultural learning in this test mainly focuses on cultural knowledge, one component of intercultural communicative skills (knowledge, skill and attitude) (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens, 2001). The assessment scale of cultural knowledge in this study is modified based on the rating rubric of 'knowledge outcomes' of Intercultural Communicative Competence designed by ACE/FIPSE Project Steering Committee (cited in Sinicrope, Norris & Watanbe 2007). With regard to oral skills, there are a number of criteria to document and

¹⁴ There is little problem with the assessment of listening tests as the answers to the questions are fixed in standard HSK test.

¹⁵ In this study, students' scores in listening test are translated into a five-level scale by rounding off.

evaluate students' oral language competence (Buckley, 1995; Holbrook, 1983; Silverman, Noa, & Russell, 1976). The assessment scale in this study borrows from Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM), which is originally developed in California in 1978. There are five criteria for the assessment, including comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Since there is no conversation during oral presentation, the item of comprehension is excluded in my test evaluation. The mean of total score of the four items is calculated as the overall score of oral skill. The three modified assessment scales are presented in Appendix 8, providing graders with standards for marking.

In order to enhance the credibility of test results, all tests (except for listening test) are marked individually and reviewed independently by two teachers of TCFL with a minimum of three-year teaching experience. The reviewers are required to assess the reading and writing tests and oral tests according to the given assessment scales. They have only limited information about the nature of the experiment. After grading individually, the scores are added and then divided by the number of the reviewers, i.e. two. Consequently, each student obtains a single score in each skill item, which is put into students' profiles. Finally, Cohen's Kappa coefficient is adopted to test the inter-rater reliability of the grading (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Post-questionnaire

To validate the test results, the post-questionnaire is used to evaluate students' self-perceptions of the effects of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, i.e. whether they think the new teaching material promoted their language and cultural learning and aroused a positive affective attitude. The 5-point rater-scales (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree) are applied to measure students' linguistic, cultural and affective perceptions of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL. In each factor (linguistic, cultural or affective), students' answers are calculated as percentages.

As a widely-used quantitative approach, rater-scale provides a visualized result to validate the conclusion.

4.5.2 Qualitative analysis approach

Except for the above mentioned quantitative data, the remaining large amount of data I collected, including students' questionnaires, assignments, class transcripts, observation notes and interviews, are analysed in a qualitative approach to answer the qualitative research question: how do students respond to linguistic factor, cultural factor and affective factor throughout the experimental course with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. Some corresponding questions are addressed through qualitative analysis, including why does the use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promote (or not promote) students' language and cultural learning and arouse (or not arouse) their positive affective attitudes? How does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* affect students' language and cultural learning and affective attitudes?

Content analysis approach

In the field of social sciences, as Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state, "there is only interpretation; nothing speaks for itself" (p.500). The purpose of qualitative data analysis is to make sense of the large amount of collected data (Kawulich, 2004) and provide a holistic understanding (Mathison, 1988). Consequently, a thick description, which should be "holistic, lifelike, grounded, and exploratory" (Merriam, 1998, p31), is strongly recommended in the process of qualitative data analysis. In order to provide a thick description to make sense of the data, *content analysis approach* is adopted in this study.

As a flexible method for data analysis (Cavanagh, 1997), content analysis approach can be used to analyse a variety of data forms, "which might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended articles, books, or manuals" (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002;

cited in and Shannon, 2005). Furthermore, this analysis approach involves a “systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), which requires the researcher to explore every detail of the data and reveal the “knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p.314). The knowledge and understanding is far beyond the meaning of language in data, because content analysis approach “focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Also, it is used to explore “mental models, and their linguistic, affective, cognitive, social, cultural and historical significance” (Busch, De Maret, Flynn, et al., 2005, p. brief history, cited in Gacia, 2007). All of the above features of content analysis approach fit well with the research question and the analysis of the multiple collected data in this study.

Procedure of data analysis

The content analysis approach for data analysis involves several steps, including identifying, coding, categorizing, formulating into themes and ensuring trustworthiness (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Patton, 2002).

Identification and reduction the raw data

The first step for content analysis is the identification of the raw data. To begin with, I read and re-read all the data and remove those are useless or irrelevant to the study, e.g. repeated words and sentences, stammers, personal greetings and compliment between students and teachers, students’ occasional chatter that is irrelevant to Chinese language learning in classroom. Thus this step is also known as reduction of data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004), which refers to the decrease of the data size and the shortening of the text. After the reduction of the raw data, I re-read the remaining data and wrote memos with key words, concepts, patterns and summaries, etc.

Develop the codes and categories

As a further step in the analysis procedure, developing the codes aims to segment large quantities of data into small and cohesive meaningful units (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990). The condensed meaning units are labeled with a code, as Coffey and Atkinson (1996) state that “codes are tools to think with” and “heuristic devices” (p.32), providing fresh and broad perspective for the context. In this step, based on the memos noted for identification, all data are re-examined and labeled with codes, which need to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive (Krippendorff, 2012).

Similar to Garcia’s (2007) empirical research, some “tentative categories” are emerged (p.70) from the identification of the data. The units that are bigger than “codes” are called “categories”. A category is a “construct that is used to classify a certain type of phenomenon in the database” (Borg & Gall, 1996, p.754). According to a comparison of similarities and differences, the large number of codes is classified into several categories, which share a commonality (Krippendorff, 2012). According to Krippendorff (2012), the development of categories should be independent, exhaustive and mutually exclusive. It can be seen as “an expression of the manifest content of the text” and “a thread throughout the codes” (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004), which “reflecting the formulated thinking, the hypotheses, and the purpose of the study” (Krippendorff, 1977). In this study, a total of 42 categories are created¹⁶.

Formulate into themes

After developing codes and categories, a link of all the categories is created, which is known as a *theme*. Within themes, “the underlying meaning of the categories” and “the relationship among categories” is identified. It is seen as “an expression of the latent content of the text” (Graneheim & Lundman 2004) Different from the feature of *categories*, “themes are not necessarily mutually

¹⁶ For example, the categories relevant to the theme ‘comprehensibility’ included ‘difficulty in comprehension’, ‘length of text’, ‘class discussion for text comprehension’, ‘assignment for text comprehension’, ‘self-efforts in text comprehension’, ‘audio-visual methods for comprehension’, etc.

exclusive” since multiple latent meanings exist in data (Downe - Wamboldt, 1992; Krippendorff, 2012). Consequently, as Graneheim & Lundman (2004) state that a code and a category can be included in more than one theme. In this study, the 42 categories are formulated into 9 themes as responses to the three qualitative questions.

Ensure trustworthiness

In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the experiment, I reconfirm the data by triangulation, member checking and thick description. According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996), “crude understandings of triangulation often imply that data from different sources, or derived from different methods, can be aggregated in some way in order to produce a full rounded, more authentic, portrayal of the social world” (p.14). As mentioned in section 4.6, multiple tools of data collection, including questionnaire, interview, observation and other documents, are used for the triangulation. Member checking is another way to ensure the trustworthiness of research, “seeking agreement among co-researchers, experts and participants” (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). I check the data with my participants and observer after class each week to increase the dependability of the study and avoid a risk of inconsistency during data collection. Finally, a thick description refers to a “rich and vigorous presentation of the findings together with appropriate quotations” (Graneheim & Lundman 2004). A clear description of context, specific texts, and details of individual participants is involved in the study to enhance transferability.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the methodology for conducting an empirical study is described in detail. The setting of the study is an advanced TCFL course at the University of Adelaide. The participants include eighteen students, four teachers and the teacher-researcher (me). From the examination of pre-questionnaire

answers and their scores in previous Chinese courses, students' background information such as learning motivation, language proficiency and family background is presented.

The tools for data collection in this empirical study include questionnaires, tests, interviews, class transcripts, class observations and assignments. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are adopted to arrive at interpretations. To evaluate students' language and cultural growth, several assessment scales are designed, translating students' qualitative data (test essays) into a numeric value; a 5-point rater-scale is also applied to measure students' self-evaluation on the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in linguistic, cultural and affective factors. To supplement the quantitative data, qualitative analysis is carried out with the application of content analysis approach. By applying several steps, the themes are formulated, which are able to answer the qualitative questions.

Before reporting students' quantitative and qualitative results, it is necessary to describe how *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is integrated into pedagogical application in this experimental course, which affecting students' responses. Therefore, the process of text selection and integration and an instructional model suggested and applied in this study are described in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Pedagogical Design

5.1 Overview of the chapter

In this chapter, a pedagogical design for the experimental course conducted in this study is presented, including two sections: the process of text selection and an instructional model based on constructivist approach. The chapter describes how *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is integrated into the experimental course of this study, providing a context for the discussion of students' responses to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in the next chapters.

5.2 Text selection

As discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3, *Chinese contemporary popular literature* provides numerous choices for language and cultural learning, with a variety of content, formats, text types, levels of difficulty, etc. To select texts from the extensive number of popular literary texts is a challenge, involving careful consideration of some important issues such as teachers' past teaching experience, pedagogical beliefs, criteria of selection and availability (García, 2007). Also, the selected texts need to be well integrated into the existing teaching syllabus. In this experimental course, several factors are involved in the decision of the selected literary texts, ranging from students' needs analysis, selection criteria, personal reading experience, to pedagogical beliefs and previous students' experimental reading, etc.

5.2.1 Students' preferred topics

According to the approaches based on constructivism, students' personal relevance of the content, their involvement and their knowledge, experience and

emotions should be emphasized in the learning process (Paran, 2006; K. Thompson, 2001). Thus before selecting teaching materials and developing teaching syllabus, it is necessary to identify students' priorities of learning needs, interests and desires, to help in organizing students' learning experiences (Knowles, 1984; Pineda & Colciencias, 2003). Consequently, as mentioned in section 4.3, the conduct of students' needs analysis for text selection is based on a pre-questionnaire. The data from students' answers to the questionnaire assists in formulating my views for the consideration of selecting the topics.

In section 4.3, students' basic information is described. The majority of the students (83.33%) are enrolled in Chinese language course combined with other majors, e.g. law, international relations, education, arts and commerce, and 66.67% of the students learn Chinese for the purpose of finding a job, reflecting students' practical intention of Chinese language learning. Thus they tend to be attracted by the texts that are practical and relevant to their daily life and career.

In the same questionnaire, students are asked to provide a list of topics they are interested in learning (Question 4, Pre-questionnaire). Several topics that are prevalent in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are shown to students for reference, including love and marriage, school campus, career, officialdom, war, history, family, youth or young people, social problem, etc. and students are encouraged to think of others they are interested in. According to students' answers, it seems that they showed their enthusiasm in topics such as love and marriage (13/18), young people (11/18), career/office (10/18), family (9/18), social issues (9/18) and campus (8/18). Some students elaborated on the topics of 'young people' and 'social issues', e.g. S10 wanted to know what Chinese young people do in their daily life and S9 specifically mentioned the issues about housing evictions and Bo Xilai, a former Chinese politician. Religion, personal achievement, immigration, terror, war, politics, and minority groups also attracted some students' interests. In addition, two students did not provide specific preferred topics; instead, they gave general criteria for text selection, i.e. relevant,

current and interesting (S5, S18).

According to students' preferred topics, we decide to teach five topics in the semester, including family love, youth and friendship, career, social issues and love and marriage. However, when I discuss the topics with the course coordinator, she suggests me to reduce one from the list because of the limited teaching time. Finally, we decide not to teach 'social issue' as a specific topic; instead, social issues are discussed through the teaching of other topics. Also, young people's lives and values, which are appealing to students, are reflected in every topic, so the final list of selected topics includes family love, youth and friendship, career, love and marriage.

5.2.2 Appropriate linguistic difficulty and the length of texts

It is crucial to select texts with appropriate language input, because linguistic difficulty is one of the biggest challenges in FLT. Brumfit (1985) emphasizes the consideration of linguistic level and text length. The linguistic appropriateness of much *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is highlighted in chapter 2 and chapter 3; however given a numerous number of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, a careful examination of the linguistic features of certain literary texts is necessary. The text-selection criteria set for the use of children's literature suggested by García (2007) also considers the linguistic factors, including the "complexity of language", "amount of language per story" and "length", etc.; he suggests a medium length of text for an advanced language class. For the students with average three to four years' language learning experience, the texts should "neither be too difficult that students cannot infer the meaning of particular lexical items nor too easy there is no challenge and no vocabulary gain" (Lima, 2010). These suggestions link up with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD and Krashen's (1985) 'affective filter theory', which have been strengthened in previous chapters. Both

of the theories suggest the challenge of input should be slightly higher than students' current level of development or 'competency threshold'.

In this course, three types of reading are considered in one unit's learning: warm-up reading; intensive reading and extensive reading. With the aim to arouse students' learning interests on certain topics, warm up reading passages are usually short-length texts, including around 100-500 characters. These texts mainly include song lyrics, micro-fiction, and micro-film screen scripts, etc. and the complexity of language is low (with limited new vocabulary and simple sentence structure). In the section of intensive reading, the literary texts are usually long passages but include a small number of short ones that need more explanation and illustration. In this course, most intensive reading passages are medium-length (1000-4000 characters). The intensive reading passages include long passages such as short fiction or novel excerpt and some short texts with more sophisticated linguistic components. The comprehension of intensive reading passages requires more efforts from students due to the linguistic difficulty. Thus a well selection of intensive reading passages involves a good balance of students' language proficiency levels and the difficulty levels of texts when considering the linguistic factor of text-selection, "teachers' own language awareness and knowledge of their students' proficiency levels are ultimately the best guides in making a decision" (Lima, 2011). To supplement the study of a certain topic, extensive reading is involved. Similar to warm up reading passages, there is limited linguistic difficulty in extensive reading. In addition to short texts such as song lyrics, feature movies with English subtitles are sometimes integrated in this section. Rather than learning complicated linguistic skills, the purpose of extensive reading is to deepen students' understanding of the discussed theme and broaden their cultural perspectives on certain topics.

5.2.3 Various literary forms

As discussed in chapter 3, from constructivist viewpoint, a variety of materials are advocated for students' learning, providing a context of target culture for participation and involvement. As Jonassen (1994) suggests in "the implications of constructivism for instructional design", the instructor should "avoid oversimplification of instruction by representing the natural complexity of the world" (p. 35). Prowse (2002) believes that the selected texts for extensive reading should be "pleasurable" and easy to "engage with and react to"; he suggests "a variety of reading material on a wide range of topics" and the "use of recordings" as assistant materials. Similarly, to supplement the text reading, Maley and Duff (2005) suggest the integration of plays, songs and poems in the classroom, providing an environment of collaborative learning. Lima (2010) adds the use of visual arts (e.g. paintings and photographs) and Web2 tools (e.g. wikis, blogs, discussion, web quests) to strengthen students' memory on materials and promote collaborative and creative writing.

The variety of literary forms is one feature of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, as strengthened in chapter 2 and chapter 3. Given this advantage, students are encouraged to access different literary forms in the teaching of each unit in this experimental course, covering micro-fiction, novel excerpt or short fiction, song lyrics, micro-film transcripts, SMS poems. Audio-visual materials such as video, movie, audio-book, radio story and MTV are used to supplement text reading, a variety of text types are accessible. The integration of a variety of text types is able to provide "multiple representations of reality" (Jonassen, 1994) and make the reading more "pleasurable" (Prowse, 2002).

5.2.4 Other factors

Apart from the above considerations, there are some other factors affecting the decision of text-selection, including personal reading experience, pedagogical

beliefs, popularity among Chinese native speakers and pilot reading by previous students. Due to the subjectivity of text-selection, personal factors such as reading experience, preferred literary texts, and pedagogical beliefs are unavoidable. Based on students' preferred topics and the criteria, an experienced teacher at the Chinese Department assists me in the selection of the potential texts according to our personal reading experience and pedagogical beliefs. Most of the selected texts are available online because it is inconvenient to access the printed *Chinese popular literary works* in Australia. During the process of selection, texts' popularity and familiarity to Chinese native speakers are also an important consideration, because such popular texts are able to provide students with more topics to communicate with Chinese native speakers.

In order to validate our pedagogical beliefs on these selected texts, two students from Chinese IISA course of 2011 are invited to do the pilot reading. One of them is an intermediate language proficiency student and the other student is a high language proficiency student. All of the texts they are asked to read are long passages, which are the intensive reading passages in this course. Two weeks after assigning the texts, I received positive feedback from the two students. Both of them stated that they comprehended the text and found it more interesting than the texts they had used in the 2011 course.

Based on the consideration of all factors discussed above, I select 29 *contemporary popular literary works*, which are considered culturally and linguistically appropriate, as teaching materials for this experimental course. According to the length of text, three reading modes presented as above (warm up/intensive/extensive reading), a total of 13 warm up reading passages, 8 intensive reading passages and 8 extensive reading passages (see Appendix 4) are decided in text integration. A list of selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* and the source of these materials are presented in Appendix 4.

5.3 Instructional model: a merger of reader response theory and schemata theory

Following the selection of texts, this section presents an instruction model and several instructional strategies that are used in this experimental course, accompanied with examples of tasks/activities designed for the instruction of the selected literary texts. As two constructivist approaches, reader response theory and schemata theory are suggested in chapter 3 in order to support the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in classroom teaching and facilitate creating a CLE. Both of the theories attach importance to students' prior knowledge and personal background but each of them possesses their own foci. The affective factor of learning is emphasized in reader response theory, while the training of cognitive skills appeals to schemata theory (Ali, 1993; Miall, 1989). In this empirical study, an instructional model (Figure 2), integrating reader response theory and schemata theory, is established to accommodate the pedagogical application of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, as shown the below:

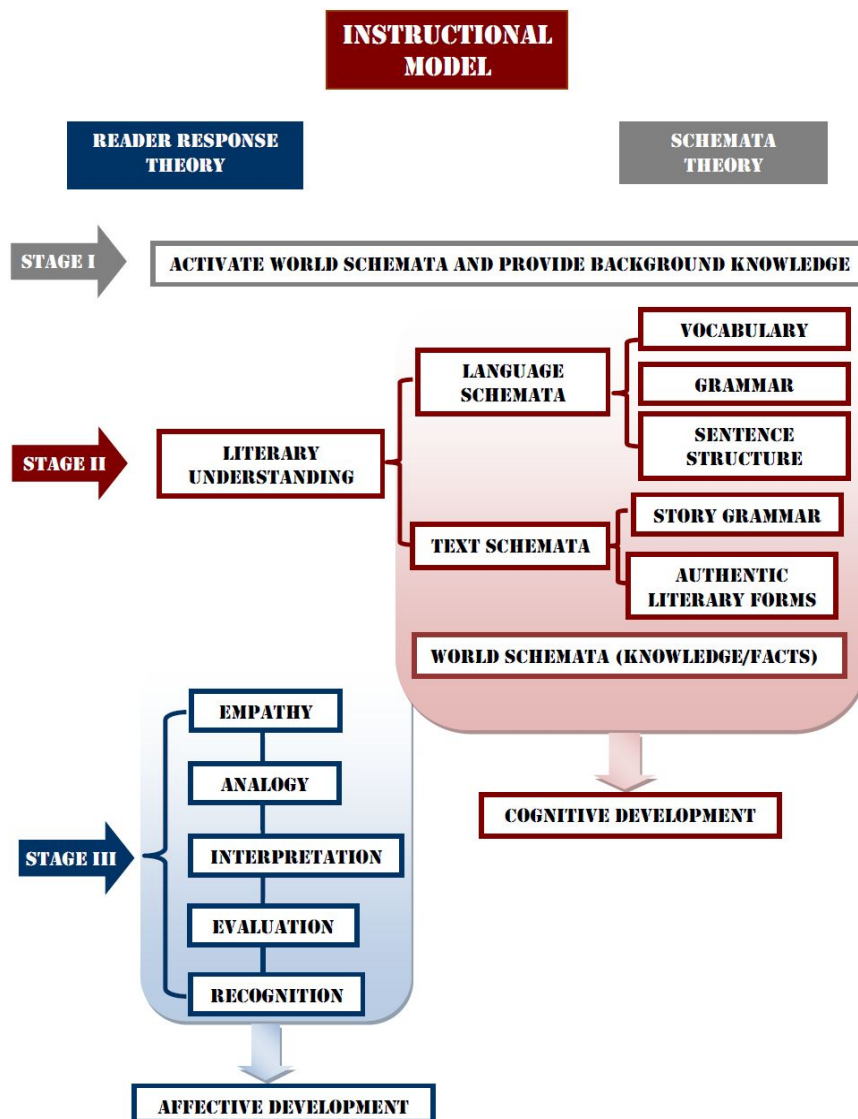


Figure 2: An instructional model based on reader response theory and schemata theory

As summarized in Figure 2, there are three stages in the instructional model, covering the learning process integrating both reader response theory and schemata theory. The first stage activates learners' background knowledge with the adoption of both theories, the second stage helps students with cognitive development by applying schemata theory and the third stage focuses on affective development with the use of reader response theory. Generally speaking, schemata theory addresses linguistic challenges within the comprehension of the texts, which is the foundation of text interpretation, while reader response theory solves

the higher-level thinking problems. Both of them concern cultural teaching but schemata theory emphasizes cultural knowledge and fact and reader response theory focus on intercultural experience. The pedagogical application of the three-stage learning procedure is flexible according to various text features and different teaching aims. This learning procedure is designed for the instruction of a full text but is not limited in it; instead, it can be applied into the deconstruction and interpretation of smaller units of text (e.g. paragraph, sentence, and genre). Thus in the whole learning process, reader response theory and schemata theory with shared concepts and different focuses are used alternatively or jointly. In this section, the three-stage learning procedure with a brief introduction of some instructional strategies is described, providing pedagogical guidance for the experimental course conducted in this study.

5.3.1 Stage I: activate world schemata and provide background knowledge

At the first stage, an appropriate context needs to be established to arouse learners' motivation and engagement in accessing literary texts. According to reader response theory, text-reader transaction requires readers' involvement of their personal backgrounds, including knowledge, perception, imagination and experience (Rosenblatt, 1978). Schemata theory also indicates that the new knowledge and information are more accessible to learners when they have similar schemata (Rumelhart, 1980). A reader may often be reluctant to access a new text due to its linguistic and cultural challenges, thus the connection of learners' previous schemata to new schemata is important. As discussed in section 3.2, the authenticity and relevancy of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is likely to arouse students' learning interests and engagement, and provide potential to apply the shared concept of reader response theory and schemata theory into teaching practice. The activation of students' world schemata and provide background knowledge for them is able to facilitate students' access to the content

and form of new text.

Activate world schemata

In this experimental course, raising questions is the most commonly used strategy to activate students' world schemata. By the guidance of heuristic questions, students are inclined to recall and share their background knowledge and similar experiences. For instance, as reviewed in chapter 2, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* describes the lifestyle and values of young Chinese people, which may arouse students' curiosity since they are in the same life phase, involving issues such as love, study and career. Accordingly, questions can be raised from both learners' personal background and target cultural background. Taking the selected text 'Miss Su's Marriage' (*Su xiaojie de hunshi*/苏小姐的婚事), which reflects the phenomenon of 'leftover woman' (*shengnü*/剩女¹⁷) as an example, several questions are raised before the instruction of the text, e.g.

- . When do you want to get married?
- . When do most people from your cultural backgrounds get married?
- . If a girl in your country does not get married over thirties, will her parents or friends be worried for her?
- . What do you think about a female PhD in your cultural background?

These questions are all daily-life topics, which are relevant to students' life experience and cultural background. The familiarity of the questions encouraged them make efforts in transferring their English (or other language) answers Chinese ones. By answering such questions, students are inclined to involve themselves in the thinking of the new topic and are more willing to find the gap between their existing schemata and new schemata.

Provide background knowledge

After arousing students' interests in the learning of a new topic or text,

¹⁷ 'Leftover woman' is a term used to describe a group of women who remain unmarried in their late twenties and beyond.

providing background knowledge (e.g. language knowledge, cultural language) is able to decrease students' negative affective attitudes caused by linguistic difficulties or cultural unfamiliarity. In this course, showing supplementary materials such as pictures or footage that are relevant to the text is a strategy to provide students with some background information. For example, before the instruction of 'The Hardest Job Hunting Season' (*Zui nan jiuye ji/最难就业季*), two pictures are displayed to provide the social background of the text, one of them is shown as follows:



The picture shows several recruitment criteria listed by some employers in career expo, some of which seem wired to students (e.g. male only, local only). It may arouse their curiosity to know about the situation. Within only a couple of minutes going through the criteria of this picture, students are able to gain general information about the difficulty in job hunting in current China, facilitating their access to the selected text. Similarly, before teaching the micro-film screen scripts 'Best Friend Forever' (*Guimi/闺蜜*), a popular footage online is shown to students, providing a short introduction about what a '*guimi*' is in contemporary China¹⁸.

In addition to provide supplementary materials, some preview tasks are assigned to encourage students to search for provide information about the new text by themselves. For instance, in the first unit, students are asked to fill the information about 'Tiger mum' (*huma/虎妈*) and 'Wolf father' (*langba/狼爸*) in a CV (see Figure 3). By collecting background information online, students are able

¹⁸ The text of the supplement footage is presented in Appendix 9: a sample of teaching material

to the idea what the topic about in the text ‘So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University’ (*suoyi, beida xiongmei*/所以，北大兄妹).

狼爸简历 CV of Wolf Dad	虎妈简历 CV of Tiger Mum
姓名(Name): _____	姓名(Name): _____
出生年月(DOB): _____	出生年月(DOB): _____
国籍(Nationality): _____	国籍(Nationality): _____
职业(Occupation): _____	职业(Occupation): _____
毕业院校(University): _____	毕业院校(University): _____
出版作品(published work): _____	出版作品(published work): _____
有几个孩子(how many child): _____	有几个孩子(how many child): _____
孩子的成就(achievement): _____	孩子的成就(achievement): _____
教育方法(Education methods): _____	教育方法(Education methods): _____

Figure 3: Task sample: background information collection

In such tasks or activities, language components are not the teaching focus, sometimes even English materials are also allowed to be integrated only if the content is relevant and encouraging. The most important thing is that these materials are able to arouse students’ affective attitudes (e.g. feelings, perceptions, curiosity) and provide a general context, whereby students receive impressions on what they might learn from the new text.

All materials and tasks applied at the first stage aim to help students activate their prior knowledge (linguistic, cultural and world schemata) and provide background information that is related to the text, arouse students’ learning interests and build a connection to the new text.

5.3.2 Stage II: cognitive development

After being given the context, students enter the second stage, mainly involving cognitive development and language learning. In the research on reader response theory, Thomson's (1987) 'developmental model of a reader response approach' suggests the 'literary understanding' as the first level of development, whereby "students give summaries of the events of the story", without providing any details for instruction (cited in Amer, 2003). The neglect of learners' cognitive skills in reader response theory can be made up by schemata theory. In this study, the two schemata, language schemata and text schemata (Cook, 1997), are involved in the deconstruction and interpretation of the text.

Language Schemata: vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure

As reviewed in chapter 3, language schemata include learners' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and sentence pattern, which are basic language components of any text (Cook, 1997). The establishment of language schemata involves many bottom-up reading strategies, which focus on the comprehension of words, phrase, sentence, paragraph and text. In the teaching of vocabulary based on schemata theory, 'semantic field training' is one of the commonly used techniques in helping students expand their vocabulary. A 'semantic field' is a technical term in the discipline of linguistics to describe a set of words grouped in a certain way (Jackson & Amvela, 2000). As Hintikka (1994) points out, a meaning of a word is dependent partly on its relation to other words in the same conceptual area and the categories of semantic fields vary from culture to culture. The application of semantic field involves readers' analogy and metaphor and encourages their imagination (Dai, X., 2003). In this manner, students are able to activate their learnt vocabulary as well as learn new vocabulary centered in the main concept in a semantic field, thus expanding their vocabulary. This strategy appears to be more effective in class application, whereby students are allowed to share their own semantic fields with those of classmates, to facilitate building a larger lexicon and creating a collaborative learning environment. Two examples about semantic

fields in this course are presented in as follows (Figure 4).

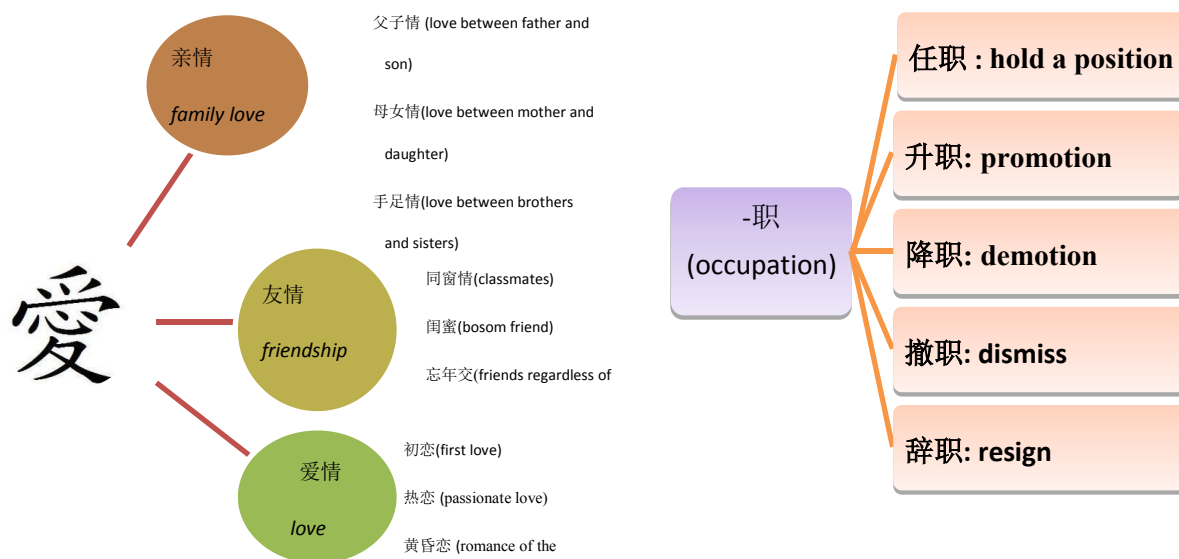


Figure 4: Examples of semantic field

The left semantic field constructs a semantic field according to the meaning of a headword: love. This semantic field is used in introductory lesson of the course, whereby all topics are briefly introduced. Since the three types of love are three topics in this course, the semantic field of love is used to expand students' vocabulary. The other example, which is used in the instruction of 'Du Lala's Promotion (*Du Lala shengzhi ji*/杜拉拉升职记), shows a semantic field with the use of word formation. In this semantic field, '职' (*zhi*) is a centered word means occupation or job. Through word formation, several vocabulary related to 'job' are presented, providing an easy way to remember new vocabulary. Except for the two examples, students are often encouraged to build a semantic field by themselves based on the reading of a new text in this course. For instance, in the instruction of the novel excerpt 'To Our Youth that is Fading Away' (*Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun*/致我们终将逝去的青春), students are asked to find words and expressions about appearance description from the selected text, as shown in the Appendix 6, a sample of students' assignment.

In addition to semantic field training, the establishment of students' new

language schemata also involves the technique of prediction (e.g. word prediction, sentence prediction) which is often applied in the form of ‘cloze procedure’ in this course. As a term emerging from Gestalt psychology, ‘cloze’ refers to “the human tendency to complete a familiar but not quite finished pattern” (Taylor, 1953). The general definition of a cloze procedure, as Alderson (1979) describes, is “the systematic deletion of words from text (J. D. Brown, 2002; Klare, 1974). In the design of written tasks, some important new words or sentences are deleted from the original text. Through filling in a cloze procedure, students are encouraged to apply acquired words, expressions, grammatical knowledge and sentences into the unfinished text according to the context, which is the activation of learners’ existing language schemata. Then through the comparison with the original text, students are able to learn the new vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. The following examples of word prediction aim to expand students’ vocabulary and help them review the application of some grammatical knowledge. The tasks are assigned in the instruction of the pop song lyrics ‘Mother’ (*Muqin*/母亲) and ‘Miss Su’s marriage’ respectively.

你入学的新书包，有人给你拿；
你雨中的花折伞，有人给你____；
你爱吃的三鲜馅儿，有人给你____；
你委屈的泪花，有人给你____
你身在（那）他乡中，有人在____；
你回到（那）家里面，有人____；
你躺在（那）病床上，有人她____；
你露出（那）笑容时，有人____。

[Translation: She took the new schoolbag when you entered school/She held up your umbrella in the rain/She made dumplings of your favorite/She wiped your wronged tears/She worries about you when you are far away/She makes tea as soon as you get home/She bursts into crying by your sickbed/She smiles more happily at your smile/]

那天从我们公司开完会，散会的时候近7点，她心急火燎地____进卫生间，正巧我也在里面，眼见她迅速____下整齐的头，对着镜子乱____，整成个韩版发型，____下眼镜，____上彩色隐形眼镜，一边____下高跟鞋，从包里____出一双平底塑料拖鞋，又____下套裙，____上一条卡通图案的七分裤---形象大变！变成一个阳光小美女！

[Translation: On that day, our company finished a meeting. It was nearly 7 o'clock when the meeting released. She anxiously rushed into toilet. By chance, I was there as well. I saw that she quickly put down her neat hair and randomly scratched the hair in front of the mirror, changing it to Korean hairstyle. Then she took off glasses and wear colored contact lenses. Then, she took off her high heels and took a flat-based plastic slipper out from her bag. Then she took off her overskirt and changed a 3/4 pant with a cartoon pattern on it. Her image had totally changed. She became a radiant little beauty!]

In the first example, it seems not difficult for students to fill in the words according to the context. For instance, when completing the senses of ‘你身在他乡中，有人____’ (*ni shen zai taxiang zhong/when you stay far from home, someone will____*), students might provide answers such as ‘想’ (*xiang*) or ‘想念’ (*xiangnian*), which means ‘miss’. By the comparison with original text, students are able to learn the new word ‘牵挂’ (*qiangua/牵挂*), another word expresses the similar meaning. In the same example, students are encouraged to learn verb match through cloze procedure, i.e. ‘hold umbrella’ (*da san/打伞*), ‘make dumpling’ (*bao sanxian xian'er/包三鲜馅儿*) and ‘wipe tears’ (*ca leihua/擦泪花*).

Similarly, the second example also aims to help students learn to use the proper verb according to the context. For example, students inclined to use the word ‘走’ (*zou*), which means ‘walk’, to fill in the sentence ‘____ into restroom (____*jin weisheng jian/进卫生间*). Given the context by the word ‘心急火燎’ (*xin ji huo liao*), literarily meaning ‘burning with impatience’, students might chose the word ‘跑’ (*pao*) which means ‘run’. By showing the original texts to

students, a more proper verb is suggested to students to use in such context, which is ‘rush’ (chong/冲). This verb exercise is also able to help students review the grammatical point ‘directional complement’, e.g. ‘put on’ (*chuanshang*/穿上), ‘take off’ (*tuoxia*/脱下), ‘take out’ (*taochu*/掏出) and ‘change to’ (*huanshang*/换上). This kind of exercises can be seen in everywhere in this pedagogical design.

Another linguistic component, sentence structure, is often instructed through the strategy of creative writing, especially in the instruction of much *contemporary Chinese popular literature* such as song lyrics, SMS poems, the sentence structure appears to be fixed. Given the sentence structure in the original text, students are expected to express similar meanings according to the same sentence structure, which helps them learn the new sentence structure. The following example is a writing task assigned to students when teaching a SMS poem:

如果秋天走了，我会在雪地里等你； 如果世界走了，我会在天堂爱你； 如果你走了，我会在泪水中想你； 如果我走了，饲料就在你旁边，别饿着自己。
--

[Translation: If the autumn leaves, I will wait for you in the snow; If it is the end of the world, I will love you in paradise; If you leave, I will miss you with tears; If I leave, the feed is just at your side, don't starve yourself.]

Provided with the above SMS poem, students are asked to write a SMS poem with their group mates according to the same sentence structure. Through this exercise, students are expected to review the sentence structure ‘If..., will...’ (*Ruguo...hui.../如果...会...*).

Text schemata: story grammar and authentic literary forms

Text schemata, according to Cook (1997), refer to the reader's knowledge of the text structures in different genres. Compared with language schemata, the establishment of text schemata more involves top-down reading strategies, whereby the text structure, title and theme are the most involved elements. In

comprehending a new text, students may often get lost when accessing an abundant of new linguistic components. In this context, text schemata can help students find the key information in a text. In *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, story-based literary texts account for a large proportion, thus the strategy of story grammar is suggested to arouse students’ awareness of text structure (Amer, 2003). As discussed in chapter 3, J. D. Cooper (1986) proposes a model of story grammar (see Figure 3), whereby a story may be composed of several different “episodes”, each consisting of “a setting, characters, a problem, action and resolution of the problem”.

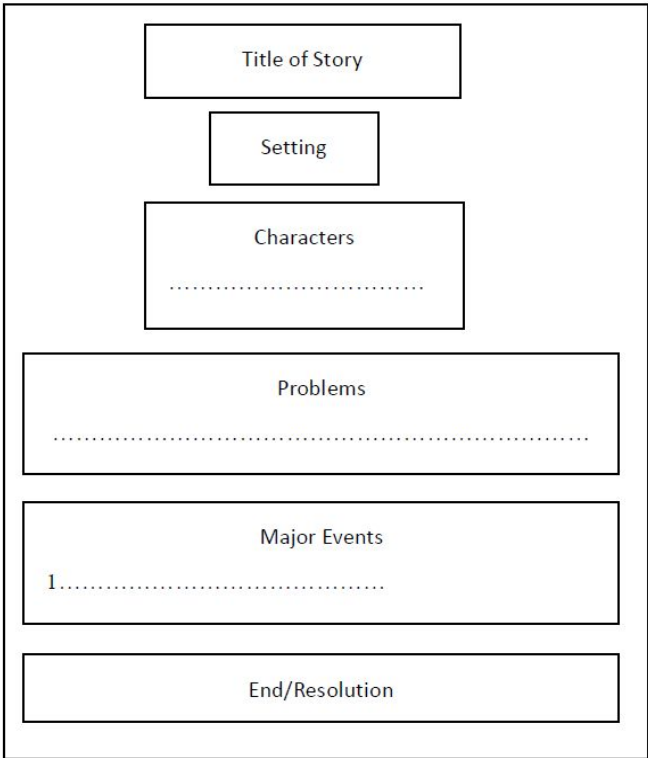


Figure 5: Cooper’s story grammar model

Among these elements, the setting is the place and time at which the story occurs; the characters are the people carry out the action; the problem is the situation around which an episode is organized; and the resolution leads to the solution of the problem. As Amer (2003) argues, the graphic representation of the text structure helps learners comprehend the text and retain textually important information, recognize the elements of the narrative texts and use these elements

to improve their comprehension of the literary works. In this study, the instruction of most story-based texts, students are required to summarize a text according to the story grammar. The example shown here is a suggested story structure designed in the assignment tasks for facilitating students comprehend the selected text ‘Because...So...’ (*yinwei, suoyi*/因为, 所以).

<p>Suggested summary structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Theme: 这个故事讲了_____2. 故事中的人物: 爸爸_____, 儿子_____。3. 爸爸做了哪些事? (1)_____ (2)_____ (3)_____4. 这是一个_____的故事, 告诉我们_____。

[Translation: Suggested summary structure:

1. Theme: The story tells _____
2. Characters: dad _____, son _____
3. What did the dad do for his son?
4. This is a _____ story, tell us _____.]

Similar to the instruction of story-based literary texts, text schemata can also be established to help students learn other types of literary forms. As discussed in section 3.2, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* covers a variety of authentic literary forms such as letter, interview, weather report, CV, etc. When accessing such types of texts, students are informed of the specific literary form of certain authentic texts. According to the given text schemata, students are encouraged to write similar works, enhancing their ability of authentic writing. For example, after learning the pop song ‘One Home Letter (*Yi feng jiashu*/一封家书), I show students a formal letter with standard style and ask students write a short letter to their parents.

In addition, the schemata of authentic literary forms also can be applied to the comprehension of some descriptive texts. The design of teaching material for the instruction of Du Lala’s Promotion (*Du Lala shengzhi ji*/杜拉拉升职记) is a

typical example. Based on the descriptions of Du Lala and her company presented in the text, I summarize the key information by creating two authentic literary forms: one recruitment advertisement (left example) and one CV. By filling in the information in the two forms, students are encouraged to find the key sentences and learn the writing forms of different types of authentic texts.

诚 聘 (Recruitment)	
职位(position):	_____
工作职责(reponsibility):	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____
岗位要求(requirements):	1. _____
	2. _____
	3. _____
	4. _____
	5. _____
薪资待遇(salary):	_____

As discussed above, the second stage with the use of schemata theory helps students understand the literary meaning and logical organization of the text and develop their linguistic knowledge, resulting in the development of high cognitive skills.

5.3.3 Stage III: affective development

Schemata theory with a variety of strategies plays a prominent role in helping students address linguistic challenges at the second stage. At stage three, schemata theory suggests building new world schemata according to the themes reflected in the texts. However, world schemata are product-oriented, related to concepts, ideas, knowledge, information and facts about culture (Cook, 1997), lacking the involvement of process and neglecting learners' affective factors. In this context, reader response theory with process-orientation is useful in arousing students' affective responses, training their critical thinking and enhancing their

intercultural awareness. According to Thomson (1987), the development process by applying reader response theory covers five levels (after the initial level of ‘literary understanding’), including empathy, analogy, interpretation, evaluation and recognition. Thomson also describes the efforts should be made in each level’s responses (cited in Amer, 2003):

Empathy: Students are involved in the story. They identify some aspects of the story with their own lives and have imaginative sympathy with one of the characters in the story, and this sympathy can range from reacting with the character to imagining how the character feels.

Analogy: From the readings, students make connections between the characters and their lives, and from, this, they learn about their own lives

Interpretation: Students reflect on the significance of events and behaviors in the text. Their reflections lead to generalizations and evaluations of the characters and theme of the story.

Evaluation of fiction: Students view text as a construct. They question the author’s values against their own values; they differentiate between fiction and reality; they are able to discuss and evaluate forms of narration and cultural values of the implied author.

Recognition: Students make a conscious effort to consider their relationship with the text; they gain implications of contractedness for their own self-understanding. They become more aware of their reading process and how they arrive at the meaning of a text. They are also able to evaluate their relationship with the implied reader.

Readers’ personal responses and the connection and transaction between reader and text/author are strengthened in this developmental process, which is not emphasized at stage two, when schemata theory is used. Also, the process involves an intercultural communicative experience. As Byram et al. (2001) suggest, the components of intercultural competence comprises “knowledge, skills and attitude” (p.5). Attitudes refer to the “curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own” (p.5); knowledge is the rules of “how social groups and identities function both one’s own culture and others” (p.6); and skills include comparison, interpreting, relating,

discovery, interaction, evaluation, etc. (p.6-7). All these factors attach importance the efforts to connect one's own culture and other cultures, which is in accordance with the five levels proposed in Thomson's developmental process. Therefore, reader responses theory is a useful approach to develop students' intercultural awareness and enhance their cultural skills. In pedagogical application, the five-level responses are used alternatively in the learning process according to the feature and content of certain literary texts and students' linguistic and cultural competence.

Similar to the first stage, raising questions is the main instrument to arouse students' affective responses. According to Thomson's description of the five affective responses, abundant reader response questions are raised in this course. In the instruction of each text, questions are designed according to the feature and content of the selected literary texts and students' linguistic and cultural proficiency, thus not all levels of responses are aroused and questions are not raised in sequence. Several examples of questions emerging from the selected texts are presented as follow.

Type of response	Questions	Texts
Empathy	If you are Jingjing, will you be unhappy with Mengmeng?	Best Friend Forever (<i>Guimi</i> /闺蜜)
	If Miss Su lives in your country, will she find a boyfriend?	Miss Su's Marriage (<i>Su xiaojie de hunshi</i> /苏小姐的婚事)
Analogy	When you were child, did you parents forbid you watch TV or surf internet?	So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University (<i>Suoyi, Beida xiongmei</i> /所以, 北大兄妹)
	Are there any similarities or differences of job hunting between China and your country?	The Hardest Job Hunting Season (<i>Zui nan jiuye ji</i> /最难就业季)
Interpretation	Which girl in the novel do you like best? Why?	To Our Youth that is Fading Away (<i>Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun</i> /致我们终将逝去的青春)
	What do you think the story wants to tell us?	Because...So...(yinwei, suoyi/因为, 所以)
Evaluation	Do you agree with the key term in the micro-film : "Forget each other rather than suffer difficulties together" (<i>xiang ru yi mo, buru xiang wang yu jianghu</i> /相濡以沫, 不如相忘于江湖)	Farewell (<i>jianghu zaijian</i> /江湖再见)
	Do you think the end of the move will happen in reality? Why?	So Young (<i>Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun</i> /致我们终将逝去的青春)
Recognition	Could you provide any reasons why the singer repeats one sentence of lyric 'this is a sad story' (<i>zhe shi yishou beishang de ge</i> /这是一首悲伤的歌)?	The Song of an Older Artistic Woman (<i>Daling wenyi nu qingnian</i> /大龄文艺女青年)
	If you grow up in Chinese culture but moves to Western culture, can you understand Weitong's struggle?	Web Banquet (<i>Xiyan</i> /喜宴)

Table 2: Suggested questions based on reader response theory

In this experimental course, such questions, especially those involving intercultural connection and comparison, are raised often in students' assignment and class discussion. By answering these questions, students are encouraged to reflect their own opinions, feelings and emotions and communicate with the characters and texts by sharing their own life experience. In this manner, students are able to connect their own cultural background with text and target culture, helping them understand better the target culture and enhancing their cultural awareness. Furthermore, in class application, discussion on such questions is likely to create an intercultural learning environment, expanding students' cultural perspectives.

In addition to answering questions, creative writing and role play are two tools for the application of reader response theory. As discussed above, creative writing is used to help students build language schemata (e.g. sentence structure), at the same time encouraging students' engagement. In creative writing for longer texts, whereby students are encouraged to predict the plot of a story, continue writing the story or re-write the end of the story. Usually tasks involving creative writing are assigned as group work, encouraging students' collaborative learning. According to the creation or recreation of the original literary text, role play is suggested in this study, which aims to provide a communicative context and encourage students' oral language output.

The instructional model based on reader response theory and schemata theory is applied in this experimental course to support the teaching of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. Schemata theory is used to help students address linguistic problems and acquire cultural knowledge and fact, while reader response theory is applied to encourage students' affective growth and enhance their intercultural awareness. The application of the three-stage instructional model in empirical study also requires the consideration of students' language proficiency levels. Approaches based on schemata theory are more accessible to lower-level language learners who may not possess enough linguistic ability to express themselves freely, while approaches according to reader response theory can be introduced to the advance language learners, providing them with more opportunities to talk and express themselves freely and enhance their critical thinking and intercultural awareness.

According to the feature and content of the selected texts and the suggested instructional model, a syllabus is designed, with detailed instructional procedure, teaching objectives and relevant tasks and activities. Sample of teaching material for one week and a syllabus designed for the instruction of three texts are presented in Appendix 9 and Appendix 10 respectively.

5.4 Summary

This chapter presents a pedagogical design for the experimental course in this study, including the selection of texts and the application of an instructional model. Given a numerous number of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, several factors facilitate the selection of texts. As the first factor for consideration, the needs analysis from students' pre-questionnaire shows students' interests in five topics. Combined with the discussion with course coordinator, four topics are decided for experimental teaching, i.e. family love, youth & friendship, career and love & marriage. The selection of texts is also in accordance with criteria such as the appropriateness of linguistic difficulty and length of texts and the variety of literary forms. According to different reading models (warm up/intensive/extensive reading), linguistic difficulty and length of texts, literary forms are considered differently. In addition, some personal factors such as reading experience, pedagogical beliefs, popularity among Chinese native speakers and pilot reading by previous students are also considered in the decision of text selection. According to the consideration of such factors, 29 texts within four topics are decided for instruction in this experimental course.

To accommodate the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in empirical study, an instructional model based on two constructivist approaches, reader response theory and schemata theory, is suggested. Both approaches strengthen readers' previous experience and background knowledge; however the former one focuses on students' affective development and the latter one emphasizes their cognitive growth. In this three-stage learning process, the first stage activates learners' background knowledge with the use of both theories, the second stage deals with cognitive development and linguistic skills by applying schemata theory and the third stage emphasizes the affective development and intercultural experience with the use of reader response theory. Several instructional strategies such as 'question raising', 'semantic field', 'prediction' and 'creative writing' are introduced to show how the instructional model can be

applied in teaching practice. A teaching syllabus, designed according to the features and content of selected texts and a three-stage instructional mode, is carried out in this one-semester experimental course. The following chapters (chapter 6, 7 and 8) report students' linguistic, cultural and affective responses to this experiment, testing the effectiveness and appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* in TCFL.

Chapter 6 Analysis of Results (1): Linguistic Effectiveness and Appropriateness

6.1 Overview of the chapter

The three chapters (chapter 6, 7 and 8) aim to present the results of the empirical study and relate the data to the formulated research questions. This chapter aims to answer the research questions about linguistic aspect, which are whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* results in the improvement of students' language proficiency (including the abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing); how do students respond to the linguistic characteristics of contemporary Chinese popular literature; and why the use of contemporary Chinese popular literature results in the improvement or lack of improvement of students' language proficiency. Several pedagogical implications are also suggested from the qualitative analysis.

In section 6.2, the quantitative results, including each student's pre-test result and post-test result of language test, and their self-evaluation on linguistic gains in post-questionnaires, are addressed. Students' scores in different language skills are presented, followed by the identification of the inter-rater reliability (apart from listening test). Then each student's scores between pre-test and post-test are compared to test the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in language teaching. The findings from test results are confirmed through students' self-evaluation. Section 6.3 presents and discusses the qualitative results to show how students respond to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in terms of language learning, testing the credibility of and provide reasons for the quantitative results.

6.2 Quantitative analysis of linguistic responses

6.2.1 Analysis of language test results

Test results

According to the assessment scales presented in Appendix 8 (other than the listening test which provides standard answers), the tests (reading and writing essay, oral presentation and essay on cultural question) are marked by two independent graders and the mean scores are calculated as students' final scores. All of the scores of students' pre-test and post-test on language skills, including two values marked by different graders and the mean score, are presented in the following tables.

Scores of listening test

The listening test is adopted from HSK level IV test. The full mark of the listening part in HSK is 45. In accordance with the five level scale rubric used in the other three tests, students' scores in listening test are calculated according to five level scales by rounding off. The original score and calculated score are as follows.

Listening Test					
Pre-test			Post-test		
Participant	Score in HSK	Score in Five level scale	Participant	Score in HSK	Score in Five level scale
S1	38	4.2	S1	42	4.7
S2	29	3.2	S2	39	4.3
S3	40	4.4	S3	45	5.0
S4	30	3.3	S4	32	3.6
S5	39	4.3	S5	42	4.7
S6	37	4.1	S6	41	4.6
S7	20	2.2	S7	26	2.9
S8	19	2.1	S8	25	2.8
S9	22	2.4	S9	39	4.3
S10	35	3.9	S10	33	3.7
S11	39	4.3	S11	42	4.7
S12	40	4.4	S12	44	4.9
S13	33	3.7	S13	38	4.2
S14	36	4.0	S14	27	3.0
S15	22	2.4	S15	27	3.0
S16	21	2.3	S16	28	3.1
S17	18	2.0	S17	23	2.6
S18	18	2.0	S18	15	1.7

Table 3: Scores of listening test

Scores of reading and writing essay

Reading and Writing Test							
Pre-test				Post-test			
Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score	Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score
S1	3	3	3	S1	3	3	3
S2	2	3	2.5	S2	4	3	3.5
S3	3	3	3	S3	4	4	4
S4	3	3	3	S4	4	4	4
S5	4	4	4	S5	5	5	5
S6	3	3	3	S6	4	4	4
S7	1	1	1	S7	1	2	1.5
S8	1	1	1	S8	2	2	2
S9	2	2	2	S9	3	3	3
S10	3	3	3	S10	4	4	4
S11	3	2	2.5	S11	4	4	4
S12	4	4	4	S12	5	5	5
S13	4	4	4	S13	5	5	5
S14	2	3	2.5	S14	2	2	2
S15	1	1	1	S15	2	2	2
S16	2	2	2	S16	3	3	3
S17	1	1	1	S17	2	2	2
S18	1	1	1	S18	1	1	1

Table 4: Scores of reading and writing test

Scores of oral presentation

Oral Test							
Pre-test				Post-test			
Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score	Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score
S1	3	3	3	S1	3	3	3
S2	3	3	3	S2	3	3	3
S3	3	4	3.5	S3	4	4	4
S4	2	3	2.5	S4	3	3	3
S5	5	5	5	S5	5	5	5
S6	4	4	4	S6	4	5	4.5
S7	1	1	1	S7	1	1	1
S8	1	1	1	S8	2	2	2
S9	4	3	3.5	S9	3	3	3
S10	3	3	3	S10	3	3	3
S11	3	3	3	S11	4	5	4.5
S12	5	5	5	S12	5	5	5
S13	4	5	4.5	S13	5	5	5
S14	3	3	3	S14	2	3	2.5
S15	2	3	2.5	S15	3	3	3
S16	3	3	3	S16	4	4	4
S17	1	1	1	S17	1	2	1.5
S18	1	1	1	S18	1	1	1

Table 5: Scores of oral presentation

Inter-rater reliability

In order to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the grading of reading & writing test and oral test, Cohen’s Kappa coefficient is made use of (Landis & Koch, 1977). According to the five-level rating scale, the scores are organized into the following contingency tables, with a 5 x 5 grid in each table. The two tables organize the scores in reading and writing test, and oral test respectively.

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	6	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	1	1	0	0
	"3"	0	2	8	1	0
	"4"	0	0	0	8	0
	"5"	0	0	0	0	3

Table 6: Contingency in reading and writing test

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	6	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	1	0	0	0
	"3"	0	3	12	1	0
	"4"	0	0	1	3	0
	"5"	0	0	0	3	5

Table 7: Contingency in oral test

The next step determines the resulting percentage agreement in the two tests above. The resulting percentage agreement is calculated by the formula $\frac{\sum a}{N}$, $\sum a$ being the total values in the diagonal cells. In this study, N is 36 and $\sum a$ in reading and writing test, and oral test are 26 and 27 respectively. Accordingly, the resulting percentage agreement in each test is:

Reading and writing test: $\frac{\sum a}{N} = \frac{26}{36} = 72.22\%$

Oral test: $\frac{\sum a}{N} = \frac{27}{36} = 75\%$

The result shows that the raters' agreement percentage is high. In the next step, the following formula is applied to the diagonal cells of the above tables in order to calculate the expected frequency (ef) for the number of agreements.

$$ef =$$

The following tables include the expected frequencies in each of the diagonal cells:

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	6(1.17)	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	1(0.25)	1	0	0
	"3"	0	2	8(2.75)	1	0
	"4"	0	0	0	8(2)	0
	"5"	0	0	0	0	3(0.25)

Table 8: Inter-rater reliability in reading and writing test

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	6(1.17)	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	1(0.22)	0	0	0
	"3"	0	3	12(5.78)	1	0
	"4"	0	0	1	3(0.78)	0
	"5"	0	0	0	3	5(1.11)

Table 9: Inter-rater reliability in oral test

By adding five expected frequency values, the $\sum ef$ in the two tests are calculated:

Reading and writing test: $\sum ef = 1.17 + 0.25 + 2.75 + 2 + 0.25 = 6.42$

Oral test: $\sum ef = 1.17 + 0.22 + 5.78 + 0.78 + 1.11 = 9.06$

Finally, the Kappa-coefficient (K) is computed to determine the inter-rater reliability of statistic. The formula to calculate K is:

$$K =$$

According to this formula, the Kappa-coefficient for the two tests in this study is as follows:

Reading and writing test: $K = 0.66$

Oral test: $K = 0.67$

As Landis and Koch (1977) suggest, $K = 0.40$ to 0.59 is a "moderate inter-rater reliability"; $K = 0.60$ to 0.79 is a "substantial reliability" and $K > 0.80$ is an "outstanding reliability". Accordingly, both of the results in the two tests are in the region of substantial reliability. The result demonstrates that the study has the inter-rater reliability.

Analysis of pre-test and post-test results

The section above presents students' scores marked by different raters and determines the inter-reliability of the results. According to these data, a quantitative analysis is conducted to compare students' results in pre-test and post-test.

In this experiment, among the 18 participants, the majority have improved their language leaning, whilst a small number of students decreased. The following table shows the difference between pre-test and post-test in each skill: ‘I’ represents ‘Improved’, ‘S’ ‘Stagnated’ and ‘D’ ‘Decreased’.

Test	<i>Listening</i> ¹⁹				<i>Reading and writing</i>			<i>Speaking</i>			<i>Overall language skills</i> ²⁰		
	Pre	Post	change	Differe nce	Pre	Post	Differ ence	Pre	Post	Differe nce	Pre	Post	Differe nce
S1	4.2	4.7	0.5	I	3	3	S	3	3	S	10.2	10.7	I
S2	3.2	4.3	1.1	I	2.5	3.5	I	3	3	S	8.7	10.8	I
S3	4.4	5.0	0.6	I	3	4	I	3.5	4	I	10.9	13.0	I
S4	3.3	3.6	0.3	S	3	4	I	2.5	3	I	8.8	10.6	I
S5	4.3	4.7	0.4	S	4	5	I	5	5	S	13.3	14.7	I
S6	4.1	4.6	0.5	I	3	4	I	4	4.5	I	11.1	13.1	I
S7	2.2	2.9	0.7	I	1	1.5	I	1	1	S	4.2	5.4	I
S8	2.1	2.8	0.7	I	1	2	I	1	2	I	4.1	6.8	I
S9	2.4	4.3	1.9	I	2	3	I	3.5	3	D	7.9	10.3	I
S10	3.9	3.7	-0.2	S	3	4	I	3	3	S	9.9	10.7	I
S11	4.3	4.7	0.4	S	2.5	4	I	3	4.5	I	9.8	13.2	I
S12	4.4	4.9	0.5	I	4	5	I	5	5	S	13.4	14.9	I
S13	3.7	4.2	0.5	I	4	5	I	4.5	5	I	12.2	14.2	I
S14	4.0	3.0	-1	D	2.5	2	D	3	2.5	D	9.5	7.5	D
S15	2.4	3.0	0.6	I	1	2	I	2.5	3	I	5.9	8.0	I
S16	2.3	3.1	0.8	I	2	3	I	3	4	I	7.3	10.1	I
S17	2.0	2.6	0.6	I	1	2	I	1	1.5	I	4.0	6.1	I
S18	2.0	1.7	-0.3	S	1	1	S	1	1	S	4.0	3.7	D

Table 10: Overview of the language test results

According to the table, 16 participants (88.89%) have improved their overall language skills, and two participants’ (11.11%) scores decreased. In terms of the specific language skills, 12 students (66.67%) improved listening skill, 5 students (27.78%) stagnated and 1 students decreased; 15 students (83.33%) improved reading and writing skills, 2 student (11.11%) stagnated and 1 student (5.56%) decreased; 7 students (38.89%) stagnated in oral skill, 2 students (11.11%) decreased and the remaining 9 students (50%) improved.

¹⁹ The scores in the grading system in listening test are very specific and subtle so that +0.5 or – 0.5 is considerate as differences. The changes between the regions are regarded as “Stagnated”.

²⁰ Each student’s score of overall language skill is calculated as the sum of listening score, reading and writing score and oral score.

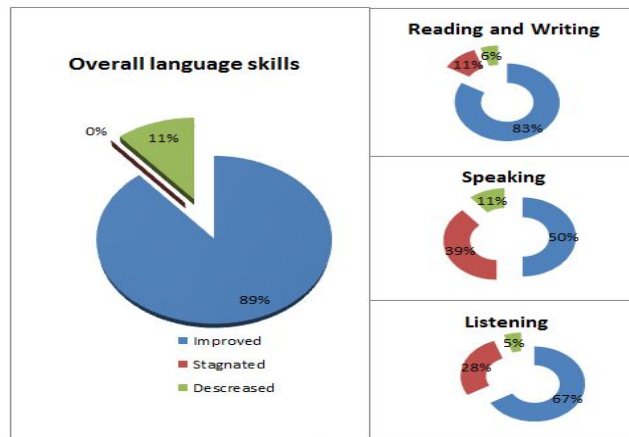


Figure 6: Distribution of students' language improvement

The above figure illustrates visually the distribution: the majority of the participants made improvement in language learning, however, more students made improvement in reading and writing skills (15/18) than those in speaking (9/18) and listening skills (12/18). In a similar manner, the difference of students' performance between pre-test and post-test in the reading and writing test appears to be more significant than that in the listening and oral test. Table 11 indicates students' development as a group in each items (listening, reading & writing and oral tests) by comparing the mean scores of the entire group in pre-test and post-test. Moreover, the mean score²¹ of overall language skills is calculated to identify students' development in overall language skills.

Items	Mean scores of the whole class		Improve by
	Pre-test	Post-test	
Listening	3.31	3.75	13.29%
Reading and writing	2.42	3.22	33.06%
Oral	2.92	3.22	10.27%
Overall language skills	2.88	3.4	18.06%

Table 11: Linguistic improvement of mean scores of the whole class

The above table indicates that the performance of the whole class in all language tests has improved between pre-test and post-test. The mean score of the whole class in listening pre-test is 3.31 as compared to 3.75 in the post-test, improving by 13.29%. In reading and writing test, the pre-test mean score increases from 2.42 to 3.22, an improvement of 33.06%. The results of oral test also indicate some development, increasing by 10.27% (from 2.92 to 3.22). By

²¹ Mean score of overall language skills =

calculating the mean score of the overall language skills (reading & writing, speaking and listening), the statistic shows an improvement of 18.06% in students' overall language learning (from 2.88 to 3.4). The developments of students' performances can be perceived visually in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Developments of students' linguistic performance



The above figure clearly indicates that the difference between the pre-test and post-test in the reading and writing test is more significant than that in the listening test and the oral test. The results of students' language show that this experimental course with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL results in students' improvement in language learning. In the positive development in all of the language skills, however, students' improvement in reading and writing is much more significant than that in listening and speaking. The reasons for students' language improvement and the different growth speed of specific language skills are discussed in the qualitative analysis.

As discussed above, the comparison of students' performance between pre-test and post-test provides an affirmative answer to the research question one, that is, whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* can and will promote student's language learning. However, it may be argued that a student's development can be attributed to other variables such as after-class language input or familiarity with the question types in the post-test. The lack of a control group is a limitation of this empirical study, which could lead to doubts on the role of teaching material in a student's learning progress. In order to confirm the

conclusion, students' self-evaluation of their development in language learning is carried out in post-questionnaires, together with their evaluation on whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promote their cultural learning and arouse their positive affective attitudes.

6.2.2 Student's self-evaluation results

As elaborated in chapter 4, students' linguistic, cultural and affective perceptions of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this experimental course are measured through a five-point rater-scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). The general question to linguistic learning is "do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* improves your overall language skills?" In terms of individual language skills, students' self-evaluation of four language skills, i.e. listening, reading, writing and speaking, has also been integrated. Students' answers to these questions are presented in Table 12 and Figure 8.

Improved	Strongly disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Overall language skills	11 (61.11%)	6 (33.33%)	1 (5.56%)		
Listening skill	4 (22.22%)	7 (38.89%)	5 (27.78%)	2 (11%)	
Reading skill	9(50%)	4(22.22%)	5(27.78%)		
Writing skill	14 (77.78%)	3 (16.67%)	1(5.56%)		
Speaking skill	4 (22.22%)	6 (33.33%)	5 (27.78%)	3 (16.67%)	

Table 12: Students' self-evaluation on linguistic improvement

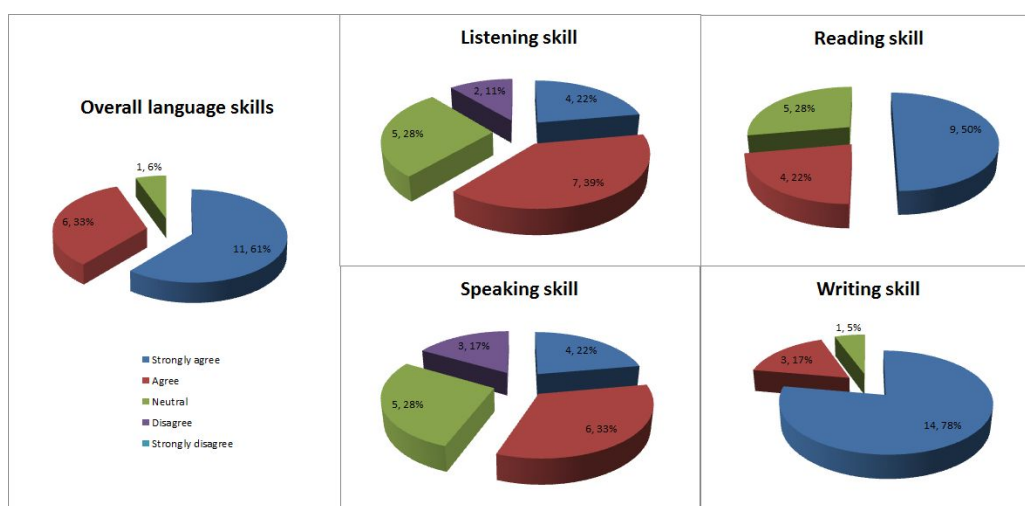


Figure 8: Students' self-evaluation on linguistic improvement

The results indicate that nearly all of the participants believed that their overall language skills had been improved (except one who remained neutral). With regard to the individual skills, students' self-evaluation results appear to be similar to those shown in test results. All students believed that their reading and writing skills had been improved; however, some students did not hold the same perception in listening and speaking skills. In terms of the improvement in speaking skill, five students were neutral and three students disagreed. Similarly, five students were neutral and two disagreed with their growth in listening skill.

The number gap between the options of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' also reflects individual student's inclinations. There are more 'strongly agree' than 'agree' regarding the improvement in reading skill and writing skill, but fewer 'strongly agree' in listening and speaking skills. Together with the 100% agreement percentage and students' test results presented in the last section, the results of students' self-evaluation point out that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this experimental course plays a more important role in enhancing reading and writing skills than in listening and speaking skills.

Despite some negative attitudes held by a small number of participants, most of the participants believed that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promoted their language learning. The findings confirm the result in the quantitative analysis of students' scores in pre-test and post-test. Thus the two-part

quantitative analysis provides a creditable answer to the first research question of the study: the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* will result in a higher level of students' language proficiency. Another finding from the quantitative study is students' growth of reading and writing skills is more obvious than that of listening and speaking skills.

The results described above lead to some more specific questions such as: how does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* help their language skills? Will there be a significant difference in students' perception between the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and the use of traditional language textbooks? Do students' own backgrounds (e.g. linguistic competence) affect their perception on the use of contemporary popular literature? These questions are addressed in the qualitative analysis of students' linguistic responses.

6.3 Qualitative analysis of linguistic responses

As discussed in chapter 4, students' responses are collected from a variety of data, including class transcripts, class observation notes, assignment, post-questionnaires, and interview transcripts, etc. In this section, students' responses in terms of language learning are collected. Three themes stood out from the content analysis of data: linguistic authenticity and relevancy, linguistic challenges, and improvement of language skills. As mentioned in chapter 4, students' interviews are conducted in Chinese so all transcripts are translated into Chinese. Due to the limited space, the original data of students' interview answers that quoted in qualitative analysis are presented in Appendix 11, which is also applied to the discussion in chapter 7 and chapter 8.

6.3.1 Linguistic authenticity and relevancy

As reviewed in chapter 2 and discussed in chapter 3 and chapter 4, 'authenticity' is one of the most important features of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. Instead of the artificial language used in most traditional

language textbooks and the delicate expressions in most canonical literature, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is written by Chinese native speakers from all walks of life, reflecting more modern, popular and daily life language used in contemporary Chinese society. The audio-visual techniques to present and supplement the printed texts are able to provide a more authentic context for readers.

In this course, supported by audio-visual input and abundant tasks based on the instructional model which merges reader response theory and schemata theory, students appreciated authentic literary text and experience many other practical literary forms, e.g. letter, CV, recruitment advertisement. Some selected texts such as ‘one home letter’ that are written in a practical written form increased the authenticity of literary text and the relevancy to the learners. In addition, in the selection of film and television literature, I avoided the exclusive selection of the movies or micro-films with standard pronunciation of mandarin. Instead, some videos with weak accents and few dialects (e.g. Taiwanese, North-east Chinese, Shanghai dialect) are used, encouraging students to experience the authenticity of Chinese language.

As expected, students’ post-questionnaires and interviews reflect their preferences for the authenticity of the language displayed in the selected literary texts. In responses to Question 12 of post-questionnaire, which is the comparison of the selected literary texts and traditional language textbooks, students found that the selected literary texts used “up-to-date” (S6), “fresh” (S6), “relevant” (S1, S16), “useful” (S12) and “colloquial” (S10) language, rather than “using the vocabulary students already know” (S2) or texts that were “made-up” (S12). This feature provided students with a real-life setting (S4, S9, S3). Besides these students, a lot of students also mentioned the keywords such as ‘authentic’, ‘practical’, ‘useful’, ‘up-to-date’, ‘daily life’, ‘relevant’ to describe the linguistic feature of selected texts, revealing the authenticity of the language used in selected literary texts. S4 specifically compared the terms learnt in this course

with her previous learning experience, as she states,

I learnt useful things. I hated New Practical Reader (*Xin shiyong hanyu*/新实用汉语). I don't need to know how to say '冰雕/bing diao' (*ice sculpture*) just yet; I need to know useful things. I learnt so many common terms. Also I learnt how to deal with problems solving when reading long texts. (S4, Question 12, Post-questionnaire)

I feel the text is very strange...the new words are not important ones... I maybe cannot say 'jiao' (*foot*) but I can say '冰雕/biao diao' (*ice sculpture*)... I feel I like this year's text very much (Interview with S4).

In both questionnaire and interview, S4 highlighted the example of 'ice sculpture' (*bingdiao*/冰雕), which was learnt in 'New practical Chinese reader', to emphasize the lack of authenticity and relevancy in traditional language textbooks. From S4's perspective, language terms such as 'ice sculpture' are not daily-life and practical terms. Instead, the terms and expressions in the selected literary texts appeared to be more useful and relevant to her.

In addition to S4, many students provided some examples to show how the authenticity and relevancy of the learnt words and phrases in the selected literary texts matter to them. For instance, S3 and S10 liked learning new vocabulary because these modern words expanded their vocabulary and they were able to explain the same thing with a variety of word choices. As S10 states,

I like learning very different new words because I wanted to do. I don't like using the same words to explain my opinions, same words" (Interview with S10).

S3 gave an example to explain the similar opinion: he could only use '穷人/*qiongren*' and '富人/*furen*' to term 'poor people' and 'rich people' respectively; now, he learnt some up-to-date terms such as 'tall, rich, handsome' (*gao, fu, shuai*/高富帅) and 'loser'(*diaosi*/屌丝) to describe the two types of people (Interview with S3). Although students sometimes may not use appropriate words in certain situations, the variety of modern terms they learnt in this course is likely to make their communication become more vivid and real-life based.

Similarly, S8, S9 and S15 also felt the learnt words and slang were relevant to their life. S9 claimed that she had applied some new words about the descriptions of appearance and personalities from the novel excerpt 'To Our Youth that is

Fading Away’ (*Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun/致我们终将逝去的青春*) into the description of her friends. S15 found the vocabulary and expressions in the topic of ‘youth and friendship’ really mattered to them. She broke up with her boyfriend and her ‘best friend forever’ helped her get through the after-effects. To her, some words in the micro film ‘Best Friend Forever’ (*Guimi/闺蜜*) became very significant, e.g. ‘best friend forever’ (*guimi/闺蜜*), ‘helpless’ (*wuzhu/无助*), etc. She also used some words learnt in ‘To our Youth that is Fading Away’ to describe her ex-boyfriend, e.g. ‘honest’ (*laoshi/老实*), ‘easy going’ (*suihe/随和*) (Interview with S15). More examples were provided by S8 to support her perception that many popular phrases she had learnt from the selected literary texts were very practical and brought her a closer relationship to Chinese friends, as she claims,

We not only see the Chinese popular culture but also learn Chinese slangs. For instance, we learnt ‘*guimi/闺蜜*’ (*the best female friend*), ‘*tie ci/铁瓷*’ (*the best male friend*), ‘*diandeng pao/电灯泡*’ (*the third wheel*) and ‘*jiebai xiongdi/结拜兄弟*’ (*sworn friend*). Since I know Chinese slang I can say them to my Chinese friends..... I think, if Chinese people hear me using Chinese slang, they will think I am more earnest. I learnt some popular phrases from some topics. We have learnt the topic of career. If I apply for a job in China, these new words will be very beneficial, e.g. ‘*daiyu/待遇*’ (*wages and treatment*), ‘*cizhi/辞职*’ (*resign*) and ‘*jianli/简历*’ (*CV*). I like watching ‘Du Lala’ very much. Although the characters’ speaking is very fast so that I had to read Chinese subtitles, I think it is a very good opportunity to listen to Chinese popular phrases. (Interview with S8)

As discussed above, most students in this experimental course appreciated the authenticity and relevancy of the language components (i.e. new words, phrases, slang) in selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* because of the Compared with traditional language textbooks they previously used, students found the language in selected texts more authentic, relevant and practical.

6.3.2 Linguistic challenge

As discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3, the language components in much

contemporary Chinese popular literature are more complex than traditional language textbooks and simpler than canonical literature, thus it is deemed to provide appropriate linguistic challenges, which is accordance with Krashen's (1985) theory of 'comprehensible input' (i+1) and Vygotsky's (1978) theory of ZPD. In order to test whether the language components of the selected popular literary texts could provide an appropriate challenge, 'comprehensibility' or 'the difficulty level' appears to be the proper measures. According to the examination of students' answers to post-questionnaires and interviews, the linguistic challenges of the selected literary texts appeared to be appropriate for most of the students in this course, however, a small number of students (all low language proficiency students) found the challenge was over overwhelming. The two parts of responses are analyzed in this section.

Appropriate linguistic challenge for most students

In students' comments on the third question of post-questionnaire, 66.67% of the students (12 students) reported they had some or little difficulty to comprehend the selected literary texts. The challenge or difficulty students encountered mainly focused on vocabulary (e.g.S1, S3, S12), as S3 claimed "some vocabulary was difficult to grasp the meaning". In spite of this, students found little difficulty in comprehension and felt the challenges were reasonable. For instance, S5 stated that,

Vocabulary is guessable, if read in a sentence and grammar is not too difficult.
For most students it is at a reasonable standard of difficulty (S5, Question 3, Post-questionnaire).

S1 also believed that the selected texts provided an "appropriate level for study" and "enough new words to make texts challenging". She strengthened that she could "understand context not using dictionary" (S1, Question 3, Post-questionnaire). Similar to S1, context seemed to be important for S16 to comprehend the text, as S16 stated, "topics are everyday conversation based and so it is easy to understand the material" (S16, Question 3, Post-questionnaire). Some high language proficiency students felt the texts were "straight forward"

(S5) and “reading friendly” (S12), providing little difficulty in understanding (S6). Compared with traditional language textbooks, S2 stated, “textbooks are easier because they only use words we know, but the popular texts are a good challenge” (S2). As presented above, most students felt the difficulty level of the selected literary texts was “perfect balance” (S4) and “reasonably challenging” (S11). As Krashen (1985) states, texts with a certain degree of challenge are able to improve student’s language learning and keep their learning motivation.

Overwhelming linguistic challenge for low language proficiency students

Despite students’ wide acceptance of linguistic challenges of the selected texts in this experimental course, there were 6 students (33.33%) who found it very hard or “incredibly difficult” (S17) to understand the selected literary texts. All of them were low language proficiency students (except for S2). S7 and S17 complained that the overwhelming new vocabulary set obstacles for their comprehension of the texts, as S17 complained,

The texts are incredibly difficult. The only way I can get through them is with an electronic dictionary. Every second word is new. A lot of the new words are not in paper dictionaries. It’s incredibly unfair (S17, Question 3, Post-questionnaire)

S17 stated that he had to look for the explanation word by word but that too many words decreased his learning interests. That was why he complained “incredibly unfair”. The same problem happened to S7, who found it difficult to identify “where a work begins and ends”, thus, “even small numbers of new words” were hard for him to process. In addition to overloaded new vocabulary, S8 and S18 pointed out the complexity and difficulty of grammar in the selected texts, hindering their comprehension of the texts. Obviously, these students could not adapt themselves to this new type of teaching materials, as S18 claimed the selected literary texts appeared to be “much more difficult than previous years”. Besides the five low language proficiency students, S2, an intermediate language

proficiency student, also felt the vocabulary was “very difficult” but he found it “useful to learn the texts” (S2, Question 3, Post-questionnaire), which seemed to be a positive response.

The negative responses from the above students (except for S2) were not unexpected. According to students’ classroom performance, these students could not answer questions in class and sometimes showed their confusion with understanding texts. They struggled with the single characters and grammatical points so that they were not able to comprehend whole sentences or paragraphs. Although students’ linguistic proficiency is a very important consideration when selecting *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, some selected texts in this experiment might not be considered as the ‘comprehensible input’ for students with low language proficiency.

In the interview, some low language proficiency students reinforced their struggles in addressing linguistic difficulties, reflecting a usual technique or learning habit of many foreign language learners, which is looking up every word by using a dictionary. For instance, S15 felt very “uncomfortable” to guess the meaning rather than catch the meaning of every character although she also doubted about this learning method (Interview with S15). The technique also frustrated S7, “although I learnt a lot, every time I searched the Internet there were still a lot of new words. I have already studied four to five years, but I still need a dictionary, which makes me sad” (Interview with S7). Obviously, to these students, the learning habit/technique of checking every character of the texts in dictionary kept them from exploring the keyword of a sentence or a paragraph, thus, slowing their reading speed and discouraging learning interests.

Facilitators for all students to address linguistic challenges

In students’ post-questionnaires and interviews, many students also mentioned some facilitators that helped them comprehend and better understand the selected

literary texts, thus, addressing the linguistic challenges, including context-dependent learning technique, audio-visual input and tasks and activities based on schemata theory.

Context-dependent learning technique

As discussed above, low language proficiency students were used to use a dictionary-dependent learning technique to assist language learning but for most high language proficiency students, the authentic context within *contemporary Chinese popular literature* already provided them with a facilitator to address linguistic challenges. In response to the interview question “what do you feel was the most difficult among all the texts we have learnt”, some of the high language proficiency students (S3, S6, S13) also mentioned ‘new vocabulary’, similar to low language proficiency students; however, it did not create a problem for these students. Most of them claimed that they had confidence in understanding the text by guessing the meaning according to the context and looking for the key words in the text (S3, S5, S6, S13, Question 3, Post-questionnaire), as S6 stated in interview:

None of them are too difficult, but all have many new words..... If you don't know every character, you still can understand. You don't need to know every word” (Interview with S6).

S3, another high language proficiency student, also claimed that given the context, the abundant new vocabulary did not bother his comprehension. The only difficulty affecting his comprehension is some ‘up-to-date’ vocabulary. He found “no such new words” such as ‘loser’ (*diaosi*/屌丝) in his previous learnt textbooks and he could not find the explanation in usual dictionary. Despite of the difficulty, the problem did not upset S3, as presented in the last section, S3 was satisfied with accessing such new language terms and expressions, which expanded and enriched his word choices.

In contract to the learning technique used by most low language proficiency students, which was looking up every new word in dictionary, most high language proficiency students had developed a context-dependent learning technique. As

discussed in chapter 3, the rich social and cultural context within *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is likely to encourage students' meaningful learning and students' "skills and knowledge are best acquired within realistic contexts" (Dunlap & Grabinger, 1996, p. 667). With the use of context-dependent learning technique, high language proficiency students were able to address linguistic challenges and acquire new linguistic knowledge. On the contrary, students with a dictionary-dependent learning technique were more inclined to find a wide gap between lower language level courses and higher level language courses than those with a context-dependent learning technique. Therefore, developing an appropriate learning technique is crucial for advanced language learning. It seems that the reading of authentic texts such as *contemporary Chinese popular literature* set obstacles for the students who still keep this dictionary-dependent learning habit at the stage of advanced language learning. For these students, the linguistic appropriateness of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is decreased. This finding reveals the significance of helping students get away from the dictionary-dependent learning technique and develop an appropriate learning habit. Starting from lower language courses, teachers may consider the integration of some authentic-context-based articles with little linguistic difficulty (adapted authentic texts are also suggested), encouraging students to find the key sentence and catch the meaning without using dictionary.

Audio-visual input

As discussed in previous chapters, 'audio-visual input' is one feature of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. In addition to original audio and/or visual literary works (e.g. film, song), many printed *popular literary texts* also have their audio and visual versions to expand their influence and popularity. In this experimental course, videos were shown to students in advance in order to provide them an impression on the text or played after teaching the text to help students strengthen their understanding. In response to the question "how do you

feel about the visual-audio materials used in this course” in post-questionnaires (Question 4), a lot of students with different language proficiency levels (e.g.S2, S5, S8, S14, S17) claimed that the use of visual-audio materials helped them comprehend the original literary texts and kept them concentrate on the texts (S10). For instance, as S17, a low language proficiency student, stated,

I don't know the meaning of the characters in lyrics sometimes but I can understand through MTV. (S17, Question 4, post-questionnaire)

Similarly, S8, another low language proficiency student, particularly offered an example ‘The Song of an Older Artistic Woman’ (*Daling wenyi nü qingnian/大龄文艺女青年*). The animation MTV of the song, which illustrates the original texts by simple characters and pictures, helped her overcome the linguistic difficulty of the texts (S8, Question 4, Post-questionnaire). Without the assistance of audio-visuals, it was very difficult for students with lower language proficiency students such as S8, to comprehend the original text. The images in the video helped them catch the meaning of the texts even though they might not understand the text very well.

According to students’ perceptions of audio-visuals used in this class, it seems that this kind of materials appealed to students of all linguistic levels and cultural backgrounds. Also, audio-visuals appeared to be more necessary for low language proficiency students. Although all of these students complained about the overwhelming linguistic challenges of the selected literary texts in this course, it does not mean they denied the linguistic appropriateness of all selected texts. Their responses in this section demonstrate that at least audio-visual popular literary works have the potential to decrease their struggles in printed text reading and provide ‘comprehensible input’ for them. This finding may suggest that more *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* with audio-visuals can be suggested as materials for low language proficiency students and it also reflects a constructivist pedagogical belief in textbook compiling, which is providing multiple resources, paths and solutions, rather than adopting single textbooks (Squires, 1999; M. F. Young, 1993).

Tasks and activities based on schemata theory

According to the instructional model elaborated in chapter 5, the instruction of the linguistic components of the selected literary texts in this experimental course is dependent on many in-class and after-class tasks designed based on schemata theory.

Class discussion

In a constructivist language classroom, as discussed in chapter 3, discussion and collaboration is an important factor. Due to the limited contact time, except for some short texts that required little efforts in addressing linguistic challenges, most linguistic tasks in this course were assigned to student in their weekly assignments before class instruction of a new text. In class, discussions were carried out to modify or strengthen their understanding of the linguistic components of the new texts. In post-questionnaires, some students (e.g. S9, S10, S13) highlighted the function of class discussion in promoting their language learning, as S13 stated,

Class discussion, group work and role play were amazing. It was good to do team work and share own experience in China and also helping each other with Chinese was really good (S13, Question 7, Post-questionnaire).

In teaching a lot of texts, students were asked to re-tell the story or summarize a certain part of one long text through group or class discussion. In this way, students had chance to share the self-constructed text meanings with their classmates and create a collective ‘text’ through discussion, which can be revealed in the discussion on the extensive reading passage ‘Brother Who Sleeps in My Top Bunk’ (*Shui zai wo shangpu de xiongdi*/睡在我上铺的兄弟). This pop song displays the dormitory friendship in Chinese university, which seems obvious to everyone. However, as the outside observer noted,

When S3 was telling the story of this song, he felt sorry for the two boys because they were too poor to have their own room. S4 corrected him immediately. Through discussion, S3 realized that he misunderstood the scenario (Class Observation: Brother Who Sleeps in My Top Bunk, Unit Two)

S3 was born and raised in Australia, and in his world schemata, two boys' sharing one room meant they were very poor thus he constructed his meaning of the text. S4, who had dormitory experience in a Chinese university, constructed the context of the song in a university dormitory. The discussion reminded S3 of the novel excerpt 'To Our Youth that is Fading Away' and corrected his misunderstanding of the text. These kinds of class discussion or group discussion happened in the comprehension of certain words, sentences and texts nearly every class, demonstrating that class discussion is an effective way to help students comprehend the text. However, not everyone in this class joined the discussion voluntarily and enthusiastically. Some students did not involve themselves in classroom discussion until I prompted them to answer. Sometimes, some students claimed that they did not know how to answer the question, which could be attributed to their limited language proficiency and personalities. For these students, class discussion seemed not to be very useful for their text comprehension but the assignment tasks appeared to be helpful for students of all language proficiency levels.

Assignment tasks

Based on the instructional model presented in chapter 5, linguistic tasks such as semantic field training, word prediction, story grammar, creative writing were integrated in students' assignments to encourage them to explore certain words, sentence structures, certain paragraphs and texts. Students' responses in assignments demonstrate that the tasks designed according to schemata theory were able to facilitate students' learning and understanding of new words, grammatical points and text structures, etc. For instance, S4, an intermediate language proficiency student, sometimes showed her confusion in class but performed quite well in her assignment. As she commented, the assignments forced her to "try and understand things that are difficult" (S4, Question 8, Post-questionnaire). S15, a low language proficiency student, also stated that it was the assignment tasks helped her review what she had learnt (S15, Question 5, Post-

questionnaire). Similar statements can be found in other students' answers to the same question (e.g.S5, S10, S11, S12).

Compared with students' class performance, students' performance in assignment appeared to be much better. Nearly all of the students, including all low language proficiency students, performed very well in their assignments. Although some students complained of the large vocabulary in some long texts, their answers to the assignment tasks based on schemata theory show that nearly all of them acquired the new words, grammatical knowledge, and sentence structures and comprehend the texts²². Students' comprehension of texts is also reflected in many tasks such story grammar, story map or summary in weekly assignments. No matter what students' language proficiency were, nearly all of the students showed much understanding of the texts despite the linguistic errors made here and there. The students with lower language proficiency also understood the text very well although their writings were not as coherent as those in the higher language proficiency group. According to students' responses to the design of assignment and their assignment performance, it seemed that the linguistic tasks designed based on schemata theory were able to facilitate students' learning of language components (i.e. word, grammar, sentence, text structure) in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*. The examination of low language proficiency students' assignment performance shows schemata theory is an appropriate teaching pedagogy for their language learning. However, in this experimental course, this approach was used more often in students' assignment than classroom activities due to the time limitation. The finding in this section indicates that more linguistic tasks based on schemata theory should be designed for lower language proficiency students. It is likely to provide more scaffolds for these students to address linguistic challenges and enhance their perception of the

²² For example, in the text 'So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University', students successfully found the key sentences to answer the questions (Page 5,6, Week 1 assignment, Unit One); in the text 'To Our Youth that is Fading Away', students were able to find the keywords that described a person's major, appearance, characters, hobbies (page 4-5, Week 3 assignment, Unit Two); in the text 'Lala's Promotion', students finished a CV and recruitment advertisement correctly according to the literary text (page 3-4, Week 5 assignment, Unit Three), etc.

linguistic appropriateness of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*.

6.3.3 Improvement of language skills

As described in section 6.2, the quantitative analysis on students' test results and self-evaluation results indicate the positive linguistic effects of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* with foreign language learners. The analysis shows that students' improvement in reading and writing is much more significant than that in listening and speaking. However, some low language proficiency students claimed that they had no or little improvement in their language learning or certain language skills. To supplement the results presented in section 6.2, the reasons for the improvement or lack of improvement in language learning with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are explored from students' post-questionnaires and interviews in this section. Whether and how the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is helpful to students' skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking is examined.

Listening skill

In the textbooks students used previously in their education, the exercises in listening part were usually created and made-up specifically for foreign language learners. The listening texts (e.g. HSK listening test) always had slow speeds, very clear pronunciation and used students' acquired vocabulary. Although the listening test in HSK exam was used in pre-test and post-test to test students' growth in listening skills, these kinds of specialised listening materials were avoided in this empirical study. Rather than separating the training of listening skill from other skills, it was involved directly in the learning of the texts with audio-visual materials. As mentioned in previous chapters, many reading passages (e.g. 'Du Lala's Promotion' and 'To the Youth that is Fading Away') were included in online audio books. Students were required to listen to the audio book as an assistant in reading a novel excerpt. Many other texts already integrated visual-audio forms,

e.g. pop songs, micro-films and feature films. In class, some tasks such as dictation, answering questions and filling in a story grammar were designed to train students' listening skills by the use of these visual-audio materials. The most significant difference between them and those used in traditional language textbooks is the 'authenticity' because all of these literary works are created for Chinese native speakers. As discussed in the section of 'authenticity', some of these songs and movies involve dialects, accents and slang instead of using standard mandarin, which provides students with a real Chinese context. As presented in section 6.2, 11 students (61.11%) strongly agreed or agreed that their listening skills had been improved, as S8, a low language proficiency student, described,

In the beginning, it was relatively difficult. I felt they spoke too fast but I felt it quite good. I should listen to fast speaking speed. Now I felt my Chinese is better and better (Interview with S8).

Students' further interpretation in post-questionnaires and interviews indicate that several reasons can be attributed to students' development in listening skills, the most significant of which is the use of a variety of listening materials, including audio book, movies, and pop songs. As S6 and S11 appreciated, these listening materials were authentic. Despite the fast speech speed, these materials provided a real Chinese context for them rather than a context created for foreign language learners (S6, S11, Question 9d, Post-questionnaire). S3 and S8 specifically indicated the importance of subtitles to help his listening (Interview with S3 and S8). S8 described her learning process through watching movies:

The most difficult part is they speak very fast so I could not understand. But if I watch the movie, I read the English...when I watched at first time. English subtitle, then the second time, I watched again without subtitles since I knew the story and the characteristics. In the second time, I can listen to Chinese (Interview with S8) .

In addition, as S12 stated, Chinese as communicative language in class is also an important factor that promotes students' listening skills. In this course, Chinese (Mandarin) was used throughout in whole teaching process. Although sometimes students could not help using their first language to involve in discussion, I tried

to encourage them to transfer into Chinese in expressing the same meaning. In recent decades, the use of target language is strongly recommended in FLT, even at lower language levels (Cohen, 1999; Dickson, 1996; Krashen & T. D. Terrell, 1983; C. Macdonald, 1993). To accompany the authenticity of teaching materials, using target language provides an authentic class for foreign language learners.

However, some students (38.89%) provided negative comments or suggestions in response to the post-questionnaire (Question 9d):

I think we need to incorporate more HSK *tingli* (listening), I found this very useful in China. (S15)

I like doing listening. I think we should practice more in class. (S14)

It would be better to have more opportunity to have conversations. (S2)

I would have liked more HSK practice. (S7)

Subtitles made it so I didn't listen ever. (S17)

Many times I just read English subtitles. (S18)

Listening tasks are not as many as writing. We need more listening practice. (S9)

Except for S8, all other students (S15, S17, S18, S7) in the low language proficiency group were neutral or disagreed with the statement in questionnaire. S15 and S17 preferred HSK listening to the authentic listening materials, and believed it was useful in China. Compared with other students in the class, they were used to and relied on the structures of traditional language textbooks. The second reason attributed to the lack of growth in listening skills is over-reliance on subtitles. Different from the positive comments presented above (S3 and S8 made use of subtitles to improve their listening skills), S18 and S17 claimed that they comprehended the listening materials through English subtitles so they did not feel their listening skills improved. This problem does not bother me because most films (mainly feature films) with English subtitles selected for this experimental course were extensive reading materials, with the purpose to provide students with the social and cultural context of the certain text or topic and encourage them to involve in deep thinking of certain cultural issue. Thus the training of listening skills was not the main purpose in using subtitle-based movies. However, students' complaint reflects the lack of listening practice in this experimental

course, which was suggested by three intermediate language group students (S2, S9 and S14). They suggested integrating more listening tasks such as conversation in class teaching.

Students' responses to the improvement of listening skills show that most students found the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* (audio and visual ones), together with some tasks, were beneficial to the growth of their listening skills. The variety of authentic language input provided a real Chinese context for students which they could not experience in the listening materials provided by traditional language textbooks. However, the lack of listening materials or tasks was complained by some students, especially low language proficiency students. The finding shows again that there was a wide gap between traditional language textbooks they previously used and the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this course for most low language proficiency students. To fill in this gap for these students, some textbook listening tasks should be incorporated into several beginning lessons of advanced level course. With an increasing authentic popular literary texts (audio-visuals) being incorporated into the class, textbook listening tasks can be gradually got away. If all language proficiency students are arranged in the same class, as it happened to this experimental course, these textbook listening tasks can be assigned as after-class tasks for lower language proficiency students. As a response to other students' suggestions, more listening practices based on the selected texts should be incorporated into teaching syllabus. As S9 complains, the listening tasks were fewer than the writing tasks in this course, thus a better balance should be maintained in the future teaching.

Oral skill

The development of oral skills is always connected directly to listening skills. As discussed in previous chapters, the audio and visual materials accompanying the literary texts provide an authentic context of target language for students'

listening training, and make it possible for students to improve their speaking abilities. In this course, within the authentic language context, students were expected to learn some communicative language expressions. Also, students had opportunities to listen to the audio and watch the visual materials (e.g. audio book, movie) and try to imitate the pronunciation, tones and speech patterns, thus improving their spoken language. However, due to the time limitations, these oral tasks were only recommended as homework, which was hard to guarantee the listening hours.

As discussed in chapter 5, based on the selected popular literary texts, some oral tasks according to reader-response theory and schemata theory were designed and assigned in class teaching, including raising questions, group & class discussion, role play, etc. Raising questions and discussion surrounding certain words, sentences, texts or topics, was carried out in almost every lesson. Especially with the use of reader response theory, students were encouraged to express orally their own opinions, feelings, emotions, personal experiences and cultural backgrounds according to affective responses questions. As another reader response strategy, role play was also often used as oral task in classroom. For long passages (e.g. short fiction, novel excerpt, movie), students were required to develop a role play based on their creative writing of the story, to provide them with speaking opportunities and encourage their oral language output.

Different from my expectation, the results of students' oral skills were far from satisfactory. Although a lot of students showed some improvement in their speaking, the growth was not as obvious as students' reading and writing skills. As presented in section 6.3, only around half of the students (10 out of 18, 55.55%) identified their progress in their oral skills in self-evaluated. Among these students, only four strongly agreed they had improved. Examination of their reflections shows that the students who presented positive comments were the most active ones in class discussion (except for S16) and most of them were high language

proficiency students. They felt the discussion in class helped improving their oral skills. In class, they often joined class discussion voluntarily, especially S6 and S5. And I found these students tried to use words and expressions they had just learnt, although occasionally using improperly. S16 and S12 indicated their favours in other class activities, i.e. singing and role play. They believed these activities “encouraged interaction” (S12) and added fun (S16).

However, many of the students claimed no or little improvement in their oral skills. They were neutral or disagreed with the statement in this self-evaluation question (Question 9e) of the post-questionnaire. Moreover, although many students ticked the option ‘agree’ in the questionnaire, they were not very satisfied with the oral practice as reflected in their own opinions and suggestions. These kinds of comments were also found in students’ answers to the discussion of class activities (Question 7, Post-questionnaire). Like the situation in the improvement of listening skills, all of the low language proficiency students were far from satisfied about their learning of oral skills. They complained that they had little chance to practice speaking skills in class. S7 even stated that he “never really spoke”. S18, S17 and S8 only regarded oral presentation (pre-test and post-test) and role play as opportunities to practice. These responses conformed to their performance in class. In class activities such as discussion and singing, they seemed reluctant to take part, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 8. As their personal preferences, S11 and S15 did not like role play. S15 felt it was not natural conversation and S11 did not think it necessary at advanced language levels, both feeling role play did not improve their oral skills. In addition, S14 and S2, both intermediate language proficiency group students, also commented on the participation in class activities. S2 said he liked the oral activities but he did not speak a lot, while S14 preferred independent oral practice, expressing nervousness when doing oral tasks in public. In my observation, they rarely joined the class activities voluntarily but when I asked them to answer questions they usually did a good job. Thus I think it was their introverted personality rather than

oral skills leading to their limited participation in oral tasks. Another intermediate language proficiency student S4 also expressed the same feelings in the interview although she felt her oral skill had been improved during the course:

.....I don't like speak in class as there are others. They may say, S4's Chinese spoke very poor. (Interview with S4)

Different from S2 and S14, S4 was an extrovert, who often joined discussion voluntarily and spoke very fluently in the beginning, but always transferred to English after three or four sentences. Caring about the judgments of her peers hindered S4's oral language output. Therefore, in addition to language proficiency levels, students' personality was also a factor affecting their development of oral skills.

Students' responses to their growth of oral skills indicate that more than half of the students recognized improvement in their oral skills. Nearly all of the high language proficiency group students stated class discussion helped their oral improvement, however, nearly all of the low language proficiency group students claimed that they did not have enough opportunities to speak in class. Excluding some personal factors (e.g. personal preference, personality) affecting students' oral development, which is difficult to alter, there are some pedagogical suggestions can be made from the above findings. According the disparity of the perceptions held by students within different language proficiency students groups, it seems that oral tasks designed based on reader response theory are more inclined to arouse the interests and engagements of higher language proficiency students. This finding also reveals the procedure of the three-stage instructional model suggested in chapter 5: students' learning of cognitive skills is the foundation of their affective development. Therefore, it can be concluded that the oral tasks based on reader response theory are more suitable for higher language proficiency. For students with lower language proficiency students, as some students suggested, more oral tasks such as face-to-face conversation and small group discussion should be incorporated in teaching syllabus. Instead of raising questions, which always arouse the responses of higher language proficiency

students and discourage lower language proficiency students' participation, these oral tasks are likely to encourage lower language proficiency students' engagement in language output. According to the above findings, a well balance of the two types of oral tasks is recommended in the instruction in a multiple language level class.

Reading skill

Compared with students' responses to listening and oral skills, the improvement of reading and writing skills is acknowledged by much more students. In the comparison with the use of canonical literature, as discussed in chapter 2, the language components used in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are more direct, understandable and relaxed and the sentence structure, which usually consists of short sentences, is much easier to access and comprehend. As discussed in section 6.3.2, in this course, with the assistance of written tasks based on schemata theory, students were expected to address linguistic difficulties and learn the linguistic components of the selected texts on their own, which is the purpose of advanced language courses.

As described in 6.2, in students' reading & writing test, nearly the entire class appeared to comprehend texts much better in post-test than pre-test. 13 students (72.22%) found their improvement in reading skills by self-evaluation. According to students' answers to post-questionnaires (Question 9b), some of the students illustrated their growth in reading skills:

I feel I am less relying on dictionary now when I read Chinese newspaper. (S5)

I read much faster than before. (S13)

Before this semester, I never read long passages. In the beginning, I found very hard but now I love reading novels. I feel more confident in reading Chinese. (S11)

I'm able to surf the Chinese internet without dictionary now. (S3)

I learnt how to read long text relatively quickly now. (S4)

Four of the above were high language proficiency students and one

intermediate language proficiency student; all stated that they are able to read long and authentic materials much faster and more independently than before.

In terms of specific improvement in reading skills, a lot of students mentioned the acquisition of new vocabulary. As illustrated in above sections, many students claimed that they have learnt many useful, practical and relevant words through reading texts. Although for many students, looking up new words in dictionary is unavoidable, the expansion of new vocabulary is very beneficial for future reading. Certain examples presented in section 6.3.2 show that some high language proficiency students (e.g. S5, S6, and S3) were able to acquire new words according to the context, instead of looking up every word in dictionary. In addition to vocabulary acquisition, some students also briefly presented other patterns of how the use of *contemporary popular literary texts* helped them improve reading skills, for example, S6, S10, S9 and S12 claimed that the access to a variety of authentic texts promoted the growth of their reading skills. S8 and S1 emphasized the significance of some assignment tasks in the training of their reading skills since these tasks assisted them to comprehend the text. All these facilitators for students' improvement of reading skill have been discussed in section 6.3.2.

However, there were five students (33.33%) who did not feel any improvement in their reading skills and provided reasons. Similar to students' responses to the linguistic challenges of the selected texts (see section 6.3.2), four low language proficiency students claimed their struggles with checking the meanings of new vocabulary (S18, S17) and the learning of some grammatical points (S15) in the explanation of their lack of improvement in reading skills. S7 attributed the lack of improvement in reading skills to his own fault; it is obvious that he was also stuck with the character reading (it is hard for him to identify a word's beginning and end). Some possible solutions to solve the problems low language proficiency students faced have also been outlined in section 6.3.2. Except for the four students, S14, who was an intermediate group student,

suggested she did not have any preferences of text types, and that she did not find any difference between the use of *contemporary popular literary texts* and traditional language textbooks as reading materials.

As discussed in this section, there were more students claiming improvement in reading skills than those in listening and oral skills. The access to relevant vocabulary, a variety of authentic texts and tasks based on schemata theory in assignment appeared to be the primary facilitator for students' progress. Since the improvement of reading skills involved the efforts in addressing linguistic challenges of the selected texts, students' responses in this section seems to validate some findings in section 6.3.2, e.g. significant linguistic improvement of high language proficiency group students, some of who have developed a context-dependent learning technique; the struggles with linguistic difficulties with a dictionary-dependent learning method. Therefore, the solutions to these problems can also be found in the discussion of facilitators to address linguistic challenges in section 6.3.2.

Writing skill

As elaborated in chapter 5, in order to help students better understand the selected literary texts and deepen their thinking on related topics, a variety of writing tasks based on reader response theory and schemata theory were assigned as homework to students in this experimental course,, e.g. creative wiring according to the give sentence structure, make a summary according to story grammar, authentic writings, intercultural comparison, affective response questions, etc. Among these tasks, creative writing was most unfamiliar to most of the students. Before this course, the texts students usually experienced were informative texts, from which it was hard to develop creative writing tasks. However, literary texts have an advantage since they are creative writing per se. Also, as reviewed in chapter 2, the writing of most *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* tended to be simple, direct and understandable -- most of the writers

are ordinary people. Compared with most canonical literature, these writings were more accessible to foreign language learners and much easier for them to imitate. With regard to some short passages (e.g. SMS, lyrics, micro-fiction), students were required to create their own literary works according to the sentence schemata and their imagination. In the learning of some long passages, students were encouraged to be ‘writers’, predicting the story plot, continue the story or re-write the end of the story. Also, through the reading of contemporary popular literary works, students had a chance to access a variety of authentic literary forms. As described in chapter 3 and chapter 4, the mix of different literary forms is a popular writing technique in much *contemporary popular literary texts*. Thus many authentic writing tasks based on text schemata were assigned to students. In addition, there were many reflective writing tasks given a set of reader response questions in students’ assignments. Students were encouraged to involve their personal experiences and cultural backgrounds in the transaction with author, text, and implied reader.

As expected, students’ writing skills improved through the variety of writing tasks designed based on the selected literary texts and the instructional model. This was demonstrated by students’ test results and self-evaluation, which were described in section 6.2. In students’ post-questionnaires, nearly all students (94.44%) (except for S7) identified growth in their writing skills. Compared with their growth in listening skill and reading skill, there were many more students who ‘strongly agree’ with their improvement than ‘agree’. Many students found that they were more free and confident to write down their opinions and feelings (e.g. S16, S12, S1, Question 9c, Post-questionnaire). S4 realized that she “did not rely on dictionary to write things anymore” (S4, Question 9c, Post-questionnaire)

The major reasons for students’ positive responses to the helpfulness of the use of *contemporary popular literary texts* for their writing improvement can be found in students’ questionnaire answers (e.g. S6, S8, S9, S10, S15, S17, Question 9c, Post-questionnaire). These responses indicate the significant role of writing

tasks in assignments. Most of the students presented a favorable view on the design of assignment generally. Only three students specifically outlined their favorite writings tasks, including story writing (plot prediction or story continuation) (S2), intercultural comparison (S5) and lyrics/SMS writing (S3).

As presented above, nearly all of the students, including most low language proficiency group students (except for S7), identified their progress in the development of writing skills. Rather than providing negative comments, S7 presented his struggle in memorizing vocabulary, “I tired trying to memorize in all words”. Despite his complaint, I found he had put effort into the assignments since most of his writing was understandable and reflected his deep and creative thought. It is obvious that he spent a lot of time in looking up the new words to express his ideas. However, the over-loaded language input decreased his learning motivation. Through the communication with S7 after class, I found he tended to be pessimistic and nervous about everything. As he stated in the interview, he felt very sad that he still needed to look up dictionary after 4-5 years’ Chinese language learning, which is normal for learners of all language levels. S7’s personality is partly responsible for his negative attitude to advanced Chinese language learning.

Examination of all students’ assignments shows how earnestly students applied themselves to writing tasks as there was an obvious improvement in their writing. At the beginning of this course, I did a lot of work correcting students’ grammar and vocabulary choice but I felt more relaxed later. Students recognized their growth through assignments, as S15, a low language proficiency student, indicated in the interview:

I felt this semester I learnt better and better, because the first assignment I only got 58%, but now I got higher and higher (score) (Interview with S15)

However, S3, a high language proficiency student, did the assignments halfheartedly, usually providing simple answers, and occasionally did not finish all the work. This can be attributed to his attitude rather than his language proficiency because he got high scores in tests. I talked with him about his

homework once and found he had a part-time job in parliament house so he was too busy to finish the assignments.

As discussed above, except for one low language proficiency student, all of the students claimed that their writing skills have improved; many of them felt that they were able to express themselves more freely than before. All of the students found it beneficial and enjoyable doing assignments with a variety of writing tasks. It seems that the written tasks designed according to the instructional model are appropriate in helping students better understand the texts and topics as well as promoting their development of writing skills.

6.4 Summary

This chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results of students' responses in terms of the linguistic factor of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*. In quantitative analysis, both test results and students' self-evaluation in post-questionnaires illustrate the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. The majority of the students (88.89%) showed their improvement in overall language skills. The results reflected in pre-test and post-test have been confirmed by students' self-evaluation. From students' perception, nearly all of them believed that their overall language skills had been improved (except one who remained neutral). Among the four individual language skills, no one disagreed with the statement that their reading and writing skills had been improved; however, some students did not hold the same perception in listening and speaking skills.

To supplement the quantitative results and explore pedagogical details, three main issues were discussed in the qualitative analysis of this chapter: authenticity and relevancy, linguistic challenge and improvement of language skills, answering the research questions highlighted in the introduction of this chapter. Instead of the artificial language in most traditional language textbooks and the delicate

expressions in most canonical literature, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* reflects more modern, popular and daily life language used by current Chinese society. In addition, the audio-visual techniques to present and supplement the print texts provide an authentic context for the readers. In this experiment, students found the linguistic factors (e.g. words, phrases and expressions) in the selected texts up-to-date, colloquial, genuine, and useful. Many examples provided by students showed how relevant and practical the linguistic factors of the selected texts matter to them, bringing them into a real context of communication.

In post-questionnaires and interviews, apart from the limited negative responses held by some low language proficiency students, most students reported the appropriate linguistic challenges of the selected literary texts. They found some or little difficulty in the selected literary texts but they claimed that the challenge was acceptable and reasonable. These comments show that the difficulty levels of the selected texts are accordance with Krashen's (1987) theory of 'comprehensible input' (i+1) and Vygotsky's (1978) 'ZPD'. Several facilitators for students to address linguistic challenges were also reflected in students' responses, including context-dependent learning technique, audio-visual input and tasks and activities based on reader response theory and schemata theory.

The above findings show that in general, the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, with its authentic, relevant and comprehensible input, is linguistically appropriate for TCFL. At the same time, according to students' some negative responses, several problems are outlined and possible solutions are proposed as follows.

Imbalanced improvement in specific language skills

Despite the improvement of overall language skills shown in their tests and self-evaluation, the growth in specific language skills appeared to be imbalanced. The quantitative results indicate that more students made improvement in reading and writing skills (83.33%) than those in listening (66.67%) and speaking skills

(50%). The comparison of pre-test and post-test results also shows that students' growth in reading and writing tests was more significant than that in listening and oral tests. In qualitative data, some students complained lacking enough listening practices and opportunities to speak out in class. According to students' suggestions, more oral and listening tasks and activities should be designed and involved in class teaching, especially providing more chances for lower language proficiency students.

Problems with low language proficiency students

In this experimental course, low language proficiency students (as defined in this thesis) tended to have negative responses (linguistic challenge, listening, oral and reading skills). They found it very difficult to understand the selected literary texts because of the overwhelming new vocabulary and complicated grammar and sentence structure. For these students, there was a big transfer from the texts artificially structured to texts that used a variety of authentic and updated vocabulary. Limited language proficiency and inappropriate learning technique/habit set obstacles for students' language learning. To deal with this problem, some suggestions emerged from the discussion for students to address linguistic challenges are presented, including the development of an authentic context-based learning technique, the integration of audio-visual popular literary texts (e.g. MTV of song, micro-film) and the increase of linguistic tasks based on schemata theory, etc. In terms of the learning of specific language skills, some textbook listening tasks are suggested to be integrated into the beginning lessons of the advanced language course, helping students smoothly narrow the disparity between lower language level courses and advanced language level courses. With regard to the development of oral skills, instead of class discussion based on reader response questions, more oral tasks such as small group discussion and face-to-face conversations are suggested to encourage students' language output.

To sum up, the analysis of students' quantitative and qualitative results reflects the linguistic effectiveness and appropriateness of the use of

contemporary Chinese popular literature. In the next two chapters (chapter 7 and chapter 8), students' responses to the cultural and affective factors are discussed respectively.

Chapter 7 Analysis of Results (2): Cultural Effectiveness and Appropriateness

7.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter aims to answer the research questions about students' cultural learning in this experimental course, i.e. Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promote students' cultural learning (e.g. enhance cultural understanding and intercultural awareness); how do students respond to the cultural characteristics of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*; why the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* results in the improvement or lack of improvement of cultural learning?. The first question explores the effectiveness of the use of contemporary Chinese popular literature in cultural learning, which is tested through a comparison of students' pre-test and post-test results and their self-evaluation in post-questionnaires. As a response to the second and third research questions, three main themes formulated from the collected data are discussed in qualitative analysis, including 'cultural authenticity and relevancy', 'learning of cultural facts' and 'intercultural connection and comparison'.

7.2 Quantitative results of cultural responses

7.2.1 Analysis of cultural test results

Test results

Just as the assessment of linguistic tests, students' answers to cultural questions in pre-test and post-test are also marked by two independent graders and the mean scores are calculated as students' final scores. The scores of the cultural test, including two values marked by different graders and the mean score are presented in the following table.

Cultural Test							
Pre-test				Post-test			
Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score	Participant	Grader A	Grader B	Mean Score
S1	3	3	3	S1	3	3	3
S2	2	2	2	S2	3	3	3
S3	2	3	2.5	S3	4	4	4
S4	3	3	3	S4	4	4	4
S5	4	4	4	S5	5	5	5
S6	3	3	3	S6	4	5	4.5
S7	1	1	1	S7	2	2	2
S8	2	3	2.5	S8	3	3	3
S9	2	2	2	S9	3	3	3
S10	2	2	2	S10	3	4	3.5
S11	3	3	3	S11	4	4	4
S12	5	5	5	S12	5	5	5
S13	4	4	4	S13	5	5	5
S14	2	2	2	S14	3	4	3.5
S15	2	2	2	S15	3	3	3
S16	3	4	3.5	S16	4	4	4
S17	1	2	1.5	S17	2	2	2
S18	1	1	1	S18	1	1	1

Table 13: Scores of cultural test

Inter-rater reliability

As same as the quantitative analysis on students' linguistic tests in chapter 6, Cohen's Kappa coefficient is adopted to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the grading of cultural tests. Accordingly, the scores of cultural tests are organized into the following 5 x 5 grid table.

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	3	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	7	0	0	0
	"3"	0	2	9	0	0
	"4"	0	0	3	6	0
	"5"	0	0	0	1	4

Table 14: Contingency in cultural test

As presented in chapter 6, the formula of resulting percentage agreement is $\frac{\sum a}{N}$ ($\sum a$ is the total values in the diagonal cells and N is the total values in all cells). According to the formula, the resulting percentage agreement in cultural test is calculated to be 80.56%, which appeared to be very high. The next step is

the calculation of the expected frequency (ef) (ef=) in each of the diagonal cells, which is presented in the following table:

		Rater A				
		"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Rater B	"1"	3(0.33)	0	0	0	0
	"2"	1	7(2)	0	0	0
	"3"	0	2	9(3.67)	0	0
	"4"	0	0	3	6(1.75)	0
	"5"	0	0	0	1	4(0.56)

Table 15: Inter-rater reliability in cultural test

By adding five expected frequency values, the $\sum ef$ in cultural test is calculated to be 8.31. Finally, according to the formula of Kappa-coefficient (K) ($K=$), which determines the inter-rater reliability, the Kappa-coefficient for cultural test in this study is calculated as follows: $K= 0.75$. According to Landis and Koch (1977), this result is in the region of substantial reliability ($K=0.60$ to 0.79), which determines the inter-rater reliability of the grading.

Analysis of pre-test and post-test results

Based on the data above, a quantitative analysis is conducted to compare students' results in pre-test and post-test. The following table shows the difference between pre-test and post-test ("I" represents "Improved", "S" "Stagnated" and "D" "Decreased").

Cultural learning			
Test	Pre	Post	Difference
S1	3	3	S
S2	2	3	I
S3	2.5	4	I
S4	3	4	I
S5	4	5	I
S6	3	4.5	I
S7	1	2	I
S8	2.5	3	I
S9	2	3	I
S10	2	3.5	I
S11	3	4	I
S12	5	5	S
S13	4	5	I
S14	2	3.5	I
S15	2	3	I
S16	3.5	4	I
S17	1.5	2	I
S18	1	1	S

Table 16: Overview of the cultural test results

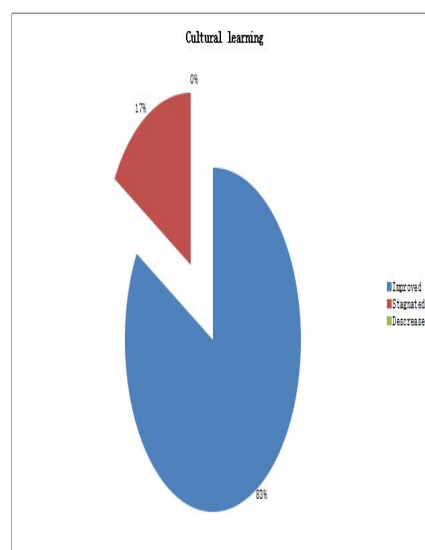


Figure 9: Distribution of students' cultural improvement

According to Table 16, 15 students (83.33%) improved, 3 students (16.67%) stagnated and no student decreased. The above figure (Figure 9) illustrates visually the distribution: the majority of participants have enhanced their cultural learning. Similar to their improvement in reading and writing skills (see chapter 6), students' growth in cultural learning was very significant, which can be reinforced in the comparison of the mean scores of the entire group in pre-test and post-test (see the following table).

Items	Mean scores of the whole class		Improve by
	Pre-test	Post-test	
Cultural learning	2.61	3.47	32.95%

Table 17: Improvement of students' mean scores in cultural test

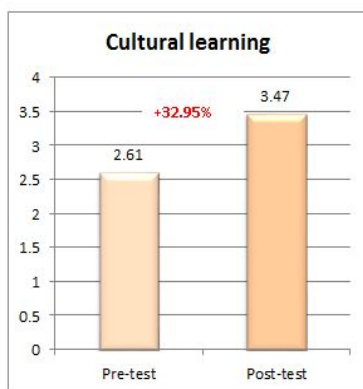


Figure 10: Students' cultural growth in tests

According to the table above, the mean score of the whole class in the cultural pre-test is 2.61 as compared to 3.47 in the post-test, improving by 32.95%, revealing a remarkable progress, which can be perceived visually in Figure 10.

From the statistics and figures presented above, it is possible to conclude that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced language course resulted in students' significant improvement in cultural learning. This finding is likely to demonstrate the effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in cultural learning, providing an answer to the first research question outlined in the introduction of this chapter, that is the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* can and will promote student's cultural learning. Similar to the quantitative study in linguistic responses (see chapter 6), the statistic about students' self-evaluation of cultural growth in post-questionnaires is examined to confirm the conclusion raised from the text results.

7.2.2 Students' self-evaluation results

In post-questionnaires, students were asked to answer the question "do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* has enhanced your cultural learning" (Question 10, Post-questionnaire). Just as students' linguistic responses, students' cultural perceptions are also measured through a 5-point

rater-scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). Students' collective attitudes toward this question are presented in Table 18 and Figure 11.

Improved	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Cultural understanding	13 (72.22%)	2 (11.11%)	3(16.67%)		

Table 18: Students' cultural growth in self-evaluation

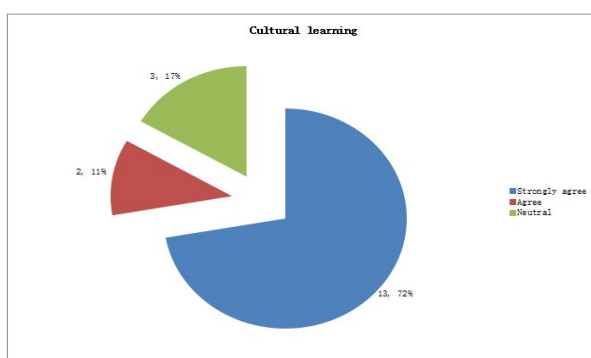


Figure 11: Distribution of students' cultural growth in self-evaluation

The statistic shown in the above figures indicates that the majority (15/18) of the students (83.33%) believed that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promoted their cultural learning (72.22% of students strongly agreed, 11.11% agreed). The three students who kept neutral were intermediate language proficiency students. It seems that the number gap between the options of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' was huge, which clearly reflects students' positive attitudes. The findings validated the result in the quantitative analysis of students' scores in cultural tests (pre-test and post-test). Thus the two part quantitative analysis provides a creditable answer to the first research question of the chapter: the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to promote students' cultural learning.

Following the findings, some questions are raised: what have these students achieved in cultural learning by the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*? In which way the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* help

students promote their cultural learning? Why there were still a small number of students holding neutral attitudes?In order to find the answers to these questions, the qualitative analysis of the data (e.g. post-questionnaires, interviews, class scripts, assignments) is conducted in the next section.

7.3 Qualitative analysis of cultural responses

As a response to the qualitative research questions, two themes formulated from the content analysis of the collected data: cultural relevancy and authenticity, improvement of cultural skills (including learning of cultural fact and intercultural connection and comparison and the facilitators for cultural learning.)

7.3.1 Cultural relevancy and authenticity

From the perspective of constructivism, providing an applied setting that similar to the target culture is suggested in FLT (J. S. Brown et al., 1989). As reviewed in chapter 2, *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* reflect the real life of ordinary Chinese people in contemporary China. Especially, the values, lifestyles, life experience of current young people and some grassroots classes have been displayed in these literary texts. Some of the social and cultural facts in these texts were not accessible in Chinese mainstream media, nor in traditional language textbooks for foreign language learners. Students were expected to experience authentic and relevant contemporary Chinese culture with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary text*. Furthermore, abundant audio-visual materials and some classroom activities strengthened the authenticity of the context within *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, making students feel actually encounter a real Chinese setting. Similar to the linguistic features, the cultural authenticity and relevancy of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are likely to arouse students' learning interests and develop their intercultural communicative skills. From students' responses to the post-questionnaires and interviews, the two features of the culture displayed in the selected popular

literary texts are outlined.

Cultural relevancy

In post-questionnaires and interview, S12 claimed that he enjoyed cultural learning with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary text* because the cultural issues he learnt were relevant to life and society. In his response to the post-questionnaire question “how do you feel about the experience with the use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this class” (Question 1), S12 answered, “such texts encourage me to read on and I feel more leisure reading such text instead of previous readings like China’s geography and different ethnic groups”. S12 expressed the same statement in the interview:

What I learnt in this year was very meaningful, different from previous years. Before, we always learnt about festival, ethnic groups, music, etc. The things I learnt this year is more life and social oriented and focus on people’ ideas (Interview with S12).

In both comments, S12 compared what he learnt in this course with his previous learning experience with traditional language textbooks. He emphasized that he did not like the learning of topics such as festivals, geography, ethics groups, and music, etc. Obviously, the reason for his preference can be attributed to the cultural relevancy. Except for S12, some other students also reflected the similar opinions, e.g. “I learnt about the culture of young people, which is very useful” (S1, Question 10, Post-questionnaire); “I learnt the culture about careers, which is relevant to my current life” (S2, Question 10, Post-questionnaire); “Yong people and their lifestyle is very interesting” (S7, Question 10, Post-questionnaire).

The topics S12 disliked all belong to the ‘high culture’ or ‘Big C culture’, which includes history, art, architecture, music and literature, etc. (Moran, 2001). As reviewed in chapter 2, canonical literature which plagued with ‘high culture’ is quite difficult for foreign language learners to handle since the unfamiliar cultural background and elite perspective that creating inappropriate cultural challenges, which may impede their understanding of the text and discourage the reader. On the contrary, *contemporary Chinese popular literature* pays more attention to the

current status of ordinary people in contemporary China and reflects their behaviors and values. According to Robinson (1985), culture is divided into three categories: “products, ideas, and behaviors” (p.18). As Narančić-Kovać and Kaltenbacher (2006) point out, ‘Big C Culture’ is often compared to an iceberg with the cultural products and artifacts above the surface and the ‘small c culture’ is the vast amount of culturally determined behavior, ideas and beliefs below the surface. S12’s comments and other students’ preferences reveal this significant feature of the culture portrayed in *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, which is the ‘lowercase culture’ or ‘small c culture’, the “culturally influenced beliefs and perceptions, expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviors that affect acceptability in the host community” (Stempleski & Tomalin, 1993).

Cultural authenticity

In addition to the cultural relevancy, students’ responses also reveal the cultural authenticity of the selected literary texts. Most of them claimed that they have learnt different social and cultural issues happened in contemporary China, as S11 stated that he “knew a real China” (S11, Question 10, Post-questionnaire). The cultural authenticity of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* was reinforced in some responses to the question about comparisons with traditional language textbooks in post-questionnaires (Question 12). S5, S6, S10 and S16 stated that *contemporary Chinese popular literature* display contemporary Chinese society and culture, which were rarely covered in traditional language textbooks. Among them, S6 highlighted that *contemporary Chinese popular literature* were the texts written for Chinese native speakers, thus, reflecting the real culture. Similarly, S10 stated that “they are texts that Chinese people also know.” These responses show that students believed *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* display authentic cultural aspects of contemporary China, which is hardly accessible in traditional language textbooks.

As presented above, both S6 and S10 mentioned ‘native speakers’, which is one feature of authentic text (Vigil, 1987). Since *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are written for Chinese native speakers and portray their life, they are likely to offer students more topics to communicate with Chinese native speakers; and the communication, in return, helps students better understand what is happening in China. In the interview, S12 claimed that after learning the song lyrics ‘The Hardest Job Hunting Season’ (*Zui nan jiuye ji/最难就业季*), he could not help calling his cousin who just finished his university in China, further exploring the different situation of job hunting between China and Australia. Finally, he confirmed the difficulty of young Chinese people in finding a job, as he was told by his cousin “graduating means losing job” (*biye dengyu shiye/毕业等于失业*) (Interview with S12). After learning the same topic, similar to S12, S13 also confirmed the cultural phenomenon learnt from the selected literary texts by chatting with her Chinese friends in Australia. The two examples indicate that due to its authenticity, the learning of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is likely to encourage students’ communication with Chinese native speakers.

The experience of culture

To supplement students’ direct reflections on cultural relevancy and authenticity, their experience in learning cultural facts and knowledge in this course also reflected the two cultural characteristics of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. As Kohonen, Jaatinen, Kaikkonen, and Lehtovaara (2001) state, ‘authenticity’ relates to “the direct experience of the fact”. Given the context of this experimental course, the ‘experience’ does not mean students have the cultural experience in a target culture. Instead, *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* provide a real-world context, encouraging students’ engagement in cultural learning and arousing their curiosity and openness to experience the target culture.

In this experimental course, some students claimed that they had learned culture through *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* by the way of exploring and experiencing instead of being taught the cultural facts. For example, S4 stated that “instead of saying ‘in China, it’s like this’, we got the chance to understand Chinese culture by ourselves.” (S4, Question 10, Post-questionnaire). In the interview, S5 expressed the similar feeling. She had heard of these cultural issues before but “never really experienced and understood” (Interview with S5). This way of experiencing culture through literature made S9 feels “actually encounter them in a normal Chinese setting” (S9, Question 10, Post-questionnaire). Students’ engagement in experiencing Chinese culture in this course also can be reflected in students’ class performance. Taking the instruction of the song lyrics ‘The Hardest Job Hunting Season’ as an example, there is one paragraph in this song reflecting the difficult life of university graduates who struggled in big cities:

文员工资一千一/也会吸引很多人去/剩余多半是业务/不包吃住/随便你
(wenyuan gongzi yiqianyi/ye hui xiyin henduo ren qu/shengyu duoban shi yewu/bu bao chizhu suibian ni)

[The salary of a clerk is 1000RMB/even though, it attracts so many people/most of the other jobs are salesman/food and accommodation are not covered/we do not care you come or not.]

Accompanying with the images in MTV and the sad melody, students constructed a concrete picture of what is depicted in this paragraph: a group of low income university graduates who settle for a poverty-level existence in the urban areas of China. After working through this paragraph, S5 seemed surprised and asked “really? Is the treatment that bad?” Being shocked by this description, S5 raised another question, which was what I expected my students to think over, “If so, why do they still stay in big city?” (Class observation: The Hardest Season for Job Hunting, Unit three). S5’s question was quite important because it revealed one keyword of Chinese people’s value: ‘face’ (*mianzi*/面子). The answer to S5’s question and the cultural keyword I wanted to reveal is presented in the next paragraph of the song:

你问我何不归故里/我也轻声地问自己/人活一张脸/树活一张皮(*ni wen wo hebu gui guli/wo ye qingsheng de wen ziji/ren huo yizhang lian/shu huo yizhangpi*)
[You ask me why I don't go back home/I also asked myself quietly/ Men live by honor as trees stand to live.]

The two questions raised by S5 also reflect her efforts in an intercultural experience: curious about the fact, “ready to suspend disbelief”, and explore “how social group function” in a target culture (Byram et al., 2001, p. 5). Following S5's questions, I asked students to search for the answer through further reading and conclude the cultural fact in Chinese culture: face (*mianzi*/ 面子). This example illustrates how students access cultural facts through the reading of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. Instead of being told the cultural facts (e.g. the significance of ‘face’ in Chinese culture), students are encouraged to find the fill in the cultural gaps in the selected popular literary texts.

A student's role as ‘experiencer’ rather than ‘receiver’ of culture can be attributed to the full and vivid context offered by *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, which “incorporates problems to be solved, controversial issues and paradoxical situations at various levels of interpretation, just as any intercultural or multicultural context does” (Narančić-Kovač & Kaltenbacher, 2006) . In some traditional models of cultural teaching, teachers used to pump cultural facts into students. However, in this experimental course with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, students are encouraged to explore the cultural factors reflected or hidden in popular literary texts by interacting with the literary text, forming and re-forming of hypothesis and arousing their emotional responses (Burwitz-Melzer, 2001). For instance, when being attracted by the story plot in a fiction, students are willing to search for clues to the understanding of characters' behaviors and thoughts that may be different from their initial expectation. Compared with native speakers, the cultural unfamiliarity makes it more difficult for foreign language learners to understand the characters' behavior, speech and storyline, etc. As a result, effort is required to find answers and make sense of any confusion caused by the unfamiliar culture. In this way, students are able to learn

a lot of cultural facts in literary texts while solving these problems. In this experimental course, students' efforts to construct the meaning of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* encourage them to find and fill in cultural gaps, resulting in a better understanding of contemporary Chinese cultural facts. Students' participation and engagement are encouraged, providing them with a feeling that they are "experiencing" (S5, S4) and "encountering" (S9) the culture rather than being taught or simply told the cultural facts.

7.3.2 Improvement of cultural skills

As presented above, the majority of the students (including all low language proficiency students) believed their cultural learning was promoted (72.22% of students strongly agreed, 11.11% agreed and 16.67% remained neutral). As presented in chapter 5, Byram (1995) proposes an assessment model of intercultural competence, including attitude, knowledge and skills (e.g. relating, comparison, evaluation). In this empirical study, students made efforts in developing these components through the access of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. The significant improvement of students' cultural skills is reflected in two aspects: the learning of cultural facts and the learning of intercultural connection and comparison.

Learning of cultural facts and knowledge

According to students' self-evaluation in post-questionnaires (Question 10), students were satisfied with the learning of cultural facts. They claimed that they had learnt many new cultural facts (S15, S16), up-to-date knowledge and terms (S7, S17), mannerisms (S13) and popular culture (S2) of current China. These comments presented students' learning of cultural factors and highlighted one feature of these cultural factors reflected in the selected literary texts: popular and contemporary (S2, S7, S16, S17).

To supplement the general comments of students' statements, more details and examples about the learning of cultural facts and knowledge were provided by students in the responses to questionnaires (Question 10) and the interview question "what did you achieve from this course?" Students' answers reflected their interests and enthusiasm in the learning of many social and cultural issues and phenomena in contemporary China, e.g. 'leftover woman' (*shengnü*/剩女) (S4, S5), 'snail dwelling' (*woju*/蜗居²³) (S5, S13), 'ant tribe' (*yizu*/蚁族²⁴) (S13), parent-children relationship (S1, S5, S8, S11), university life (S7, S9, S11), young people's marriage, lifestyle and values (S7, S9, S11), career (S2, S5, S9, S11). Some traditional Chinese cultural values such as 'face' (*mianzi*/面子) and relationship (*guanxi*/关系) also attracted students' interests. As S5 concluded her cultural learning in the interview,

I like this semester because I was able to learn the social situation in contemporary China and know how they think. Since I immigrated here very early, what I think is the situation of my mum and dad's situation, not realistic...So this semester is very good for me because of different social phenomenon, e.g. family love in this era, friendship, career, leftover woman and man, snail house.....I learnt a lot of background culture. I just heard before but I never really experienced and understood (Interview with S5).

More than that, some students enhanced their understanding of some Chinese phenomena, for instance, S16 claimed her better understanding of the wave of immigration in contemporary China:

I found that I had learnt a lot in this semester: many Chinese cultural aspects, Chinese social problems and traditions so I understood a lot. I did not understand why so many Chinese people wanted to work overseas before. Now I can understand (Interview with S16).

Learning of intercultural connection and comparison

According to the instructional model based on reader response theory and

²³ 'Snail dwelling' is a term used to describe the difficulties of buying an affordable home in the city.

²⁴ 'Ant tribe' is a term used to describe a group of low income university graduates who settle for a poverty-level existence in the cities of China.

schemata theory (see chapter 5), students' personal feelings, experiences and cultural backgrounds were suggested to be involved and activated in this experimental course. Accordingly, based on the rich and authentic social and cultural components reflected in the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, many class activities and assignment tasks were designed to build a connection between students' background knowledge and target cultural knowledge.

In post-questionnaires, many students stated that they had learnt a variety of cultural differences between Chinese culture and Australian culture (or other cultures) (e.g. S5, S10, S16, Question 10, Post-questionnaire). In addition to the learning of cultural differences, S6 "saw more than ever how China and Australia interacts" (S6, Question 10, Post-questionnaire). In the interview, students provided more examples to illustrate different values and behaviors connecting the interpretations of certain Chinese cultural issues raised from the selected literary texts with their own cultural backgrounds. For example, they discussed the difference of university life (S3, S10, S16), university accommodation condition (S3), relationships between university classmates (S16), promotion in career (S5), etc. Some students also expressed their feelings and emotions towards these cultural differences, e.g. S10 felt lucky to have easier university life in Australia while S16 admired the close classmate relationships in Chinese university, which shows totally different attitudes toward the same issue but both of them connected the issue presented in the selected literary text with their own opinions and thoughts. Similarly, S3 revealed his feeling of being offended when imaging himself as a Chinese groom from the perspective of an Australian, as he stated,

They have the custom to '*nao dong fang*' (闹洞房), which means teasing the bride and groom in their room on wedding night. I think it is very special. I feel if I am the groom in the movie, I will be very angry because this is my private place (Interview with S3).

In his statement, S3 used 'empathy' and 'analogy' to respond the new cultural

fact he received from the movie ‘Wedding Banquet’ (*Xiyan/喜宴*), reflecting his efforts in affective responses, the third stage of the instructional model in this experimental course. S3 firstly illustrated the cultural fact, a Chinese wedding custom, and expressed his first impression, which appeared to be special to him. Then he put himself in the target culture, supposing himself to be a Chinese groom, from an Australian perspective and concluded that the custom would offend his privacy. Although S3 has not provided his intercultural understanding from a Chinese perspective, his interpretations already reflect his efforts in intercultural connection and comparison.

In addition to the cultural differences, many students also found similarities between target culture and their own culture. For example, after learning the song lyrics ‘No House, No Car’ (*Meiyou fang, meiyou che/没有房，没有车*), S12 was surprised (and upset) that mainland China had similar social conduct to Hong Kong, where he came from. He stated that the song did not surprise him if he was in Hong Kong but he felt shocked to find mainland China also had the tendency of ‘money worship’ (*baijin/拜金*) (Interview with S12). For another instance, after learning the topic of ‘job hunting and career’ (*ren zai zhichang/人在职场*), S13, also with an Asian background (Korean), was amazed at the similar culture in careers, particularly the importance of ‘relationships’ (*guanxi/关系*). Similarly, S4 found many commonalities shared by Chinese culture and Italian culture when she was reading ‘Miss Su’s Marriage’ (*Su xiaojie de hunshi/苏小姐的婚事*). As she stated in the interview,

“I feel the thing about ‘leftover girl’..... I don’t agree, but I understood why they had such opinions, which is different from Australian culture but very similar with Italian culture. My mum is Italian and my dad is Greek, my boyfriend is Spanish. In Italy, my mum has a friend. She is 35 years old and still hasn’t married or fell in love. Others feel she is lesbian, but no one ask her ‘are you lesbian’ but everyone think so. In Italy, everyone believes in religion, so if she is lesbian, she could not tell her parents. Because as same as China, we have the concept of ‘face’ (*mianzi/面子*). The most important thing is ‘face’, the second thing is family member and the third thing is happiness. It differs in Spain, whereby the first priority is happiness, then family member, then ‘face’... (the thing about leftover girl) is a very important thing. In

Australia, no one think like this but there are a lot of Italian, Spanish, Greek people here, who hold the same opinions.” (Interview with S4)

As a student with multicultural backgrounds and influences (Italian, Australian, Greek and Spanish), S4 assumed that she could understand the phenomenon of ‘leftover girl’ (*shengnü*/剩女) in China because of the cultural similarity. She found some shared concepts between Chinese culture with her background cultures, e.g. the importance of ‘face’, family-oriented and less individualism. S4 did not stop at describing a specific cultural phenomenon, instead, she tried to think “how social groups and social identities function” (Byram et al., 2001). For instance, she identified the different priorities of people’s consideration in different cultures, providing a rationale for their behavior or values, e.g. people’s perception of ‘leftover woman’. She also revealed that it was because of the religious background that leads to the unacceptance of gay or lesbian in Italian culture.

All of the above examples indicate that the rich social and cultural issues raised from *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are able to arouse students’ intercultural awareness, encouraging their engagement in intercultural connection and comparison, thus it is likely to promote students’ cultural learning and improve their cultural skills.

Facilitators for cultural learning

Although the selected popular literary texts provided an intercultural context for students to encounter and experience, not everyone is able to explore the cultural fact and make intercultural connection and comparison on their own. Some facilitators are required to help these dependent learners and enhance the intercultural learning of some higher level students. The collected data identify the tasks and activities based on reader responses theory as facilitators to help students’ cultural learning. In this section, two types of tasks with students’ responses are presented as example.

Assignment tasks

In the responses to post-questionnaires and interviews, most students appreciated the helpfulness of assignments for the enhancement of cultural learning, believing the assignment tasks are “highly relevant” (S16) and encourage them to explore other cultures independently (S2). As S13 stated in the interview,

“The weekly assignments also helped me learning a lot of things. There are some questions about comparison Chinese culture with my own culture so sometimes I needed to search for some information about this topic. Spending time to seek the information helped me better understand Chinese culture, Chinese people’s values and social phenomenon in modern China.” (Interview with S13)

As described in chapter 5, questions emerging from the selected popular literary texts were included in students’ weekly assignment. Based on reader response theory, students were asked to connect the cultural issues raised from certain literary texts to their own cultural background. Some questions asked about cultural comparison (e.g. what are the similarities and differences between A and B), while others involved students’ personal feelings and imagination (e.g. what is your feelings on this cultural phenomenon; if you are the main role in this novel, what will you do?). Most students, including low language proficiency group students, reflected a lot of their cultural values and perspectives on such questions. In the responses to these questions, students’ answers sometimes differed from each other because of different cultural backgrounds. Every week, I collected some good written samples from different cultural backgrounds and showed them to the whole class, broadening students’ cultural perspectives and enhancing their intercultural awareness.

For instance, after learning the pop song lyrics ‘Mother’ (*muqin*/ 母亲), students were asked to compare it with a song about mother from their cultures in the assignment. In this task, S3 compared the relationship between mother and children in Chinese culture to “shepherd” (*muyangren*/牧羊人) and “sheep”(yang/羊) in which children should listen to their mother, while he highlighted that this

relationship in western culture is more like friends (S3, Week 1 assignment). In another assignment task in the same topic, in response to the question “whether tiger mother and wolf father exist in your culture”, S5 presented the different parental methods between Chinese culture and western culture. As a student who was born in Hong Kong and moved to Australia when she was very little, S5’s value of family education was obviously western-oriented but she also understood the view of Chinese parents due to her Chinese cultural background. As she stated in assignment:

S5: 我在澳大利亚长大，我爸妈很想做狼爸和虎妈。但这不可能，因为这里的教育环境不允许这样做。比如说，爸妈对你太狠，孩子是可以投诉到学校里去的，他们一定会帮助你。我有一个女儿，我从不打她或骂她，只是尽量帮助她，发挥她的特长，以及坐下来和她说道理

(S5-Chinese background, high language proficiency, Week 2 assignment)

[Translation: I grew up in Australia. My parents wanted to be wolf father and tiger mother but it was impossible because it was not allowed in the educational environment here. For example, if you parents were too strict with you, children can complain to school, they will definitely help you. I have a daughter. I never beat her or scold her. I just try my best to help her, develop her advantages and reason things out to her.]

Similarly, after learning the two pop songs ‘No House, No Car’ and ‘The Song of an Older Artistic Woman’ (*Daling wenyi nü qingnian*/大龄文艺女青年), students were asked to write a reflection on this song in assignment. Nearly all students thought over the issues of young people’s marriage in current China from their cultural perspectives. For example, as an Italian background student, S10 presented her understanding of the phenomenon of ‘leftover woman’ (*shengnü*/剩女) in current Chinese society and compared it with her own cultural background, as she stated,

这两首歌反映的问题在中国很普遍。因为如果男人没有房或车，就很难找到对象。另一方面，如果女人年龄超过三十岁且学历高，男人往往不愿意与她交往。我觉得不管是男人还是女人在社会上和家庭里都有很多压力。如今很多女人想上大学，所以在大学花很长时间学习，她们通常要读到硕士或博士，毕业时都三十多岁了。对现代女人来说，掌握知识是件重要的事，但是她们如果真要一边学习一边谈恋爱，压力会很大。在我们国家（意大利）的文化中，女人通常不上大学，只专心照顾孩子、照看老公、做饭、洗衣服和打扫卫生，而男人没有那么大压力，

他们是家庭的主人。(S10-Italian background, intermediate language proficiency, Week 9 assignment)

[Translation: The issues reflected in the two songs are very common in China. If a man has no house or car, it is hard for him to find partner. On the other hand, if a woman is over the age of 30 years old and also highly educated, men are often reluctant to date her. I think both man and woman have a lot of pressure in society and family. Nowadays, many women want to go to university, so they spend a long time to study at university. They usually want to get master or doctorate degree. When they graduate, they are over 30 years old. For modern woman, the mastery of knowledge is an important thing, but they have a lot of pressure if fall in love while studying. In my culture (Italy), women usually do not go to university. They just concentrate on taking care of children, taking care of her husband, cooking, and laundry and cleaning, while man has not so much pressure, they are the owner of a family.]

The examples presented above can be found everywhere in students' weekly assignments, reflecting the wide range of cultural responses to certain texts or topics from students. It seems that despite some disparity of students' language proficiency, nearly all students engaged in the intercultural connection and comparison in such assignment tasks. For example, in Week 4 assignment, S7, a low language proficiency student, identified the similarities and differences of young people between Chinese culture and Western culture. He conducted intercultural comparison starting from the thinking of dormitory life which shown in learnt literary text. S7 found that young Chinese university students got along with each other very well, which appeared to be similar with Western culture. He wondered why since he assumed that the young generation of current China should be spoiled. By connecting to a wider social background, S7 concluded that it was the large population forced Chinese people to try to stay with others peacefully. Although there is still some difficulty in understanding S7's statement due to linguistic errors and his cultural understanding seemed very limited, his engagement in intercultural connection and comparison is clearly reflected in his answer: finding similarities and differences and exploring the reasons in the social and cultural context.

The examples above indicate again there are rich authentic social and cultural components reflected in *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. And based on

the selected literary texts, the assignment tasks designed according to reader response is obviously a facilitator for promoting students' cultural learning, helping them better understand the cultural facts of target culture and enhancing their intercultural awareness.

Class discussion

Compared to their responses to assignments, fewer students specifically outlined the helpfulness of class discussion for their cultural learning in the responses to questionnaires and interviews. In the interview, S13 occasionally mentioned “we heard a lot of opinions from others. We felt it is an impressive topic”. Although S13 did not emphasize the significance of class discussion to cultural learning, her statement shows that the discussion in class may encourage students' thinking on certain social or cultural topics. This can be demonstrated by the examination of transcripts of class discussion. Here is an example of students' class discussion in the teaching of the micro-fiction ‘Mum Enjoys Happiness’ (*mama xiangfu*/妈妈享福). This discussion was unexpected in class teaching since it is a creative writing task. Students were asked to finish the following micro-fiction by filling in the blanks.

上学时,妈妈说,等你大学毕业了,妈妈就能享福了。
大学毕业了,妈妈说,等你_____了,妈妈就能享福了。
_____了,妈妈说,等你_____了,妈妈就能享福了。
_____了,妈妈说,等你_____了,妈妈就能享福了。
_____了,妈妈您终于能享福了,可是,妈妈_____。

[When I am studying, mum said, after you graduate from university, I will enjoy happiness; When I graduated, mum said, when you _____, I will enjoy happiness; When I _____, mum said, when you _____, I will enjoy happiness. When I _____, mum is finally able to enjoy happiness but she _____.]

The creative writing task is designed based on schemata theory, with the aim to help students learn the sentence structure ‘Until..., then...’ (*deng...le, jiu...le*/等...了,就...了) and activate their world schemata on life procedure. After finishing this task, each group was asked to present their answers. What surprised me was that all groups put the life stage ‘buying house’ after ‘getting married’

(one group wrote 'buying house after giving birth to baby' and one 'buying house before having baby'). This life procedure is different from that in China, especially in urban areas, in where 'house' is the necessary condition for getting married. Based on the difference, students were encouraged to discuss the relationship between marriage and house from different cultural perspectives, as presented in the following transcripts:

T: 大家的答案有一些共同的地方，就是先结婚，再生孩子，然后再买房子，在澳大利亚你们是不是这样子的？

S1: 现在在澳大利亚年轻人没有能力买房子，两个人一起买。

T: 没有能力，没有钱来买房子，所以要两个人一起来买房。

S6: 应该先买房子，但是有时候 (Laugh)。

S1: 每个人不一样，希望是这样。

T: 因人而异，每个家庭都不一样，但是可能大家大部分的观念是先结婚，然后买房子，然后生孩子，对吧？

S16: 应该是。

T: 淑珍，在韩国你们是怎么样的？

S13: 恩，现在两个人，女人和男人都买家，买房子，但是我的父母像男的一样，想男人要买房子。

T: 想男人买房子，这个情况在韩国普遍吗？是不是很多，很流行。

S13: 流行。

T: 可能是在亚洲，像在中国，大家知道现在年轻人的压力非常大，尤其是在一些大的城市，像上海、北京，男人，男孩子如果没有房子的话他很难找到女朋友。

S11: 对。

T: 在韩国也是这样子吗？

S13: 还有，男人，如果男人没有车，很难找女朋友。

T: 是的，如果没有房，没有车，很难找女朋友。大家有没有听过你的中国朋友和你说过这个情况？

S-some students: 恩。

T: 当你知道这种情况，你觉得什么感觉？

S9: 我不同意。

T: 为什么？

S10: 两个人在一起，房子车子不是最重要的，爱情是最重要的。

T: 意大利是不是一样？

S4: 在意大利，你结婚的时候，你去跟你的 husband 丈夫住 or 你的丈夫跟 you come to your husband's parents or your husband comes to your parents.

T: 是吗？

S6: 现在一样吗？

T: 不需要买房子？

S4: 女孩子去男孩子家，人越多，房子越高，或者男孩子去女孩子家里住。

T: 男孩子去女孩子家里住，这是很正常的吗？

S4: 都可以，我的爸爸跟我的妈妈和她的父母，没有问题，我非常喜欢，因为有我的父母和我的祖父母。All family (laugh)

T: 那很幸福，但是在中国文化当中，以前都是和父母住，但是一般来说都是女的去男的家里，如果男的去女的家里，就会怎么样？

S-some students: 没面子。

[T: There are some commonalities among your answers. All the procedures are “first getting married, then give birth to baby, then buy house”. Is it the common way in Australia?

S16: Nowadays, Australian young people have no ability to buy house so two people buy together.

T: No ability, have no money to buy house, so needs two people buy the house together.

S6: should be buy house first, but sometimes (laugh)

S16: Everyone is different, hopefully like this.

T: It depends on person. Every family is different. But perhaps the common value is “getting married first, then buying house, then having baby”, right?

S16: should be

T: S13, what is the situation in Korea?

S13: Nowadays, two people, man and woman buy house together but my parents wanted man to buy house.

T: want man to buy house, is this situation common in Korea? Isn't it a lot, very prevalent?

S13: yes, it's common

T: Perhaps this happens in Asia. Like in China, everyone knows young people's pressure is very high, especially in Shanghai, Beijing. If a man has no house, it is hard for him to find girlfriend.

S11, S12: yes

T: is it same in Korea?

S13: Also, man, if man has no car, it is difficult to find a girlfriend.

T: yes, without house and car, it is hard for a man to find a girlfriend. Have you heard of this situation from your Chinese friends?

S6: yes

T: When you heard it, what was your feeling?

S9: I don't agree

T: Why?

S9: For two people being together, house and car are not most important, love is most important.

T: How about Italy?

S4: In Italy, when you got married, you went to your husband's house or your husband comes to your parents' house.

T: Really?

S6: It is still same now?

T: Don't need to buy house?

S4: The girl moves to boy's house. More people, higher house. Or the boy moves to girl's house.

T: Is it normal if a boy moves to a girl's house?

S4: Both are possible. My dad stayed with my mum and her parents. There's no problem. I like it very much because I stay with my parents and my grandparents. All family (Laugh)

T: That sounds very happy. But in Chinese culture, it is usual that woman moves to man's family. If the man goes to woman's family, what will be the man's feeling? No?

S-some students: No face]

.....

(Lines 95-132, class transcripts <translated and edited>: Mum Enjoys Happiness, Unit One)

In discussion, all Australian students (including Chinese background students) claimed that in Australia, most young people had not enough money to buy house just after graduation so they would choose to rent a house first and then buy a house with their partner together, while S13, a Korean girl, stated that her parents wanted her to find a rich boy who can buy a house for her. Some students (S11, S12) claimed that they had heard about the similar situation in China. A different situation in Italy was described by S4, a student of Italian background student. She stated that in Italy, man moved to woman's house (or woman to man's house) and lived with their parents. At this occasion, another significant cultural issue was raised: man's self-esteem, which is valued differently between western and eastern culture. In Western culture, it does not matter who is the owner of the house, but in Chinese culture, which has been historically influenced by the man-dominated ideology, whether the man is the house owner is important. Following this, I asked students what the feeling of a man would be if he lived in his wife's house in China, to which, some students reacted immediately 'no face' (*mei mianzi*/没面子). Students of different cultural backgrounds shared different behaviors and cultural values, thus creating an intercultural learning context.

Similarly, the comprehension and interpretation of one sentence in the lyrics of the web song 'The Song of an Older Artistic Woman' (*Daling wenyi nü qingnian*/大龄文艺女青年) also aroused students' enthusiasms in discussion. In

this song, Miss Wang (*Wang xiaojie*/王小姐) is a 30-year-old unmarried lady. Her friends and parents are worried about her and pushed her to find a partner as soon as possible. The discussion starts from the sentence ‘look at others’ (*ni kan renjia nei nei nei nei*/你看人家那那那那):

T: 爸爸妈妈除了说你赶紧的，还说你看，你看，人家那那那那那那。

T: 这是什么意思？

S4: 哦，is that like everyone else is doing. Look else.

T: Yes, look else!所以，爸爸妈妈经常从小到大都会这么说，比如小时候我们考试考得不好，爸爸妈妈会说你看人家；长大了，我们没有男朋友，爸爸妈妈会说，你看人家；如果我工作赚钱赚得很少，爸爸妈妈又会说你去看人家。这也是一个很普遍的社会现象，

S6: 比

T: 比较，在中国文化中，经常父母或老师会把你和别人比较

S10: keep up with Jones’

T: 对，Keep up with Jones’

S10: (talk to desk mates) you don't know? If you have house, have car, but S7 has better house, better car, keep up with them.

T: 那在澳大利亚你们会不会经常 keep up with Jones’

S6:因为她们是意大利人，所以会 keep up with Jones’

T: S10, 那你觉得在你的家庭中，你的爸爸妈妈会不会经常这样？

S10:不会。

T: 不会。为什么中国人会，而？

S10: 我的家人觉得钱不是最重要的事情，恩，幸运，不是幸福是最重要的事。她们觉得跟别的人有更好的关系更重要，帮助别人。

T: 恩，所以说 S10 的家人觉得快乐还是不快乐并不是金钱所决定的。S11,你爸爸妈妈会吗？

S11: 不知道，但是她们不一定要，他们.....

T: 不会要，如果不需要，就不一样要有，对吗？

S11: 对。

S6:我觉得大家要有很多钱，他们先看到别人的东西，然后说我要这个，但是想一想，然后，没关系，钱不是生活中最重要的。

[T: Dad and mum say “be hurry” and “look, look, look others.....”

T: What's meaning?

S4: Oh, is that like everyone else is doing. Look else.

T: Yes, look else. So, dad and mum always say such words, for instance, if we don't have a good score in exam, parents will say ‘look others’; if we grow up but still haven't boyfriend, parents will say ‘look others’; if we made less money than others, people will say “look else” again. This is also a common social phenomenon.

S5: Compare

T: Comparison

S10: yes, keep up with S7s'
 S10: (talk to desk mates) you don't know? If you have house, have car, but the Jones have better house, better car, keep up with them.
 T: In Australia, do you always 'keep up with Jones'?'
 S6: Because they are Italian, so they will keep up with Jones'
 T: S10, so in your family, do your parents do like this?
 S10: no, they won't
 T: They won't. Why Chinese people do?
 S10: My family believes that money is not the most important thing. Lucky, no, happiness is the most important thing. They think having a better relationship with others is more important. Help others.
 T: So S10's family believes happiness does not depend on money. S11, how about your parents?
 S11: I don't know, I think if it isn't necessary, they
 T: If it isn't necessary, perhaps they don't want it, right?
 S11: Right!
 T-S6: I think if everyone wants a lot of money. They may looked at others first, then say I want this, but think for a while and think, it doesn't matter, money is not most important.]

.....

(Lines 218-244, Class transcripts<edited>: Old age young art girl, Unit Four)

At first, students did not understand the sentence although it had only few characters: 'look at others' (*ni kan renjia nei nei nei nei/你看人家那那那那*). After I gave them some examples that were common in Chinese culture, they quickly understood. S10 connected it to the English saying 'keep up with Joneses'. S10 claimed that happiness and having good relationships with others were most important, reflecting an Italian cultural perspective. S6 and S16 held similar views on the topic from an Australian and Spanish perspective respectively: they may admire others' possessions but if they did not need them, they did not care.

The two examples above show how students can learn Chinese cultural issues through discussion in class. Instead of gaining direct cultural information, students learnt and understood the cultural issues through empathy, analogy, interpretation, evaluation and recognition, which are in accordance to reader response theory. The multicultural environment of such a typical Australian class is also important, whereby students from different cultural backgrounds create an intercultural communicative environment. The discussion in such an environment helps

develop students' intercultural awareness and gives them a better understanding of other cultures.

However, not everyone took part in the discussion in class. As described in chapter 6, students with higher language proficiency and extroverted personalities were more engaged in this activity, while other students were reluctant to participate. S6 and S5 were the most active students in the class, though in the examples presented above, S5 was absent due to sickness. In some cultural discussions, these two dominated the discussion, reducing the opportunities for other students to participate, but for those students who were actively involved in the class, the discussion appeared to very beneficial for their cultural learning.

Negative responses and suggestions

The discussion above reveals the improvement of students' cultural skills throughout the experimental course with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. However, in this class, not everyone was satisfied with cultural learning with the use of selected literary texts. In post-questionnaires, there were three students who were neutral on the helpfulness of the selected texts for the improvement of their cultural learning. As they stated:

Not really! I think I had a good understanding of Chinese culture. (S1)

I am familiar with most of the phenomenon. So it doesn't help me so much.
(S14)

They are good, but I'm also interested in some business culture. (S11)

S1 and S14 claimed no improvement or little improvement in their cultural learning since they already knew most of the cultural issues, which can be attributed to their family background (i.e. both of them have Chinese background). S11 did not provide negative comments but suggested integrating business culture into the teaching syllabus, which in turn related to her career plan (her ideal job is in Sino-Australian trade). The three students' answers were quite simple but reflected that a wider selection of *contemporary Chinese popular literature texts*

should be involved to meet more students' cultural expectation. In this study, only S11 provided a concrete suggestion that she wanted to learn some business culture, which was neglected in the text selection of this experimental course. Indeed, business is an important cultural aspect in current China and there are a lot of works in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* writing about business and entrepreneurs. Also, as presented in chapter 2, most foreign language learners study Chinese for practical purposes, e.g. trade and commerce. The selection of the works within this topic should be considered in the design of a future syllabus.

In the interview, S1 reinforced a negative perception of cultural learning, expressing her struggle in doing oral or written tasks about intercultural connections and comparisons:

“I found the comparison of my country with China a little difficult. Although I am Australian, my mum taught me with Chinese culture..... Some questions I don't know how to write. I can't find so many differences. Many of them are similar.” (Interview with S1)

Although other students with similar backgrounds did not provide such comment, S1's statement reflects possible problems to Chinese background students: a struggle between the cultural identity of Australia and China. In a multicultural country, such students represent a common and special group: “the third culture kids” (TCK), which means “a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture” (David & Van Reken, 2009, p. 14). These Chinese background students grow up and share both their parents' culture (first culture-Chinese) and host culture (second culture-Australian). The mix of both cultures they shared is known as ‘the third culture’. The cultural identities of TCKs differ from person to person, affecting by both external and internal factors (Stultz, 2003). S1's cultural identity was obviously Chinese-oriented. Consequently, she was reluctant to search for the cultural differences between Australia and China from an Australian view of point. As a result, she found little improvement in cultural learning. In order to provide a possible solution to such problem, some immigrant writers (e.g. Shao Jun, Tu Ya)

works from *contemporary Chinese popular literature* should be considered in text selection since these works reflect the life of Chinese people living in ‘a third culture’.

7.4 Summary

In this chapter, the effectiveness and appropriateness of use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced Chinese language course is demonstrated from the aspect of students’ cultural learning. Compared with linguistic responses presented in chapter 6, the quantitative results of students’ cultural responses indicated more obvious growth in students’ cultural learning and their wider acceptance of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* to promote Chinese cultural learning. In the cultural tests, 83.33% improved, 16.67% stagnated and no student decreased. Similarly, 83.33% of the students acknowledged the helpfulness of the use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* for cultural learning; only three of them were neutral and no student opposed.

To supplement the quantitative findings, this chapter with qualitative analysis reports students’ positive responses in terms of cultural learning in two aspects: cultural authenticity and relevancy, and the improvement of cultural skills. According to students’ answers in post-questionnaires and interviews, they appreciated the cultural relevancy and authenticity reflected in the selected literary texts. Compared with the ‘high culture’ or ‘Big C culture’ presented in many advanced Chinese textbooks and some canonical literature, it seems that the ‘lowercase culture’ or ‘small c culture’ portrayed in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is more able to activate students’ world schemata and aroused their learning interests since it is more relevant with students’ life experience. Another important issue reflects the authenticity of the selected text is that many students claimed their efforts in exploring and experiencing the culture through the access of selected literary texts instead of being taught the cultural facts.

In terms of the improvement of cultural skills, the majority of students appeared to be satisfied with the cultural learning through *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. They enjoyed learning such popular and contemporary cultural facts/knowledge in China in this experimental course. Apart from the learning of cultural facts, students also reported their enhancement of the ability of intercultural connection and comparison. Students' responses also show that tasks and activities designed based on reader response theory are the facilitators for students' cultural learning. By doing such tasks, nearly all students were making efforts to connect the culture reflected in the selected literary texts with their own cultural backgrounds, life experiences and personal feelings.

Only three students were neutral on the helpfulness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* for the improvement of their cultural learning; two of them were Chinese background students. It is possible that the cultural issues discussed in the selected literary texts could not satisfy their demands because of their familiarity with these issues or other practical needs. As a TCK, Chinese background students may struggle between the cultural identity of Australia and China. One student in this course claimed the difficulty for her to find the cultural differences between Australia and China. To provide a solution to these negative responses, a wider range of text-selection in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* (e.g. including immigrant writer's works, business novels) should be considered. In the future study, a list of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* within a variety of cultural topics is required to provide more choices for students with different backgrounds, interests and needs. As a result, students are likely have chance to choose their own passages or books to meet their various cultural demands. However, the making of such a list requires more collective works by scholars, teachers, and foreign language learners.

Chapter 8 Analysis of Results (3): Affective Appropriateness

8.1 Overview of the chapter

In the discussion of students' linguistic and cultural responses to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in chapter 6 and chapter 7, some of the affective factors have been occasionally mentioned in the analysis. In this chapter, students' responses to affective factors are described in detail. As discussed in chapter 3, there are a number of researchers who emphasize the importance of the affective side of learning (J. Arnold & Brown, 1999; Krashen & T. D. Terrell, 1983; Skehan, 1991). According to Krashen (1981), the affective factors, including motivation, anxiety, empathy, self-confidence, can promote or discourage students' foreign language acquisition. This chapter firstly presents the results of students' self-evaluation on the affective effects of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, followed by the description and analysis of students' positive and negative affective responses in questionnaires, interview, and class observation, which are under the headings of motivation, preference, and atmosphere.

8.2 Quantitative results of affective responses

Different from the quantitative analysis of students' linguistic and cultural responses, students' attitudes of affective factors may be considered subjective and therefore hard to measure. However, students' attitude change can be examined through a comparison of students' perception of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in pre-questionnaires and that in post-questionnaires. As presented in chapter 4, in both questionnaires, students were asked to answer the question with a 5-point rater-scale (strongly agree, agree,

neutral, disagree and strongly disagree): “do you think the use of contemporary Chinese popular literary texts will arouse/have aroused your positive affective attitudes (e.g. motivation, interests, etc.)”. Students’ answers to these questions are presented in the Table 19 and illustrated in Figure 12.

Positive affective attitudes	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Pre-questionnaire	6 (33.33%)	7 (38.89%)	3 (16.67%)	2 (11.11%)	
Post-questionnaire	14 (77.78%)	1 (5.56%)	3 (16.67%)		

Table 19: Students’ affective attitudes in pre-test and post-test

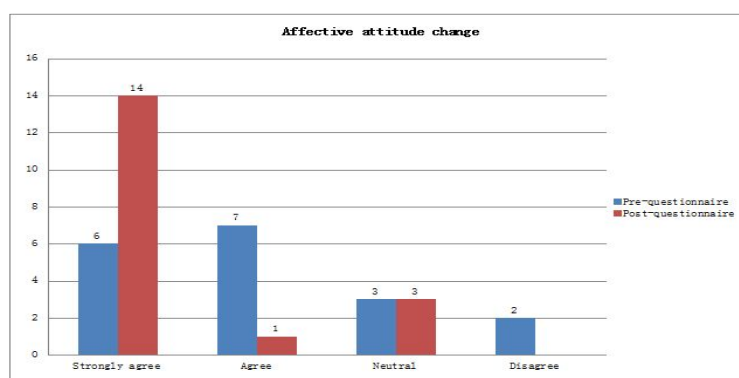


Figure 12: Students’ affective attitude change in pre-test and post-test

The above figures show students’ affective changes throughout this experiment. Although most students held positive attitudes on the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in both questionnaires, some statistic differences are found through the comparison. Firstly, there were two students ‘disagreed’ with the statement that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* would bring positive affective attitudes but none of them ‘disagreed’ in the end of the course. Secondly, there were many more students ‘strongly disagree’ (instead of ‘agree’) in post-questionnaires than those in pre-questionnaires, which meant that there were at least 8 students (38.89%) had enhanced their positive perception on the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*.

As the results presented above, students’ increasing positive attitudes toward the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* have been showed. Also, the result in post-questionnaires indicates that the majority of the students (83.33%)

believed that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* had aroused their positive affective responses. The following figure visually reflects students' wide acceptance of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this empirical study:

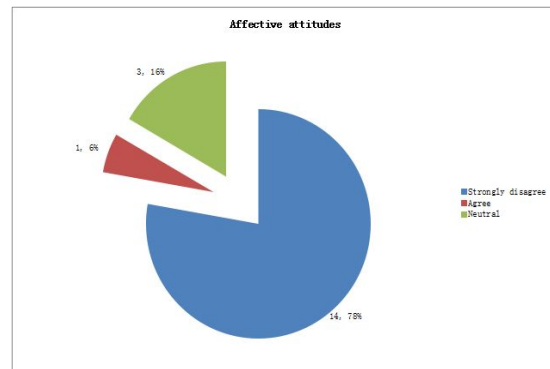


Figure 13: Distribution of students' affective attitudes in post-questionnaires

Offsetting these positive responses to the certain question in post-questionnaires, some discomfort, anxiety and frustration are reflected in their further interpretation or other questions. The above data demonstrates that students' affective attitudes can be measured quantitatively by questionnaires. In the next section, the affective factors, both positive and negative, of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are involved in qualitative discussion and analysis.

8.3 Qualitative analysis of affective responses

In addition to the discussion of students' responses to some specific questions in terms of their affective attitudes in post-questionnaires and interviews, this section also raises some issues such as students' class performance and class atmosphere based on class observation. Since the affective factor is involved in the whole process of learning, the qualitative discussion of students' affective responses could not be separated from linguistic and cultural learning. Thus, this section may repeat some statements mentioned in chapter 6 and chapter 7 but the students' affective factors are the focus of discussion. Three themes stood out

from the data: motivation, preference and atmosphere.

Motivation

As discussed in chapter 3, developing learning motivation, including extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation (J. Arnold & Brown, 1999), is critical in foreign language acquisition. The use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is expected to enhance both types of motivation. Breen (1987) suggests the selection of texts should consider students' emotion, attitude, experience and interests, which are students' intrinsic motivation. As presented in chapter 4, a pre-questionnaire was carried out to find out students' interests, and as expected, students preferred topics reflect contemporary China and young people's life, which can be found in much *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. A lot of *contemporary popular literary texts* are connected to many popular audio-visual platforms (e.g. TV, film, music, Internet) and are able to arouse students' extrinsic motivation.

In response to the question “do you think the use of contemporary Chinese popular literature has aroused your positive affective attitudes” (Question 11, Post-questionnaire), most students reported enjoying their experiences with *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* and stated that their motivation of Chinese language learning had been aroused by these literary texts, e.g. “It made me to participate most of class” (S13); “It surely enhances my interest and time willing to spend in the course” (S12); “It made me want to go to China” (S16). In addition, some comments taken from the students' answers to the same question reflect several reasons for the enhancement of students' learning motivation. Along with students' responses to Question 2²⁵, these reflections demonstrate that students felt that *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* were “interesting” (S2, S8, S11, S13) “entertaining” (S8), “enjoyable” (S2, S5, S6), “encouraging”

²⁵ Question 3: How interesting or boring do you find the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literature*? Explain.

(S12) and “engaging” (S2). Even S8, a low language proficiency student, found the selected popular literary texts to be interesting. Although the texts were too difficult for her, it was the content of selected literary texts that brought her extrinsic motivation and kept her going, as she stated,

They are interesting and entertaining, so even when the text is difficult, you can still persevere (S8, Question 11, Post-questionnaire).

Among the “interesting” materials, some students specifically identified fictional stories (S12), movies and songs (S4, S17, S13) as their favorite types. Others were encouraged by authentic and current cultural topics and issues (S3, S10). In addition to the content of the teaching materials, some other aspects were mentioned by some students, e.g. class activities (S5), assignments (S16) and staff (S6). S4 emphasized the motivation of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* by comparing it with traditional language textbooks she previously used in the answers to many questions in post-questionnaire as well as in interviews.

(The use of contemporary Chinese popular literature has aroused my positive attitudes) is because they are current. New practical reader, boring texts about nothing=no; cool relevant/current movies and songs=Yes! (S4, Question 11, Post-questionnaire)

Like S4, many students were found more motivated by *contemporary Chinese popular literature* than by traditional language textbooks in the interview and their answers to Question 12 of the post-questionnaire, which is the comparison of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and traditional language textbooks. Firstly, many of them claimed that they preferred the selected materials to traditional language textbooks since *contemporary Chinese popular literature* was more interesting and encouraging than traditional language textbook (S1, S6, S9, S12), as S12 compared,

The major difference is traditional language textbooks might be more formal and better structured but it turns off my brain because it tends to be more boring, yet popular literature provide a similar difficulty but a lot more encouraging and friendly. I would prefer popular literature over normal textbook (S12, Question 12, Post-questionnaire).

Secondly, some students strengthened the authenticity and relevancy of

contemporary Chinese popular literature, which has been discussed in chapter 6 and chapter 7. Students claimed that the selected literary texts showed students more contemporary (S3, S10), “authentic” (S9) and “realistic” (S2) cultural aspects and provided more “general everyday phrases/words” (S1) than traditional language textbooks. The authenticity and relevancy of linguistic and cultural factors of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* add intrinsic motivation to students’ foreign language learning.

In addition, students found the different forms between *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and traditional language textbooks. As presented above, S12 mentioned that traditional language textbooks were “more formal and better structured”. The “formal” and “structured” compiling form of traditional language textbooks, however, can be too “formulated” (S9). It is possible that this was one of the reasons turned S9 off when he was studying traditional language textbooks. The impact of the different forms within the two types of materials was illustrated in detail by S5 in her interview:

This (material in the course) is best! I learned a lot. With the previous textbook, I wanted to give up in one period. I did not want to learn. I used textbook at Shandong University and used it again at home country. It is too inflexible. Learn this, learn that. Even if you don’t need to come to class, you still know what teacher will teach. But in this semester, if you don’t attend the class, you will miss out on something. This is the best encouragement for students. I felt I learnt a lot in this semester. Maybe it is relatively difficult, however you won’t feel inflexible. Especially for those young people, (textbooks) are too inflexible (Interview with S5).

As a high language proficiency student, S5 was one of the most active, curious and creative students. In class and after class, she always raised questions that even beyond my expectations. Obviously, the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* provided her a lot of space to discover, explore and create. As she stated that the flexibility of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* encouraged her to attend every class. It seemed that every class might bring surprise to her. On the contrary, as she complained, the inflexibility of traditional language textbooks discouraged her language learning. As discussed in chapter 2

and chapter 3, the study of traditional language textbooks always expect one “correct” answer while the reading of literature allows multiple interpretations. This can be an important reason for S5 to appreciate the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*.

The above comments indicate that the use of *contemporary popular literary texts* enhanced students’ learning interests and motivation throughout this experimental course. In order to further explore students’ motivation of reading *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, I asked students whether they would like to continue reading *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* on their own (Question 13, Post-questionnaire). In response to this question, half of the students (11 out of 18) expressed interests in continuing reading. Three of the high language proficiency group students (S11, S3, S5) claimed that they had already started to read popular novels on their own. For instance, attracted by the excerpt of the novel ‘Du Lala’s Promotion’ (*Du Lala shengzhi ji/杜拉拉升职记*) and the corresponding movie ‘Lala, Go’, S5 started to read the original novel by herself, which reflected her strong interest in reading *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*. S12 also stated that he would like to have some leisure readings such as ‘Miss Su’s marriage’ after class. For other students such as S4, S6 and S13, the reading of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* is a good way to access contemporary Chinese language and culture, and for some students such as S16, it seemed that only audio and visual literary works appealed to them.

However, not everyone in the class was motivated by the use of *contemporary popular literary texts*. In the response to the question about positive affective attitudes, three students were neutral; although some agreed with the statement, they did not provide a positive response (Question 11), i.e.

It was (readings) usually too hard which made me feel discouraged. (S7)

Motivation is based not from material provided, but by the person’s self-interest. (S14)

Agree but need to understand text first. (S15)

Agree but sometimes, it’s too difficult and turns me off. (S17)

I don’t find it interesting. Some are really confusing, especially when rushed.

(S18)

Among the five students, four of them were low language proficiency group students. The difficulty of the texts was the main reason that decreased their learning interests, making them feel discouraged. As presented above, S12 felt that the traditional language textbook was boring so that it “turned off” his brain. S17 used the same expression “turn off” in her comments as the popular literary texts were sometimes too difficult. S7 specifically indicated the readings were too hard for him, while S18 and S15 had problems in text comprehension and the class was too rushed for them to catch up. In the discussion of students’ linguistic responses in chapter 6, these students reflected a lot of negative feelings on the inappropriate linguistic challenges of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*. The reasons for inappropriateness of the selected literary texts for their language learning and the possible solutions to address the problems have been discussed in chapter 6. If these problems are solved, students’ affective frustration will be decreased.

In addition to low language proficiency students, S14 expressed her indifferent attitudes toward the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, believing that it was self-interest rather than materials enhanced the learning motivation, which was similar to her responses to linguistic aspect of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, describing the learning experience as “just another form of study, which makes no difference”. Therefore, S14’s perception can be seen as a special case because all of the other students identified a connection between the selection of teaching materials and language acquisition.

In response to the question about the willingness to continue reading *contemporary popular literary texts*, there was no or little motivation for 7 students (38.89%) to read *contemporary popular literary texts* by themselves after the completion of the course. Some low language proficiency students (S7, S17, S15) pointed out again the difficulty of *contemporary popular literary texts* that beyond their linguistic competence. S4 and S9 attributed the reluctance of

continue reading to their personal reasons, i.e. lack of time (S9), laziness (S4).

According to the discussion above, it is concluded that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary text* is able to enhance most students' learning motivation and interests since they are interesting, relevant, authentic and contemporary. However, if students' language proficiency is not high enough, these texts will discourage language learning and increase their anxiety.

Preference

In the discussion of students' linguistic and cultural responses to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, the appropriateness of the selected texts and related tasks was widely accepted by students. However, due to different personal backgrounds and interests, students appeared to have their own preferences on the text types, activities and tasks. Some collective preferences were drawn from chapter 6 and chapter 7, e.g. class discussion is more popular among higher language proficiency students than lower language proficiency; the tasks about cultural comparison were not welcomed by some Chinese background students. In this section, students' preferences on certain types of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are discussed in more detail. In post-questionnaires, students were asked to list three texts they liked and disliked most and provide reasons (Question 4 and Question 5, Post-questionnaire). In the response to this question, some students listed more than three texts. S3 and S11 even claimed that they liked all the texts. Just as she was indifferent to many post-questionnaire questions, S14 did not hold any preferences. In the following table, the titles of the texts students liked best, students' code number, and the votes on these texts were counted and presented.

Literary types	Text title	Code number	Votes
Fiction or novel excerpt	So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University (<i>Suoyi, Beida xiongmei/所以, 北大兄妹</i>)	S5	1
	To Our Youth that is Fading Away (novel excerpt) (<i>Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun/致我们终将逝去的青春</i>)	S10, S12, S9, S13	4
	Lala's Promotion (novel excerpt)(<i>Du Lala shengzhi Ji/杜拉拉升职记</i>)	S5, S13	3
	Miss Su's Marriage (<i>Su xiaojie de hunshi/苏小姐的婚事</i>)	S4, S16, S12, S13, S2, S5	6
Micro-film screen scripts	Because... So... (<i>Yinwei, suoyi/因为, 多以</i>)	S7, S15	2
	Best Friend Forever (<i>Guimi/闺蜜</i>)	S10, S9, S6, S15	4
	Go for Job Hunting (<i>Qiuzhi xiang qian chong/求职向前冲</i>)	S6, S9, S8, S15	5
Song lyrics	Friends (<i>Pengyou/朋友</i>)	S7	1
	The Hardest Job Hunting Season (<i>Zui nan jiuye ji/最难就业季</i>)	S16	1
	The Song of an Older Artistic Woman (<i>Daling wenyi nü qingnian/大龄文艺女青年</i>)	S4, S16	3
	No house, No car (<i>Meiyou fang, meiyou che/没有房, 没有车</i>)	S4, S12, S2	3
Feature film	Wedding Banquet (<i>Xiyan/喜宴</i>)	S6, S7, S17, S8, S18	5
	Go Lala (<i>Du Lala shengzhi Ji/杜拉拉升职记</i>)	S17, S2, S5, S13, S18	6
	So Young (<i>Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun/致我们终将逝去的青春</i>)	S10, S4, S12, S9, S17, S18	6
SMS poem	SMS to friends (<i>Gei pengyou de duanxin/给朋友的短信</i>)	S2, S8	2

Table 20: Students' favorite texts

Among these students' favorite texts, feature films 'Go, Lala', 'So Young' and short fiction 'Miss Su's Marriage' got the highest votes (6), feature film 'Wedding Banquet' and micro film 'Go for Job Hunting', with each gaining 5 votes. In addition, the micro-film 'Best Friend Forever' (4 votes), the novel excerpt "To

Our Youth that is Fading Away’, and the pop song ‘The Song of an Older Artistic Woman’ (3 votes) and ‘No house, No car’ (3 votes) also attracted some popularity.

According to the reasons provided by students, it seems that it was young people’s life and thinking attracted students’ reading interests (S10, S4, S6, S12, S5, S16, S9, S13, S2). Many students reflected their strong interests in such social or cultural issues happened to current Chinese young people that are different from those in Australia, e.g. the social phenomenon of ‘leftover man’ (*shengnan/剩男*²⁶) and ‘leftover woman’ (*shengnü/剩女*); friendship; university life; education, etc. (S4, S2, S12, S5, S9). Also, students favoured some of the texts because of their usefulness, e.g. micro-film ‘Go for Job Hunting’ – several of the students in the course are looking for jobs so the content of this micro-film is practical and relevant (S15, S9, S6, S8).

It is interesting to find that none of the low language proficiency students regarded any of the long texts (fiction, novel excerpt) as their favorite texts. Except for the SMS poem which was one of S8’s favorite texts, all texts low language proficiency students liked best were those texts with audio-visuals, i.e. movies, micro-films, songs, because these materials were more comprehensible to them. On the other hand, some high language proficiency students (i.e. S12, S13, S5) loved reading novels and fictions. As presented in above section, S12 stated that he liked the leisure reading such as ‘Miss Su’s marriage’, while S5 started to read the novel ‘Du Lala’s Promotion’ on her own. In response to the question of text preference, S13 indicated that she was attracted a lot by plots found in stories, which encouraged her to keep reading. These long texts with a storyline were also welcomed by some intermediate students, e.g. S2, S4, S9, S10. It seems that the long texts such as popular fiction or novels only attracted students with higher language proficiency, while audio-visual texts appeared to be more suitable for lower language proficiency students. In addition to the above findings, what surprised me most was that none of the students regarded any micro-fictions as

²⁶ ‘Leftover man’ is a term to describe unmarried man beyond 30-45 years old.

their favorite texts. The reasons for why these texts appeared to be less important and attractive than other types of texts are presented in the following section.

In post-questionnaires, students were asked to answer what texts they liked least in this semester and provide reasons. Six students (S3, S5, S6, S11, S12, S13) did not provide any text titles, as S3 claimed, “I like all of the texts; I cannot think any of those isn’t good to read”. (S3, Question 5, Post-questionnaire). Interestingly, all of the high language proficiency students stated that there were no texts they did not like. It seems that the use of selected popular literary texts provide a ‘non-threatening environment’ for them (Krashen, 1985). Except for the six students who claimed that they favoured all texts, the remaining students in the class presented the titles of the texts they disliked in this course and some of them explained why. Among the responses of the above students, only a few of them outlined the certain text or texts they did not like, including ‘Miss Su’s Marriage’ (S15, S7), novel excerpt of ‘To Our Youth that is Fading Away’ (S17, S7), screen script of TV series footage ‘Snail Dwelling’ (S2, S8), ‘Study Room of University’ (S2, S8, S17), ‘The Hardest Job Hunting Season’ (S7), ‘The Song of an Older Artistic Woman’ (S8), ‘Mum Enjoys Happiness’ (S17), etc. The others students specifically indicated certain types of texts they did not like, e.g. SMS poem (S14), songs (S9, S14), long texts (S18), short texts (S10), micro-fictions (S16).

The main reason for students’ disfavour of these texts was the difficulty in comprehension. In accordance with my expectations, some texts with more linguistic difficulty such as the novel excerpt ‘To Our Youth that is Fading Away’, script of TV series footage ‘Snail Dwelling’, short fiction ‘Miss Su’s marriage’ and pop song lyrics ‘Study Room of University’ aroused some negative responses. For lower language proficiency students, long texts with over-loaded vocabulary and complicated sentence structure were too hard to understand. As S18 stated, long texts “took a long time to understand”. This result demonstrates again the above finding: long texts such as fiction and novel seemed not inappropriate for lower language proficiency students.

However, some students' confusion in the understanding of short texts such as micro-fictions and lyrics was not my expectation. In most short texts, especially the micro-fiction, there was little linguistic difficulty for students, which was why they were integrated into the teaching materials. However, these short texts were not popular with students, even confused some of them. S10 stated that she preferred longer texts and complained that short texts were "too short to see the point" (S10, Question 5, Post-questionnaire). One reason for S10's complaint was the lack of contact time for the instruction on these texts, as S16 complained "some short fictions were taught too rush" (S16, Question 5, Post-questionnaire). All micro-fictions were assigned as warm-up reading passages, thus the instruction of these texts appeared to be too brief. The other reason can be attributed to the gap between students' previous learning experience and the reading requirements of micro-fictions. It is important to recognize that some micro-fictions require readers' involvement, using their imagination, filling in the blanks of the literary text and finding the hidden meanings. According to reader response theory, the reading of such texts is expected to encourage students' engagement in filling in the blanks in the literary texts. However, some students found little motivation in such reading practice. Perhaps it is due to students' previous Chinese reading experience, where they tended to read texts with direct and concrete information, and so were reluctant or unable to expend their effort in text interpretation.

In addition to the two types of texts (long texts and micro-fictions) discussed above, some students had their own perceptions on certain texts or text types. For example, S9 claimed that she did not like the idea of learning language through song, while S14 did not like SMS and some lyrics because she did not like poetic literary forms. Such responses reflected students' personal preference, rather than collective choices.

In summary, the analysis above shows that, in general, students preferred the texts that concern young people's lives and values and the ones that are relevant

and useful to their real life. Specifically speaking, students' preferences of text types differ from different language proficiency groups. Higher language proficiency students have a wider acceptance of all types of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, whereas lower language proficiency students preferred audio-visual and shorter texts. Linguistic challenge is the main reason for students' different preferences. The findings of students' responses to their text preferences are in accordance with the qualitative results presented in chapter 6 and chapter 7. Students' collective preferences demonstrate again the authenticity and relevancy of the selected literary texts, which are strengthened in previous two chapters; while students' personal preferences reflected different needs for students with different language proficiency, which is revealed in chapter 6. Some suggestions for text selection for students with different language proficiency are proposed in chapter 6.

Atmosphere

In addition to students' oral and written responses to their attitudes and feelings, class atmosphere is another important factor that reflects students' affective responses to the experimental use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*. In a friendly atmosphere, students can enjoy the class and feel relaxed and comfortable, in which case they always show their enthusiasm in participating in the class activities, illustrating their involvement and engagement. However, an unfriendly atmosphere may increase students' anxiety, creating a threatening environment for students, and students may be reluctant to involve themselves in class and feel tired and bored with class activities. Several factors can affect the class atmosphere: teaching materials, class activities, students' performance, teacher's performance, etc. Among them, the selection of teaching materials is critical because the activities are centered on the teaching materials. According to the outsider observer, the class atmosphere in this course in general was

Very friendly, active and relaxing. Students enjoyed this class and engaged in the class activities. The classroom was full of laughter. Most of the students looked attentive, comfortable and relaxed. Students' participation and activity seemed to be higher than the language courses I taught before. (Class observations: conclusion)

Similar comments can be found in students' written responses to some questionnaire questions (e.g. Question 1, 6, 7, 11, 12), although there was no specific question about class atmosphere. These comments indicated that the class atmosphere in this course were friendly (S6, S10), interactive (S9, S10, S12, S16), attentive (S13), relaxed and enjoyable (S5, S6, S8, S16). Some of the students reflected their favours on certain class activities, e.g. singing (S12, S13), role play (S8), watching videos (S13), class discussion (S9, S10). In order to investigate the relationship between class atmosphere and the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, observations were made on class activities and teacher-student relationships.

Class activities

As presented in the instructional model (chapter 5) and other sections in chapter 6 and chapter 7, some class activities encouraged in this constructivist classroom mainly included text reading (including watching/listening to audio-visual materials), text deconstruction based on schemata theory (e.g. learning of vocabulary and grammar, text structure), class discussion based on reader response theory (e.g. reflections on certain texts, cultural discussion, plot prediction, personal story and experience, in-class creative writing) and role play, etc. In this section, three main class activities involved in this course, including text reading, class discussion, and role play, are discussed to illustrate how the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* affects the class atmosphere.

Text reading (or watching/listening)

In this experimental course, students were assigned some in-class reading tasks, mainly short texts such as song lyrics, micro-film screen scripts, micro-fiction, and SMS, since the reading of long texts was usually assigned as preview

task in students' assignments. According to the observer's notes, the class atmosphere was more active in watching or listening to the audio-visual texts than the reading of the printed text. Students appeared to be more engaged and attentive when watching or listening to the audio-visual texts. For example, in the teaching of the micro-film 'Because...So...', the observer noticed that "the girls in the back of the classroom (S9, S10, S15) had tears in their eyes" during the process of showing the video (Class observation: Because...so...,Unit one). The audio-visual effects aroused students' emotions, which is likely to enhance their engagement in language learning. For another instance, when teaching the song lyrics 'One home letter', students were firstly asked to fill in the blanks while they were listening. As soon as I played the video, students kept laughing at the direct and funny expressions in this song. When I asked them the words they had heard, many students such as S4 and S6 asked me whether they could sing following the song. S2 and S6 suggested me play a Kalaok version of the song. The classroom atmosphere was very friendly and happy (Class observation: one home letter, Unit one). Although some students (e.g. S9) did not favour the idea of using song to learn language, most students showed their enthusiasm and engagement in this class activity, which seemed obviously to arouse students' learning interests and motivation.

However, students were less enthusiastic when it came to reading printed texts in class, for example, as the observer noted,

As the teacher announced that now we moved to reading, I heard some students screaming 'no'. In the class, students always showed that they could not focus on the reading section. While I asked them do the reading task in class, I found that many students were talking to their desk mates. However, their talking was not relevant to the text. (Class observation: Cat and pig, Unit two)

Students' different affective responses to audio-visual texts and printed texts were in accordance with my expectation. In the era of picture reading, students are reluctant to access the plain text which lacks visual impact, thus discouraging students' learning. By contrast, the audio-visual material, as an extrinsic

motivation, is likely to arouse students' learning interests. As presented in chapter 6, some students such as S12 claimed that "singing encourages interaction" and S10 highlighted that the audio-visuals made her more concentrated on the learning of the texts. This finding again demonstrated the appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in foreign language class since the variety of audio-visuals is one of the features of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, which has been discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3.

Class discussion

In a constructivist classroom, as discussed in chapter 3, the activities should be "interactive and student-centered" (Gray, 1997). Students are encouraged to collaborate in group tasks and class discussions, exchanging their own ideas and reach common understanding (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992). As presented in chapter 6, class discussion was favoured by many students, especially high language proficiency students. However, all of the low language proficiency students and some intermediate language proficiency students claimed that they did not have enough opportunity to speak out in class. Observer's notes reinforce the finding, e.g.

The teacher asked S18 to share her feeling. She just read his assignment answer. I could not hear what he is talking about (Class observation: So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University, Unit one).

Most of the students enjoyed the discussion of the movie, however, some students still kept quiet, e.g. S7, S17, S8, S2, S15, and S18.(Class observation: Wedding banquet, Unit one.

Everyone in class was doing group discussion, except for S7. He is reading the texts by himself. The teacher asked S7 to join S12 and S16. He was reluctant to do so. He talked with them for a while and kept quite again. (Class observation: Miss Su's marriage, Unit four).

In the class, S7, S17 and S18 rarely joined the discussion or answered questions voluntarily, only speaking out when I asked them to answer questions directly. It was mainly the language proficiency and personality that affect their involvement in class discussion. By contrast, as occasionally mentioned in chapter 6 and chapter 7, some high language proficiency students, especially S5 and S6,

were very engaged and active in class discussion, as evidenced by their speaking out in class discussion despite some language errors, e.g.

The texts seemed too difficult for most of the students. The classroom was very quiet. Only S6 and S5 kept asking the teacher questions of every word's meaning (Class observation: Study room of University, Unit Two).

Other students enjoyed class discussion to some extent. The class atmosphere appeared to be especially active in some cases. For instance, in the teaching of the novel excerpt 'To Our Youth that is Fading Away', students were asked to discuss the characteristics of the six girls and talk about their favorite girls. According to class observation, most students were involved in this discussion. Many students such as S9 and S6 stated that they liked Ruan Guan best because she was the most beautiful and easygoing girl in the novel. They used the new learnt term 'easygoing' (*suihe yichu*/ 随和易处) to describe Ruan Guan's personality. Following her classmates, S13 claimed that she would like to make friends with Ruan Guan because she had chance to be acquaintance with handsome boys through Ruan Guan since Ruan had a lot of pursuers. S10's favorite girl was He Lüya because S10 felt that her personality had some similarities with He Lüya, e.g. 'afraid of conflict' (*haipa chongtu*/ 害怕冲突), 'honest' (*laoshi benfen*/ 老实本分). S7, who always got lost in class, also answered my question immediately. He preferred Zhu Xiaobei to other girls because Zhu's major was as same as his so that he could find common language when they communicate (Class observation: To Our Youth that is fading away, Unit two). These examples show that nearly all students tried to connect the characteristics of the characters with their own backgrounds, as the observer outlined,

Obviously, students favoured this discussion. They explained the reasons why they liked certain girls by the connection with their own interests, personality, majors, friends, etc. (Class observation: To our youth that is fading away, Unit two)

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that students' enthusiasm in this class discussion can be attributed to the relevancy of the selected popular literary texts. The description of the six university girls in the selected texts was not unfamiliar

with students. Their lives were the ones students were experiencing, thus the description in the text reminded students of characteristics of their own and their university classmates and friends. As S9 mentioned in the interview, the learning of this text provided her a wide word choices to describe her acquaintances. Someone may argue that students could also acquire these terms by learning the vocabulary solely, why bother to use the popular literary text. However, without an authentic context, it is hard for students to construct the meaning of a language term and remember it. Through the reading of literary texts, students are likely to construct an image of what is described in their brains and try to make sense of it. The effort students expended on the meaning construction is likely to reinforce their learning.

For another instance, as the observer described the class discussion of the micro-film ‘Best Friend Forever’,

When the teacher asked them some questions related to their personal experience, they showed more interests. While talking about the phenomenon that Chinese girls like holding hands to show their intimacy, many students presented their feelings. S10, S9 and S6 thought it seemed very weird and looked like lesbian. S13 shared her experience while she first came to Australia.” (Class observation: Best Friend Forever, Unit Two)

For some students who had been to China, the phenomenon presented in this micro-film was familiar with them since they saw it everywhere in China. For S13, a Korean background student, this image reminded her of the intercultural adaptation experience when she first arrived, and for some students who had little knowledge about Chinese culture, it appeared to be weird for them, bringing them to the schema of ‘lesbian’, which was a hot issue in Australian society. Therefore, it was again the relevancy of the material encouraging students’ thinking and language output. As the observer outlined, students showed their enthusiasm when were asked their own opinion. On the one hand, the questions posed in class discussion were important; on the other hand, the context (literary text) where the questions were raised from was also very significant. The examples such as the above ones could be found in class observation here and there, which revealed that it was the relevancy of the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literature*

brought with the friendly class atmosphere in class discussion.

However, not all discussion activity attracted students to the extent described above. According to class observation, for example, in the discussion of the song lyrics 'Friend', students did not reflect their feelings on this song; instead, S16 expressed their opinion about the standard of a good friend, which had no connection with the song lyrics at all (Class observation: Friend, Unit Two). It possibly can be attributed to the content of the song, which pays a tribute to a lifelong friendship. Different from the above text examples that described something in detail, the song lyrics 'Friend' describes the friendship in a more general way. Perhaps, it was because students' lack of life experience and the abstract content of the song creating the gap between reader and text. In addition, S16's performance shows again that students were more willing to answer questions by connecting their personal backgrounds. Therefore, given the wide choices of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, the consideration of the connection between the text and students' own backgrounds still appeared to be significant in the process of text selection.

Role play

Role play, aiming to develop students' oral skills and communicative competence, is a common class activity used in language classrooms of all levels. In the usual role play tasks assigned in traditional language textbooks, students were asked to make a role play by the given vocabulary according to a certain scenario (e.g. market, hospital, school). In this manner, students had little space to display/develop their creative ability and subjective initiative. By contrast, literary text, with its blanks for multiple interpretations, provide students with the platform to create and recreate. In this experimental course, students were asked to continue or rewrite the short fiction or novel excerpt according to the given context and their own imaginations. Although some students (S11, S15) claimed that they did not like role play as presented in chapter 6, class observation shows that the role play based on the selected popular literary texts creates a very

friendly, active and interactive atmosphere for students.

For instance, in the role play of ‘So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University’, S12, S3 and S7 re-wrote the endings of the story. Based on the storyline of the text, the role play tried to display the possible hidden thoughts and behaviors of the ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’. The ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’, in their role play, did not agree with their father’s values on family education. They watched television and surfed the Internet unbeknown to their father. Students’ plot creation showed their deep thinking of Chinese family education, the issue raised from this novel excerpt. The original story in the selected literary text presented the image of four obedient ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’, which was written from the perspective of a ‘successful’ father. However, students’ creation revealed the other side of the story, which was from the perspective of the ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’. The ending of the students’ role play was that the scores of ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ were not high enough to be enrolled in Peking University. However, in the end they were accepted by the university because their father had threatened the leaders of university that if the university did not accept his children, he would destroy the university. The ending seemed unexpected and unrealistic but quite creative. In terms of the class atmosphere of this role play, as the observer noted,

The role play was funny and entertaining, kept students laughing during the performance. Despite some difficult terms S12 used, students had little problems to understand the story (Class Observation: So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University, Unit one)

As one example of role plays, the discussion above shows that the selected popular literary text is likely to encourage students’ creative thinking and the role play based on the selected text is able to create a relaxed and friendly class atmosphere, arousing the positive affective responses of most students. One sample of students’ full role play transcripts (in Chinese) is presented in Appendix 12.

Teacher-student relationships

The friendly class atmosphere in this course was also reflected in teacher-

student relationship. According to the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 3, constructivism suggests providing a student-centered and/or reader-centered learning environment, where the instructor has to adapt to the role of a facilitator instead of a teacher (Cobb & Bauersfeld, 1995), arousing students' learning interest, connecting them with their previous learning experience and encouraging students' multiple interpretations and affective responses (Rosenblatt, 1995). Different from the 'give-receive' instructional model in traditional classroom, an instructor in a constructivist classroom interacts and negotiates with learners (Thirteen Ed Online, 2004). In this study, the flexibility and multiple interpretations within *contemporary Chinese popular literature* provided me with a platform to apply the constructivist instructional concept into practice. Accordingly, as an equal reader of the selected literary texts with students, I always joined the class or group tasks, trying to be in continuous dialogue with students (Rhodes & Bellamy, 1999).

For instance, in the discussion of wolf father's family rules, students were asked to share their feelings and experiences about family education. I also shared the family rules my parents set for me in my childhood. Students were laughing at my experience and engaged in the sharing of their similar experiences (Class observation: So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University, Unit one). Similarly, in the discussion of 'Miss Su's Marriage', students showed their enthusiasm in the discussion on the phenomenon 'leftover woman'. They knew that I was a PhD student (same as Miss Su). Thus, S6 asked me whether I felt this kind of pressure as Miss Su, making other students laughing (Class observation: Miss Su's Marriage, Unit four). In this manner, I was perceived as much a friend or peer than an equal teacher. In some cases, students expressed their different opinions with me, as the observer described,

In the discussion of the movie 'Wedding banquet', the teacher stated that she felt Weitong was a selfish guy. However, S5 argued that she did not agree the teacher's opinion. She thought his father was selfish (Class observation: Wedding banquet, Unit One).

The example shows that students did not regard me as a knowledge transferor, which was a common role in traditional language classroom. Instead, the selected material encouraged their interpretations from their cultural perspectives, thus creating an intercultural environment for discussion. This kind of discussion can be found in nearly every lesson. As discussed above, it is possible to conclude that it was the multiple representation forms and flexibility of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*, with a variety of class activities based on reader response theory, encouraged students to make different interpretations and express freely, which facilitates building a friendly teacher-student relationship and create a friendly constructivist learning environment (CLE).

8.4 Summary

In addition to students' linguistic and cultural responses reported in chapter 6 and chapter 7, students' affective responses demonstrate again the appropriateness of use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced Chinese language course. The quantitative results show that students enhanced their positive attitudes toward the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* throughout the experimental course and the majority of the students (83.33%) found that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* had aroused their positive affective responses.

Following the quantitative result, the qualitative analysis of students' affective responses seems to validate the quantitative findings. The affective responses show that the majority of the students enjoyed the experience with *contemporary popular literary texts* in language learning. Most of them felt being motivated by the use of *contemporary popular literary texts* more than traditional language textbooks since they are interesting, relevant, authentic and contemporary. However, some low language proficiency students provided negative responses. The overwhelming linguistic difficulty of the selected literary texts was the main

reason for discouraging their learning, which has been addressed in chapter 6.

Also, the qualitative findings reveal students' different preferences on text types due to their different personal backgrounds. There are several collective preferences of the selection of *contemporary Chinese popular literary text*. Generally speaking, students especially preferred the texts that are relevant to young people's lives and values and practical for their career. Specifically speaking, it shows that higher language proficiency students tend to have a wider acceptance of the types of contemporary popular literary texts; they enjoyed leisure reading such as popular novels or fiction, whereas lower language proficiency students only preferred audio-visual materials and shorter texts. In addition, some short texts (e.g. SMS poem, micro-fictions) were not popular, since many students preferred texts with direct and concrete information, rather than those texts requiring effort in interpretation. The lack of contact time was also a reason for students' disfavour.

Finally, the class atmosphere in this experimental course was very friendly, active and relaxed, which could be partly attributed to the appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in foreign language classroom: the variety of audio-visuals within *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to enhance students' engagement and interaction; the relevancy of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* encouraged students' creative thinking and language output by connecting their personal backgrounds (e.g. experiences, opinions, perceptions); and the flexibility of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* provided a platform to apply the instructional model based on constructivist approaches (reader response theory and schemata theory), which encouraged students' multiple interpretations and promoted a friendly teacher-student relationship.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter concludes the study with a summary of findings and implications as well as suggestions for future study. In the first part of this chapter, answers to three research questions (i.e. linguistic factor, cultural factor and affective factor) are summarized, followed by the pedagogical findings emerged from the qualitative analysis. Limitations of this study and final thoughts are presented in the end of the thesis.

9.2 Summaries of answers to main research questions

As presented in the first chapter, primary research questions are discussed in this thesis:

1. Whether the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promotes students' language and cultural learning and motivates their learning. (Quantitative question)

- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* result in a higher level of students' language proficiency including the abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing?
- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* result in a higher level of students' cultural learning?
- Does the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* results in students' positive affective attitudes?

2. How do students respond to the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* during the empirical study carried out in this research? (Qualitative question)

- How do students respond in terms of language learning?
- How do students respond in terms of cultural learning?
- How do students respond in terms of affective factors?

In this study, both theoretical discussion and empirical study are involved to answer the above questions. Constructivism provides the theoretical foundation

for supporting the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, and the empirical study with both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates the appropriateness and effectiveness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL. While discussing the main research questions from collective perspective, some individual differences due to students' various backgrounds are also presented, providing some pedagogical suggestions for similar research and teaching practice.

9.2.1 Rationale from theoretical approach

As discussed in chapter 3, according to the constructivist approach, learning is a process of making sense of real experience, involving learners' prior knowledge and the interaction with social context. In order to create a constructivist learning environment (CLE), several requirements are suggested for the design of textbooks, including authentic and relevant context, appropriate challenge and positive affect. Firstly, constructivist theorists believe that knowledge should be constructed in an authentic and realistic context and the real-world context should be personally relevant and meaningful to the learner. In order to enhance the authenticity of texts, multiple resources including new technology are suggested to provide multiple representations of reality and present the complexity of the real world. Secondly, Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests creating a challenging environment that is slightly beyond learners' actual developmental level, influencing Krashen's (1985) 'comprehensible input' which means the input that is a little beyond language acquirer's current competence level. Thirdly, constructivist theorists emphasize the significance of positive affect in students' knowledge development. M. Williams and Robert (1997) consider the internal and external factors affecting learners' motivation. Therefore, the integration of learners' thoughts, feelings, emotions, and life contexts in the learning process become important.

As continuous discussions in chapter 2, chapter 3 concludes that the characteristics of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are in accordance with

the three pedagogical beliefs of constructivist learning theory and that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is likely to address the linguistic, cultural and affective challenges faced when using traditional language textbooks and canonical literature in foreign language classroom.

Linguistic benefit

In traditional language textbooks, the language used are usually artificial and oversimplified, failing to provide authenticity and enough linguistic challenges for language learners, while the use of canonical literature provides over-loaded linguistic challenges, impeding students' language acquisition. To compensate these shortcomings, the linguistic components in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are authentic, relevant, comprehensible and practical, providing appropriate linguistic challenges, real context and training of overall linguistic skills for foreign language learners.

Cultural benefit

Different from traditional language textbooks that lack cultural authenticity and canonical literature with over-loaded cultural challenges, the cultural components in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* are authentic and relevant, reflecting the real life of ordinary people from all walks of life in contemporary China and displaying cultural issues, especially 'small c culture', for foreign language learners.

Affective benefit

In a traditional language classroom, the usual single textbook with its lack of authenticity and appropriate challenges decreases learners' learning motivation; while over-loaded linguistic and cultural challenges caused by canonical literature may increase learners' affective frustration, thus hindering their language acquisition. However, the appropriate challenge in linguistic and cultural components of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is able to decrease learners' affective frustration. The relevant and interesting content is likely to

enhance students' intrinsic motivation and the rich and attractive forms may enhance their extrinsic motivation.

9.2.2 Rationale from empirical study

According to the theoretical discussion, the constructivist approach of learning suggests that it is appropriate to use *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, which is confirmed by the empirical study of this research. In chapter 6, chapter 7 and chapter 8, the quantitative and qualitative results of students' responses of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* are reported in three factors: linguistic factor, cultural factor and affective factor. The analysis of the data, including tests, questionnaires, interviews, class transcripts, observations and assignments, shows students' overall growth in language and cultural learning and their positive affective attitudes toward *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*.

Linguistic effectiveness and appropriateness

In the aspect of language learning, the results of students' pre-test and post-test indicate that the majority of students (88.89%) improved in overall language skills. Students' self-evaluation confirms the test results, showing that nearly all students (94.44%) believed that their overall language skills had improved throughout the experiment with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature*.

The qualitative analysis demonstrates again the findings in quantitative results of students' linguistic improvement, testing the linguistic appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* and exploring the rationale for the quantitative results. Three main issues are raised in the qualitative analysis, including authenticity and relevancy, linguistic challenges and improvement of language skills. The analysis shows that most students found the language components in the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* authentic, relevant, providing appropriate linguistic challenges and improving their overall

language skills. Several facilitators for addressing linguistic challenges and improving language skills are presented, e.g. context-dependent learning technique, audio-visual materials, class discussion based on reader response theory and assignment tasks according to schemata theory.

Cultural effectiveness and appropriateness

Similar to the results of linguistic learning, the majority (83.33%) of students (72.22% strong agreed) showed their improvement in cultural learning, which appears to be very significant. The credibility of the test results is demonstrated by students' self-evaluation in post-questionnaires: except for three students who were neutral, 83.33% students believed that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* promoted their cultural learning.

In the qualitative analysis of cultural responses, students reported enjoying the learning of so many social and cultural phenomena in current China, and appreciated the cultural relevancy and authenticity reflected in the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, which helped them access a real Chinese context. Compared with the 'high culture' or 'Big C culture' presented in many advanced Chinese language textbooks and some canonical literature, it seems that the 'lowercase culture' or 'small c culture' portrayed in *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is more able to activate students' world schemata and arouse their learning interests due to its relevancy. Another important issue raised from students' cultural responses reinforces the authenticity of the selected literary texts. Some students reported that they transferred their role from a 'knowledge recipient' in previous learning experience to a 'cultural experiencer' with the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literary text*. This can be attributed to the feature of literary texts that provide 'blanks' for readers to explore the hidden cultural elements. Students' cultural responses to this study also illustrate their cultural growth of cultural skills in two aspects: the learning of cultural facts and intercultural connection and comparison. Some tasks and activities based on

reader response theory encourage students to explore the rich social and cultural components reflected or hidden in *contemporary Chinese popular literary text* and make efforts to connect target culture with their own cultures, in which way students' cultural skills and intercultural awareness are enhanced.

Affective appropriateness

Influenced by the linguistic and cultural appropriateness, the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* also confirms to be affectively appropriate: students' agreement with the affective appropriateness of the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* is enhanced throughout the experimental course and 83.33% of the students (77.78% strongly agreed) believed that the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* aroused their positive affective attitudes in final evaluation. The quantitative result is confirmed by the qualitative analysis in three aspects: motivation, preference and atmosphere. Generally speaking, students enjoyed the experience with the use of *contemporary popular literary texts*. Compared with traditional language textbooks, students were more motivated by *contemporary popular literary texts*, claiming that these texts were more interesting, entertaining, enjoyable and engaging. Due to various personal backgrounds, students had different preferences on text selection but the texts reflecting young people's lives and values appeared to be their collective preferences, which is one of the largest components in *contemporary popular literary texts*. With the use of appropriate teaching materials and the instructional model that suits the materials, a friendly, interactive, and 'non-threatening' learning environment with a constructivist teacher-student relationship is presented in students' affective responses. Students reported enjoying class learning and finding the atmosphere relaxed and comfortable.

9.2.3 Main pedagogical findings and suggestions

In this empirical study, there are several pedagogical issues raised from students' positive or negative responses, including an instructional model suggested in literature class, pedagogical implications for addressing problems with students of different backgrounds and a suggestion for teaching in a multi-backgrounds language classroom.

An instructional model suggested in literature class

In the theoretical discussion, constructivism provides two corresponding teaching approaches: reader response theory and schemata theory. In this empirical study, an instructional model based on the two approaches is suggested and applied to support the teaching of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL. Taking advantages of the shared concept and different foci of the two approaches, three stages are involved in the instructional procedures in this experimental course. The first stage aims to activate learners' prior knowledge with the use of both theories, the second stage applies schemata theory, with the purpose to help student deal with linguistic challenges, improving their cognitive skills and the third stage, with the application of reader response theory, strengthens students' affective development and enhances their intercultural competence. In each stage, there are several instructional strategies used to apply the theories. In this study, most students enjoyed the learning process with various tasks and activities based on this instructional model, indicating that the instructional model is appropriately used in this experimental course. Both of the approaches are widely used in literature class of FLT, however, there were very limited researches combining the two approaches and provide empirical study. Therefore, the application of this instructional model in this thesis may provide pedagogical suggestions for similar research.

Address the problems with students of different backgrounds

Despite the wide acceptance of the linguistic, cultural and affective appropriateness of the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*, not everyone was happy with the learning in this experimental course. The main complaints come from low language proficiency students for inappropriate linguistic challenges and two Chinese background students for lack of enough cultural challenges. These students' negative responses indicate some pedagogical implications for the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in TCFL, especially in the instruction for the two types of students.

Problems with low language proficiency students

In this experimental course, low language proficiency students complained the linguistic difficulty of the selected texts. Similar to problems faced with canonical literature, these students found overloaded new vocabulary, complicated grammar and sentence structure in *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*. It is the limited language proficiency and inappropriate learning techniques that lead to a wide gap between their previous learning experience and the course with the use of literature. In response to the above negative responses, several suggestions are proposed to provide possible solutions. Firstly, it is important to help low language proficiency students develop an appropriate learning habit, getting away from a dictionary-dependent learning technique. One suggestion in this study is the integration of some authentic-context-based articles with little linguistic difficulty at lower language level courses, with the aim to encourage students to develop a context-dependent learning technique step by step. Secondly, text selection should be more careful for these students. Short texts with audio-visuals appear to be more appropriate for them since these materials are likely to be their 'comprehensible input'. Thirdly, more linguistic tasks based on schemata theory should be designed for these students, providing pedagogical scaffolds for them to address linguistic challenges.

Problems with Chinese background students

In this study, nearly all students strongly agreed with the helpfulness of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* for the improvement of their cultural skills, only three were neutral, two of who were Chinese background students. The qualitative analysis indicates that the cultural issues discussed in the selected literary texts could not satisfy their demands because of their familiarity with these issues or other practical needs. As a ‘third cultural kid’ (TCK), Chinese background students may struggle between the cultural identity of Australia and China, which may accounted for one student’s complaint of her difficulty in identifying cultural differences between Australia and China. According to the negative responses, a list of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* involving a variety of cultural topics is required to provide wider choices for students with different backgrounds, interests and needs. This is one of the limitations in this research; the compilation and updating of such a list requires more collective works by scholars, teachers, and foreign language learners in future study.

A balanced solution to the problem with whole class teaching

There are few or no problems for the instruction of a class with equal language levels. However, in most advanced language courses, students’ linguistic levels appear to be of a great disparity. According to the suggestions above, in terms of text selection, audio-visual materials are important for lower language proficiency students, while higher language proficiency students have wider choices. The examination of pedagogical approaches shows that schemata theory is more suitable for lower language proficiency students, who focus on addressing linguistic challenges, while reader response theory appears to more useful for higher language proficiency students, enhancing their intercultural awareness and critical thinking. Therefore, the materials and tasks for the two groups of students are different. More audio-visuals and schemata-based tasks should be assigned to

lower language proficiency students, while with a wider choice of texts, more reader response tasks need to be applied to higher language proficiency students. In a multiple language level class, a well balance of text selection and pedagogical approaches seems to be significant. One possible solution suggested in this study to deal with the differences of linguistic proficiency and facilitate the linguistic improvement of both groups is to provide different after-class written and oral tasks to students, but to take the advantage of this solution, more instructors or tutors should be involved in the course as after-class mentors to assist students' language learning.

9.3 Future study

Although the conclusion comes from both theoretical and empirical study, with concrete and credible qualitative and quantitative data, there are some limitations to this study: lack of a control group and lack of a wide selection. These limitations provide some suggestions for future research.

9.3.1 A control group

In this study, the quantitative analysis involving tests and questionnaires results reveals students' significant improvement in language and cultural leaning as well as their positive attitudes, some people may argue that it is other variables such as the role of the teacher or teaching approaches rather than the content that affect learners' progress. The involvement of a control group was considered when starting the empirical study; however, due to limited number of participants in this experimental course, it was impractical to divide them. Thus in this empirical study, only qualitative data was used to prove the superiority of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* over some other types of materials. I hope that in a future study, one or more control groups could be included to better validate the results.

9.3.2 A wide selection of texts for individual choices

The second limitation of this study, as mentioned in pedagogical suggestions, is the lack of a wide selection of texts for individual choices. According to the constructivist approach of learning, learners' personal backgrounds, interests and choices should be considered. In this empirical study, although the decision of topics is based on students' preferences, the texts selected by researchers and teachers are offered for all students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As a result, some learners found it inappropriate in linguistic or cultural factors, decreasing their learning motivation. Therefore, in a future study, it would be better to provide students with a wider selection of texts to meet the demands of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Also, in addition to three main literary types of *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* (i.e. film and television literature, network literature and pop music literature) discussed in this study, more types of popular literature should be explored and integrated in. It is a difficult task to decide and update a selection list, and requires the involvement of knowledgeable researchers and instructors.

9.4 Final reflection

As concluded above, the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in an advanced university class of Chinese as a foreign language is a proper, practical and productive concept, providing appropriate linguistic, cultural and affective components. Due to the time span and other constraints, this research could not cover everything, and some issues require more discussion and interpretation in future study. Despite these limitations, this study provides some alternatives for textbook design, especially on the potential role and functions of new types of literature which hopefully can enhance the role of literature in TCFL. The research, with a complete empirical study, provides some useful pedagogical

suggestions for similar research. As a pioneer of relevant research, I conclude that the integration of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in advanced TCFL courses has a promising future.

Appendix 1: Consent Form



Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

CONSENT FORM

1. I have read the attached Information Sheet and agree to take part in the following research project:

Title:	The Important Role and Useful Functions of Contemporary Popular Literature in Teaching Chinese as Foreign Language (TCFL): A Case Study in an Australian University Setting
Ethics Approval Number:	HP-2013-003

2. I have had the project, so far as it affects me, fully explained to my satisfaction by the research worker. My consent is given freely.
3. I have been given the opportunity to have a member of my family or a friend present while the project was explained to me.
4. Although I understand the purpose of the research project it has also been explained that involvement may not be of any benefit to me.
5. I have been informed that, while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will not be divulged.
6. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and that this will not affect my study at the University now or in the future.
7. I agree to the class teaching being audio/video recorded. Yes No
8. I am aware that I should keep a copy of this Consent Form, when completed, and the attached Information Sheet.

Participant to complete:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher/Witness to complete:

I have described the nature of the research to _____
(print name of participant)

and in my opinion she/he understood the explanation.

Signature: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2a Pre-questionnaire

Your comments, positive or negative, will not affect your grade in this class nor your relationship with your teacher. Your answers are only for research purposes – be as honest as possible. When you finish, please type the answers and send to your teacher (wenming221@163.com) or hand in the written answers. Thank you.

1. Personal Information

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

First language: _____

Family background: _____

Major: _____

2. How long have you been studying Chinese? _____

3. Why do you learn Chinese language? (e.g. family, culture, career)

4. What kinds of cultural topics do you want to learn in Chinese language classroom? (e.g. love and marriage, school campus, career, officialdom, war, history, family, youth or young people, social problem)

5. Do you think the use of contemporary Chinese popular literary texts will arouse your positive affective attitudes? (e.g. motivation, interests)

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

Appendix 2b Post-questionnaire

Your comments, positive or negative, will not affect your grade in this class nor your relationship with your teacher. Your answers are only for research purposes – be as honest as possible. When you finish, please type the answers and send to your teacher (wenming221@163.com) or hand in the written answers. Thank you.

1. How do you feel about the experience with use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* in this class? Explain.

2. How interesting or boring do you find the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literature*? Explain.

3. How difficult or easy do you find the selected *contemporary Chinese popular literature*? Explain.

4. List your favorite three texts that motivated to learn Chinese? Explain.

5. List three texts you most disliked in this semester? Explain.

6. How do you feel the visual-audio materials in this course? Explain.

7. How do you feel the class activities in this course? Explain.

8. How do you feel the assignment design in this course? Explain.

9. Self-evaluation on language learning (Explain)

(a) Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has improved your overall language skills?

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

(b) Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has improved your reading skill?

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

(c) Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has improved your writing skill?

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

(d) Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has improved your listening skill?

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

(e) Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has improved your oral skill?

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree

- D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

10. Self-evaluation on cultural learning (Explain): Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has enhanced your cultural learning?

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

11. Self-evaluation on Affective factor: Do you think the use of *contemporary Chinese popular literature* has aroused your positive learning attitude? (Explain)

- A. Strongly agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Neither agree nor disagree
 - D. Disagree
 - E. Strongly disagree
-

12. Would you have preferred taken a regular class with the use of traditional language textbook than this class with *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts*? Explain.

13. In your future study, would you like to read more *contemporary Chinese popular literary texts* on your own? Explain.

Appendix 3 Students' Background Information

No	Age	Gender	First Language	Background	Other majors (apart from Chinese)	Study years	Reasons for learning Chinese (higher to lower priority)	Language proficiency
S1	18	Female	English/Cantonese	Chinese	N/A	8	Family, job	Medium
S2	18	Male	English/Cantonese	Chinese	Education	6	Culture, family, job	Medium
S3	22	Male	English	Australian	International studies/media	5	Culture, people, job	High
S4	22	Female	English/Italian	Australia	Spanish	3	Language, culture	Medium
S5	45	Female	English/Cantonese	Hong kong	N/A	3	Culture, Job, family	High
S6	28	Male	English	Australian	French/Latin	4.5	Culture, language, job	High
S7	28	Male	English	Britain	Science	4.5	Culture	Low
S8	21	Female	English	Australian	Law/Chinese	3	Culture, job	Low
S9	19	Female	English	Australian	N/A	4	Culture, language, job	Medium
S10	23	Female	English/Italian	Italian	Spanish	3	Language, culture	Medium
S11	19	Female	English	Australian	N/A	3	Interest, job	High
S12	25	Male	English/Cantonese	Chinese	Commerce	9	Job, language, family	High
S13	20	Female	English	Korean	Education	4	Job	High
S14	20	Female	English/Hokkien	Chinese	Education	5	Job, family	Medium
S15	28	Female	English	Australian	Arts	4	Job, culture	Low
S16	21	Female	English/Spanish	Bolivian	Education, Spanish	8	Job	Medium
S17	20	Female	English	South African	Commerce	3	Job, culture	Low
S18	19	Female	English	Australian	Management, International relations	3	Job, culture	Low

**Appendix 4 List of the Selected Contemporary Chinese
Popular Literary Texts in Experimental Course**

Topic	Title and Author	Sources	Literary form	Length	Reading mode
Family Love (<i>qinqing jiating</i> / 亲情家庭)	Mum Enjoys Happiness (<i>Mama xiangfu</i> /妈妈享福) (Unknown)	http://www.tudou.com/programs/view/FitrEv_TWL4/	Micro fiction/ Video	Short	Warm up
	Telephone (<i>Dianhua</i> / 电话) (Unknown)	http://www.tudou.com/programs/view/j5SpC2FMon4/	Micro fiction/ Radio story	Short	Warm up
	One Home Letter (<i>Yi feng jiashu</i> / 一份家书) (Li Chunbo)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf0mR7YeRQ8	Pop song lyrics / MTV	Short	Warm up
	SMS to parents (Gei fumu de duanxin/给父母的短信) (Unknown)	Zou, X. (2008). <i>Carnivals on the Plaza: Contemporary Popular Literature and Art (Guangchang shang de kuanghuan: dangdai liuxing wenxue yishu yanjiu / 广场上的狂欢: 当代流行文学艺术研究)</i> . Beijing: China Social Science Press.	SMS	Short	Warm up
	Family Rules of the Tiger Mother (<i>Huma jiagui</i> /虎妈家规) (Amy Chua)	Chua, A. (2011). <i>Battle hymn of the tiger mother</i> . Bloomsbury Publishing.	Excerpt from autobiographical novel (Chinese version)	Short	Warm up
	Mother (<i>Muqin</i> /母亲) (Zhang Junyi, Che Xing)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQ5i-mCugyI	Pop song lyrics/ MTV	Short	Intensive
	Because...So...(Yin wei, suoyi /因为, 所以) (Unknown)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLDI3UgUfKY	Micro film screen scripts/ Video	Medium	Intensive
	So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University (<i>Suoyi, Beida xiongmei</i> / 所以, 北大兄妹):Family Rules of Wolf Father (<i>Langba jiagui</i> /狼爸家规) (Chapter Three) (Xiao Baiyou)	Xiao, B. (2011), <i>So, Brothers and Sisters in Peking University</i> . Shanghai: Shanghai Joint Publishing.	Excerpt from an autobiographical novel	Long	Intensive
	The Lunch in Heaven (<i>Tiantang wucan</i> / 天堂午餐)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYLxbBACfgw	Micro film/ Video	Medium	Extensive

Appendix 5a Pre-test Questions

1. Listening test (HSK-Level 4)

2. **Oral test (5 minutes):** Choose one of the two topics and give presentations: Music, Tourist Attractions

3. Reading, Writing and Cultural Test

(You have 60 minutes for this part. Please time yourself.)

一碗馄饨

那天，小女孩跟妈妈又吵架了，她非常生气，转身向门外跑去。她走了很长时间，看到前面有个面摊，香喷喷，热腾腾，她这才感觉到饿了。可是，她摸遍身上的口袋，连一个硬币也没有。

面摊的主人是一个很和蔼的老婆婆，老婆婆看到小女孩站在那边，就问：“孩子，你是不是要吃面？”

“可是，可是我没带钱。”她有些不好意思地回答。“没关系，我请你吃。”老婆婆很热心地招呼她，“来，你坐下，我煮一碗馄饨给你。”

很快，老奶奶端来一碗馄饨和一碟小菜。她满怀感激，刚吃了几口，眼泪忽然就掉下来，纷纷落在碗里。

“你怎么了？”老婆婆关切地问。“我没事，我只是感激。”她一边擦着泪水，一边对老婆婆说：“我们不认识，你就对我这么好。可是我自己的妈妈怎么对我...？我跟她吵架，她竟然把我赶出来，还叫我不要再回去！”

老婆婆听了，平静地说：“孩子，你怎么会这么想呢？你想想看，我只是煮一碗馄饨给你吃，你就这么感激我，那你自己的妈妈煮了十多年的饭给你吃，你为什么不去感激她呢？你为什么还要跟她吵架呢？”

女孩愣住了。女孩匆匆吃完馄饨。她开始往家走去。当她走到家附近时，一眼就看到疲惫不堪的母亲，正在路口张望……母亲看到她，脸上立即露出喜色：“你这个淘气包，赶快过来吧。饭早就做好了，你再不回来吃，菜都凉了！”这时，她的眼泪又开始掉了下来。

有时候，我们会对别人给予的小恩小惠“感激不尽”，却对亲人的一辈子恩情“视而不见”。(585 words)

Reading and Writing Questions: Please write an interpretation of the text (including summary and critical response).

Cross-cultural question: In terms of the relationship between parents and children, do you think there are any similarities and differences between Chinese culture and the culture in your country?

Appendix 5b Post-test Questions

1. Listening test (HSK-Level 4) (30 minutes)

2. Oral test (5 minutes): Choose one of the two topics and give presentations: Food, Festivals

3. Reading, Writing and Cultural Test (60 minutes):

第一百个客人

中午尖峰时间过去了,原本拥挤的小吃店,客人都已散去,老板正要休息的时候,有人走了进来。那是一位老奶奶和一个小男孩。

“牛肉汤饭一碗要多少钱呢?”

奶奶坐下来,拿出钱袋,数了数钱,叫了一碗汤饭,热气腾腾的汤饭奶奶将碗推向孙子面前,小男孩吞了吞口水望着奶奶说:“奶奶,您真的吃过中饭了吗?”

“当然了。”奶奶含着一块萝卜泡菜慢慢咀嚼。一晃眼功夫,小男孩就把一碗饭吃个精光。

老板看到这幅景象,走到两个人面前说:“老太太,恭喜您,您今天幸运,是我们的第一百个客人,所以免费。”

之后过了一个多月的某一天,小男孩蹲在小吃店对面像在数着什么东西,使得无意间望向窗外的老板吓了一大跳。

原来小男孩每看到一个客人走进店里,就把小石子放进他画的圈圈里,但是中餐时间都快过去了,小石子却连五十个都不到。

心急如焚的老板打电话给所有的老顾客:“很忙吗?没什么事,我要你来吃碗汤饭,今天我请客。”

像这样打电话给很多人之后,客人开始一个接一个到来。

“八十一,八十二,八十三……”小男孩数得越来越快了。

终于当第九十九个小石子被放进圈圈,小男孩匆忙拉着奶奶的手进了小吃店。

“奶奶,这一次换我请客了。”小男孩有些得意地说。

真正成为第一百个客人的奶奶,让孙子招待了一碗热腾腾的牛肉汤饭。而小男孩就像之前奶奶一样,含了块萝卜泡菜在口中咀嚼着。

吃得津津有味的奶奶问小孙子:“要不要留一些给你?”

没想到小孩却拍拍他的小肚子,对奶奶说:“不用了,我很饱,奶奶您看……。”(607 words)

Reading and Writing Questions: Please write an interpretation of the text (including summary and critical response).

Cross-cultural question: In terms of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, do you think there are any similarities and differences between Chinese culture and the culture in your country?

Appendix 5c Samples of Students' Answers to Tests

Sample 1 Student 12: high language proficiency student

Pre-test

Reading and writing test:

有一天小女儿跟她的妈妈吵架了,小女儿很生气地
离家出走了。她走了很久后发现自己又~~没有~~没有
没有钱。而叔叔的老木是一个和蔼可亲的老奶奶,
她热情地招呼了小女儿,她又请~~她~~她吃了石斑、馄饨
和小菜。小女儿很感激老奶奶,可是老奶奶却告诉了
她亲情的的重要性。小女儿回家看见出来找她的妈妈终于明白了
她一直对妈妈的恩情不见而不见了。

这个故事是一个很有深度的故事,它教会了我们家母亲
对孩子的包容和关心。在这个故事里,虽然妈妈跟
小女儿吵架后把小女儿赶出家门,但是心里
还是在乎着小女儿,妈妈把~~它~~它做好以后
疲惫不堪地去找小女儿,又再透过老奶奶
的话表达出人们了对小恩小事的恩情很重视
却对在身边关怀和经常照顾的人的恩情
一直“不见而不见了”,由此教会了我们
水思源的人生道理。

Cultural test:

我跟我妈妈的关系跟中国的家庭大有
分别。我妈妈是一个传统的澳洲女人,她不
要求我要有很好的成绩,也不要求我将来要
照顾她。我妈妈的愿望是我早点学会自立,
她也希望早点出来找工作,对社会有贡献,而最
重要的是不用她照顾我。我妈妈跟很
多澳洲家庭一样,在我十八岁生日以后给了我
一把家里的钥匙,说“家里的大门为你
常开,以后有困难或麻烦的事情永远又欢迎
你回来找我们。我们会尽我们的能力
帮助你,从这一刻开始,你的人生是属于你
自己的。”这跟中国的家庭最大的分别就是
家庭给予你的自由和你只需要照顾自己的未来
而不用想着家,但是家的大门会一直欢迎你。

Post-test

Reading and writing test:

在午饭时间快要过去的时候，一位老奶奶和一个小男孩子进了饭店。奶奶买了一碗汤饭，自己不舍得就把它让给小男孩了。老板看到了后主动地告诉她她是第一百个客人所以免费请了他们一吨饭。过了一段时间后老板看见了小男孩在饭店外卖饭，老板马上打电话给老顾客们叫他们来吃饭，说他请客。小男孩拉着奶奶的手进了饭店，让她真正地成为第一百位客人。最后这一次小男孩请了他奶奶吃饭。

这个故事主要讲述了三个人物通过两个善意的谎言来表达出人与人之间的关爱，长辈对晚辈的牺牲和晚辈对长辈恩情的报答。奶奶作为长辈关心自己的孙子，她宁愿自己不吃也要让自己的孙子吃一顿饱饭。然后孙子作为晚辈，他懂得爱护奶奶。小孩子虽然没有工作，但是他仍然希望通过自己的努力来报答奶奶。最后老板作为社会的一员充分地展示出人人为我，我为人人的精神，他用了一个既温和又婉转的方式帮助有需要的人。

Cultural test:

中国与西方国家对于祖父母和孙子之间的关系上的观点有着非常大的差异。首先中国文化崇尚「百行以孝为先」，孝的定义是指晚辈回报长辈的恩情，并遵从长辈的意愿。在西方国家或在英语里并没有这一个词，大多词典里把孝译为「尊敬」(Honor)。在澳大利亚，孙辈没有着一定要照顾祖父母的责任，老人有着对自己老后生活作出安排的责任。如果孙子不愿意为照顾祖母操劳，他大多可以完全不管。我有一些朋友就因为他的母亲不喜欢他的祖父母而一辈子都没见过他的爷爷和奶奶。我觉得不无论孩子长多大或者有着多么大的成就，在父母和祖父母的眼里我们永远都是小孩。长辈们从我们出生就用心地呵护和教导我们，如果因为长大了就淡化了他们为我们作出的一切是不可原谅的。

Sample 2 Student 2: Intermediate language proficiency student

Pre-test

Reading and writing test:

小女孩跟妈妈吵架了，所以小女孩去
外边走了很长时间。小女孩相逢一个面摊。
香喷喷，热腾腾让她饿了。因为小女孩
忘带钱，可是主人是一个很和蔼的老婆婆，愿意
请她吃。老婆婆的美意由小女孩觉得感激，开哭。
老婆婆说不要对我感，只是我^让第一次做你饭，
应该对你^{妈妈}这么感激！

这个故事教很容易“视而不见”。如果我们
习惯我们的老亲对我们关心，还很容易^想把他们
想当然。有时候，要有吵架^让亮堂。同时，
你有一个问题的话，应该寻找一个英明的
老婆婆给你参谋一下。

Cultural test:

当然有很多相似性。我小的时候
跟我父母吵架。以后觉得我把
他们的爱想当然，还没有升值。
可是^{别人}跟父母吵架后，~~不~~寻找面
摊的老婆婆！（开玩笑）。但是
我们对这个问题~~讨论~~讨论，这是
有人对我们很好，他们常常说
我们应该对我们的父母恭敬。

Post-test

Reading and writing test:

一位老太太和她的孙子到外边散步,老太太给她的孙子买了一碗汤。小吃店的老板发现她没有足够的钱给自己也买一碗。老板很同情,就告诉老太太她是第一百个客人,所以可以免费。几个月后的一天,小男孩回到小吃店,但是没有看到一个客人来。老板知道小男孩儿想成为第一百个客人,那样就可以免费。于是老板就给他的客人一个打电话,请他们来吃。等到有九十九位客人来后,老板让小男孩成为第一百客人,

因为奶奶只能买得起一碗汤可是都给了孙子,所以她非常无私。当然,小男孩应该纳闷为什么奶奶不也喝一碗,也许他还小,不能理解奶奶的处境。可是老板发现了奶奶的处境,他同情奶奶,想帮助她,但是又不想让奶奶丢脸。几个月后,当老板知道小男孩又想得到免费汤后,老板又一次表现出了他的善心,想办法让小男孩成为第一百个客人得到免费汤。可是这次小男孩是想送给奶奶,为表达他的感激之情。

Cultural test:

我觉得中国和澳大利亚的文化有很大的差异,但是在这种情况下,两国的文化又很相似。因为我的外祖父母从来没有遇到经济困难,所以他们没有这个故事中的奶奶的处境,但是我的外祖父母也像故事中的奶奶一样,一直待我比对他们自己更好。我觉得世界上的爷爷奶奶都很疼爱自己孙子,孙女,他们都希望自己的儿孙生活得比自己更幸福。我小的时候就经常问他们表示我的感激之情,比如对他们说“谢谢”,给他们画画儿,或者帮助他们做家务。现在我长大了,我会带我外婆去去午饭,给她买鲜花。我也常常去她家和外婆一起边喝咖啡边聊天儿。我认为,不管在澳大利亚还是中国,祖父母都很爱自己的孙子,孙女,相反,孙子和孙女们也都尊重他们的祖父母。

Sample 3 Student 18: low language proficiency student

Pre-test

Reading and writing test:

小女孩跟妈妈又吵架了，她就跑去。
她跟很老婆婆聊聊天。她给小
女孩吃一碗馄饨，所以小女孩很
感激，可是对她的妈妈很生气。
我觉得这长文章说明小孩子常常
不感激他们的父母。常常小孩很淘气。
一般来说，人对陌生人比亲人感激
多了。

Cultural test:

我觉得人在中国平常对上面比 ao zhou
人恭敬多了。可是我对我妈妈、
爸爸很感激。他们^真对我很^赞。

Post-test

Reading and writing test:

在小吃店中午尖峰时段间,一个老奶奶和一个小男孩进来了。他们幸运因为是第一百客人,所以免费。之后过了一个多月的某一天,小男孩是尊小吃店计数客人。一看第九十九的客人,急忙跟奶奶去小吃店。他说他要请客。我觉得老板太心急如焚,可是真的好人。小男孩也是很好人因为他对奶奶心眼好。也是对上面尊重的。文章关系到祖孙的关系。

Cultural test:

小孩子对上面者有尊重。我觉得不顾文化祖孙的关系者很接近的。我是我奶奶的关系很接近的。我常常帮忙她,因为我照料她。Grandparents are there to spoil their grandchildren & look after them so when the grandchildren grow up, it's instinct to do the same back.

Appendix 6 A sample of Students' Assignment Answers

第三周作业 Week 3 Assignment

一、复习(Review)

1. 这星期你学到了哪些关于好朋友和友情的生词? 请在旁边写上拼音和英语解释

	E.g. 挚友 (zhì yǒu): bosom friend;	同喜同悲 (tóng xǐ tóng bēi): share laughs and ears
	观念 (guān niàn) opinion	陪伴 (péi bàn) to accompany
	知心 (zhī xīn) caring/intimate	孤单 (gū dān) lonely
	足够 (zú gòu) enough	背景 (bèi jǐng) rear view view of back
	无力 (wú lì) helpless	失去 (shī qù) to lose
	可贵 (kě guì) to be treasured	珍惜 (zhēn xī) to treasure to value
	牵挂 (qiān guà) worry	伤害 (shāng hài) to injure/harm
收获 (shōu huò) to gain to harvest	心痛 (xīn tòng) heartache	

2. 学习了《闺蜜》这部微电影, 选择一个问题回答。

(Choose one of the following questions to answer) YouTube: 微电影闺蜜 (9: 27)

(1) 如果你是女生, 你觉得你和你的闺蜜的关系和这部微电影中的闺蜜关系有什么异同? 如果你是男生, 你觉得你和你的铁瓷的关系和女生之间的闺蜜关系有什么不同? (If you are a girl, do you think there are any similarities and differences between you and your BFF with the relationship in the movie? If you are a boy, do you think there are any differences between girls' friendship and boys' friendship?)

(2) 你觉得闺蜜关系是否也反映了中西方文化的差异? (Do you think there are any differences of girls' friendship between Chinese culture and western culture?)

东方文化
西方文化

我觉得中国文化的闺蜜关系和西方文化的闺蜜关系一样。他们都“一生一起走”，“一句话一辈子”，“一生情一杯酒”。这三句话意味着，不管^{什么}国家，真正的朋友^{都会}同甘共苦。像友情歌曲歌词《朋友》一样，和朋友不曾孤单过。虽然有伤或者有痛，但是朋友还相伴永远。所以我^{觉得}中国文化的闺蜜关系的观点和西方文化的闺蜜关系的观点相近。他们^都认为友情非常珍惜。

二、课文自学 (self-learning) : 《致我们终将逝去的青春》片段

1. 生词短语学习 : 从课文中筛选 10 个描写外貌的生词或短语, 并在旁边写上拼音和英语解释。(Select and write down ten new words or short sentences, which describe appearance, from the text. Put pinyin and translation alongside)

文科女生		工科女生	
大一		五官细致 (wǔguān xìzhì) delicate face	胸大无脑 (xiōng dà wú nǎo) big chest but mindless
大二		身材高挑 (shēn cái gāo tiǎo) tall in stature	恐龙 (kǒnglóng) ugly (disgusting)
大三		气质出众 (qìzhì chūzhòng) beautiful & graceful	轮廓立体 (lúnkuò lìtǐ) angular face
大四		青春可爱的 (qīngchūn kě'ài) young & cute	端庄大气 (duānzhuāng dàqì) graceful
		前凸后翘 (qián tū hòu qiào) good figure	朴素 (pǔ sù) plain & simple

Wǔ gān xiè

2. 语法学习

(1) 就算/即使...也... Even though

就算郑微一向自视甚高, 也不得不承认, 阮莞是绝对的美女!

E.g. 即使/就算下雨, 我也不带伞。Even though it's raining, I will not bring umbrella.

Make a sentence: 就算他说的不对, 你也不该发那么大的火。

(2) 连...也/都... Even

就连最朴素的黎维娟也并不难看。

E.g. 汉语声调太难学了, 连有些中国人都说不好。





Chinese tone is too difficult to learn; even some native speakers could not speak well.

Make a sentence: 就连你也不理解我的心。

3. 课文理解 : 给 402 宿舍的六个女生做名片 (Name Card)

(Make name cards for six girls according to the text. If no information provided, write N/A. draw what do you think they look like if you like ^_^)

<p>E.g. 姓名: 郑微 籍贯(哪里人): N/A 专业: 土木系 外貌: 长得不错; 头发像碳一样黑, 皮肤像雪一样白, 眼睛像星星一样亮; 青春小美女。 性格: N/A 爱好: 喜欢海侃 (聊天)</p>		<p>姓名: 朱小北 籍贯(哪里人): 东北 专业: 机械或自动化 外貌: 短的头发, 不穿裙子, 性格: 大大咧咧 爱好: N/A</p>	
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姓名: 卓美 籍贯(哪里人): 本市 专业: 计算机 外貌: N/A 性格: N/A 爱好: 吃和睡		姓名: 黎维娟 籍贯(哪里人): 河南开封 专业: 管理 外貌: N/A 性格: 一板一眼, 平时做事说话一喜一衰的 爱好: N/A	
姓名: 何绿芽 籍贯(哪里人): 本市 郊县 专业: 机械 外貌: N/A 性格: 老实本分 爱好: N/A		姓名: 阮莞 籍贯(哪里人): N/A 专业: N/A 外貌: 五官精致, 身材高挑, 气质出众 性格: N/A 爱好: N/A	

4. 回答问题 选择一个问题回答。

(Choose one of the following questions to answer)

- (1) 如果你是女生, 这六个女孩你最喜欢和哪一个做闺蜜, 为什么? 如果你是男生, 这六个女孩你最喜欢哪一个, 为什么?
- (2) 看了这段文章, 你觉得西方的大学生活和中国的大学生活有什么不一样? 你更喜欢那种, 为什么?

如果我是女生我最喜欢和何绿芽和阮莞做闺蜜。
 我想和何绿芽做闺蜜, 因为她是个老实本分的姑娘。比如说, 如果我和何绿芽都誓守秘密, 我相信她一定秘而不宣。第二个理由是因为别人开心, 她也开心。所以我觉得我们可以有福同享, 有难同当。她会成为很好的朋友。
 我也喜欢和阮莞做闺蜜, 因为她很漂亮。美女总是有很多帅哥朋友。所以我可以交她的朋友。
 交俊伟的男朋友。还有, 她很漂亮, 所以我想我会^{莫俊}在意自己的外表, 衣着考究。我觉得如果我是她的闺蜜, 我会变漂亮。
 得越来越漂亮。

Appendix 7 Interview Questions

1. 这个学期的中文课你觉得你学到东西了吗？如果学到了，学了些什么？如果没有学到，为什么？ *(Have you learnt any things from the Chinese course this semester? If so, what did you achieve? If not, why?)*
2. 在我们学过的流行文学作品中，你觉得最有意思的是哪些？为什么？ *(What kinds of selected contemporary popular texts attracted you most in the selected popular literary texts? why?)*
3. 那你觉得这学期最难的是什么呢？为什么？ *(What do you think are the most difficult things in this semester? Why?)*
4. 当你遇到困难的时候，你会怎么办？ *(What did you do when you encountered some difficulties?)*
5. 那你觉得我们今年用的材料和你以前用的课文有哪些不一样？ *(Do you think there are any differences between the used materials this year with the previous texts you used before?)*
6. 除了上课的材料以外，你还有自己找一些材料来学习吗？ *(Besides the materials used in this course, did you find other materials to learn Chinese?)*
7. 你对本课程使用当代流行文学作品有什么建议吗？ *(Do you have any suggestions to the use of contemporary Chinese popular literature in this course?)*
8. 其他*(others)*

Appendix 8 Assessment Scales of Language and Cultural Tests

Reading and writing skills

1	The answer is a summary of the text. It copies the text's content. The learner shows no motivation or ability to analyse the meaning of the text. Total and obvious misreading and linguistic errors occur.
2	The answer is a summary of the text. The essay paraphrases the text's content. The learner shows little motivation or ability to analyse the meaning of the text. Major misreading and linguistic errors occur.
3	The answer is an interpretation, but the interaction between text and reader lacks depth. It only presents one possibility to understand the text. Some misreading and linguistic errors occur.
4	The answer is an interpretation that provides a thoughtful analysis of the text. Multiple positions are considered. The interpretation is based partly on the students' original thoughts. However, the student neither compares or contrasts the multiple perspectives nor makes a commitment to one interpretation. Minor misreading and linguistic errors occur.
5	The answer is an interpretation that provides a thoughtful analysis of the text. Multiple perspectives are assumed, which are partly based on the students' original thoughts. The writer is also able to contrast these perspectives and shows commitment to his interpretation. Very few or no misreading and linguistic errors occur.

Cultural skills

1	Descriptions are inaccurate.
2	Little description but poorly developed.
3	Describes basic points accurately.
4	Compares and contrasts perspectives, uses examples to illustrate.
5	Content knowledge is extensive, analyses are sophisticated.

Oral skills

	Fluency	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Grammar
1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make presentation virtually impossible.	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make presentation virtually impossible.	Pronunciation problems so severe so to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Errors in grammar and word order so severe so to make speech virtually unintelligible.
2	Usually hesitant; often forced into silence by language limitations.	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary: comprehension quite difficult.	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat in order to make himself or herself understood.	Grammar and word-order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict himself or herself to basic patterns.
3	The presentation is frequently disrupted by the students' search for the correct manner of expression.	Student frequently uses the wrong words; presentation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener and occasionally lead to misunderstanding.	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order which occasionally obscure meaning.
4	Generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression.	Student occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies.	Always intelligible, though one is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate intonation patterns.	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word-order errors which does not obscure meaning.
5	Fluent and effortless	Use of vocabulary and idioms approximate that of a native speaker.	Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker.	Grammatical usage and word-order approximate that of native speaker.

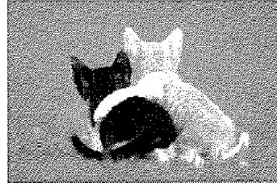
Appendix 9 A Sample of Teaching Material Design

Week 3: 青春友情主题 (1)

一、友情歌曲歌词《朋友》

1. 根据英文翻译, 填写歌词

(Fill in blank of the lyrics according to the English translation)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lbPgfKK7m4>

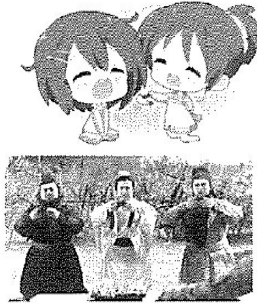
这____年, 一个人 风也过, 雨也走 有过____, 有过____ 还记得____什么 ____过, 才会____ 会____, 会回首 终有____, 终有你, 在心中 朋友____ 那些日子不再 一____话 一____ 一____情 一____酒 朋友 不曾____过 一____朋友 你会____ 还有____ 还有____ 还要走 还有我	All these years, all alone, Through wind, through rain, There were tears, there were wrongs, I still remember what to persevere. Because I truly loved, so I can understand, I might feel alone; I might look back, I always had dreams; I always had you in my heart. Friends walk the life together, Those days will not return, one sentence, one life, A lifelong relationship, a cup of wine. With friends, (we) never feel alone, Call you one sound of friend, you will understand, There are still wounds; there are still pains, Must go our separate ways, always there is me.
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2. 看歌曲 MV, 修改你填写的歌词。(Watch the MV of the song, revise what you have written)

3. 讨论:

- (1) 在这首歌曲中, 你觉得什么是朋友? 他应该有什么特点?
- (2) 你觉得友情和爱情、亲情有什么异同? 哪个最重要, 哪个次重要, 请你排一个顺序, 并回答为什么。

二、 关于最好的朋友

	挚友 zhì y u 知己 zhī j 知心朋友 闺蜜 guī mì 铁瓷 tiě cí 铁哥们 死党 sǐ dǎng 结拜(bài)兄弟	英语或别的语言中有哪些表示“最好的朋友”的词语？ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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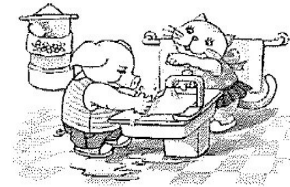
Task: 描述一下你最好的朋友。

三、 友情微小说《猫和猪》

1. 阅读《猫和猪》这篇微小说，理解大意。

(Read the micro-fiction and understand the meaning)

- (1) 猫为什么哭了？
- (2) 这个故事中的友情或友谊是怎样的？



2. 根据这篇小说写的友情主题，写一篇少于 140 字的微小说。

猫和猪是好朋友。 一天，猫掉进大坑 kēng (pit)， 猪拿来绳子，猫叫猪把绳子扔下来， 结果它整捆扔了下去。 猫很郁闷地说：这样扔下来，怎么拉我上去？ 猪说：不然怎么做？ 猫说：你应该拉住绳子的一头啊！ 猪就跳下去，拿了绳子的一头，说：现在可以了！ 猫哭了，哭得很幸福。 有种朋友不是很聪明，却值得你终生拥有。	_____和_____是好朋友。 一天，_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
---	---

四、闺蜜 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40qw9gsWdAs>

1. 独白听写(1)

在我的_____里
朋友 其实有一个最_____的就_____了
女孩之间通常会把这种_____的朋友 叫做闺蜜
在你最_____的时候,你的闺蜜可以最快走进你的_____
在你最_____的时候,也是你的闺蜜向你伸出最_____的双手
我从来不奢望你跟你的闺蜜之间的友谊,一定要_____
闺蜜的_____不仅仅是因为你们一同走过的_____
还有分别以后依然会时时想起的那份_____
在我的心里,闺蜜有一个就足够了
在这个故事里面,晶晶也是这么想的……

2. (1993年9月 上海)

晶晶是一个带着梦想走进戏剧学院的女孩,
她热爱表演事业,性格坚强、感性,
来到戏剧学院,考上大学是她第二次出远门,
她的感觉很复杂:兴奋、紧张,又有点孤独,
见到萌萌的那一刻,晶晶就有一种感觉,
萌萌会是自己一生的朋友
不因为别的,就因为感觉……
闺蜜,也可以_____
……

什么是感性?

1. 这一段讲了什么?
2. 介绍一下晶晶。
3. 她和萌萌是怎么认识的?
4. 她们是怎样建立关系的?
5. “一见钟情”是什么意思?

3. “哎呀 衣服不能这么洗,这么洗没法穿啦”

“那以后我的衣服你都帮我洗”
“美得你,袜子全你洗”
“行,成交”
爱情有保质期,友情也有
过了新鲜劲儿,两个人的缺点也都会慢慢暴露出来
萌萌的什么缺点晶晶都能忍受,但唯一让晶晶难过的是
和自己的专一相比,萌萌却是一个博爱的人
晶晶的眼中只有萌萌一个朋友,但萌萌却有很多朋友
“演出准备的怎么样啊”
“挺好的,我跟你讲...”
……
闺蜜,其实_____

1. 这一段讲了什么?
2. 中国闺蜜总是手拉着手?你和你的闺蜜会吗?你和你的闺蜜最亲密的表现是什么?
3. 晶晶和萌萌的性格有什么不同?
4. 晶晶为什么不高兴了?
5. 如果你是晶晶,你会“吃醋”吗?
6. 晶晶觉得闺蜜有一个就足够了,你觉得呢?

.....

4. 对于每一个学表演的孩子来说，
上学时就有机会进剧组是一件很让人兴奋的事情
晶晶大二的时候就开始接戏了
不单如此，晶晶还很希望萌萌能和自己一起进组
“喂萌萌，我跟导演说好了，你明天过来见见导演吧”

1. 这一段讲了什么？
2. 如果你和你的闺蜜一起竞争一个很好的职位，你该怎么办？

.....

闺蜜 就是一起_____ 一起_____

(1997年7月1日)

.....

5. 就在香港回归的那一年，萌萌和晶晶都大学毕业了
萌萌留在了上海，而晶晶去了北京
残缺是一种美，有的时候，距离也是一种美
有人说，距离是爱情的杀手
但对于友情来说，距离却是催化剂
尽管离开了上海，但是晶晶仍然思念着那座美丽的城市
更重要的是，在那座城市里有晶晶最好的朋友——她的闺蜜：萌萌

距离是爱情的杀手却是友情的催化剂你同意吗？为什么？

.....

(2001年7月13日)

.....

“晶晶”

“啊...”

“要不这样吧，你也别住宾馆了这两天住我家吧，咱俩姐妹好好聊聊”

“那不打扰你们二人世界啊”

“他敢，他敢打扰咱俩我就休了他”

“好 我就喜欢你这份仗义”

...

“你怎么了”

“没事”

“没事你哭什么呀？有谁欺负你了吧？是不是他？电话给我！”

“我不知道你们之间发生了什么，萌萌是我最好的朋友，如果你还想跟她在一块儿，你现在马上跟她道歉”

.....

闺蜜 就是_____的人

.....

6. 晶晶的片约越来越多，萌萌也很忙碌

1. 这段讲了什么？
2. 你和你的男朋友吵架，你的闺蜜会为你挺身而出吗？

两个老朋友电话,从一周一次变成了一月一次,
随后变成了一季一次,再后来,只有春节,两人才能收到对方的祝福
这并不是两人感情淡漠的表现,
有时候,老朋友的位置,就是藏在对方内心的最深处

...

“你可是我的伴娘啊,你必须得来”

“你结婚我一定去”

...

演员最忌讳的就是私事和档期冲突

晶晶没有忘记她和萌萌的约定

但是晶晶万没有料到

萌萌的婚礼,正好赶上晶晶的新戏即将杀青

最后两场戏,女主角晶晶是不能缺席的

“请假这个真难为我了,还有两天就杀青了,你一走全组都停,我没法放你走”

...

“晶晶,你怎么没来啊!今天是我结婚你都不来,我心里特别难受”

.....

闺蜜就是_____的人。

.....

7. 独白听写(2)

闺蜜,多_____的称呼啊,

不管你有多_____,不管你有多_____

如果生命中少了这样一份_____

也只能看到一个孤单的背影

很多朋友,在你_____了之后才懂得_____

很多朋友,只有_____了以后才懂得_____

这是一个关于闺蜜的故事

你有闺蜜吗

.....

1. 这段讲了什么?
2. 如果你的闺蜜不能参加你的婚礼,你会那么伤心吗?
3. 如果你是晶晶,你会怎么做?

1. 说说你和你闺蜜之间的小故事。
2. 你和你的闺蜜的关系和这部微电影中的闺蜜关系有什么异同?
3. 你觉得闺蜜关系是否也反映了中西方文化的差异?

8. Story Schema 故事图式

1. 主题: _____
2. 故事中的人物: 晶晶_____, 萌萌_____。
3. 晶晶和萌萌之间发生了哪些事?
(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____
4. 故事的结局: _____
5. 看了这个故事, 我的感想: _____

Appendix 10 Samples of Teaching Syllabus

Sample 1 warm up reading: SMS to friends (*Gei pengyou de duanxin/给朋友的短信*)

Text	Procedure	Objective	Tasks
SMS to friends (30 minutes)	Stage I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate students' world schemata Encourage students' language output 	1. Discussion: Have you sent SMS to your friends to show your love before? What is the content?
	Stage II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct students' pronunciation Expand students' vocabulary Help students learn new sentence structure Improve students' writing skills 	1. Read the two SMS aloud 2. Schematic field training I: Share with your classmates what words you always use to express your love to your friend (in Chinese). 3. Schematic field training II: Collect and learn the words expressing love in SMS poem. 4. Work through and comprehend the text 5. Group creative writing: Write a SMS to your best friend in Chinese according to the given sentence structure 6. Share writings with classmates
	Stage III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students to connect their feelings and life experience with the text Encourage students' creative thinking Encourage students' engagement Arouse students' learning interests 	1. Discussion: (1) If your friend sends you the similar SMS to make fun of you, will you feel being offended? (2) If you receive such SMS, what will you do? (3) How do you make joke of your good friends?

Sample 2 intensive reading: To Our Youth that is Fading Away (*Zhi women zhong jiang shiqu de qingchun*/致我们终将逝去的青春)

Text	Procedure	Objective	Tasks
To Our Youth that is Fading away <i>(90 minutes)</i>	Stage I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate students' world schemata • Encourage students' engagement and language output 	1. Discussion (1) What is 'youth' (<i>qingchun</i>) (2) Do your parents always miss their 'youth' period'?
	Stage II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve students' reading skills • Improve listening skills • Expand vocabulary and build linguistic schemata (university life, subject, place, personality, appearance, dormitory, etc) • Improve students' descriptive ability and oral skills. 	<i>(Students are asked to preview the text before class)</i> 1. Vocabulary learning (Semantic field training): Find the words from the text to fill in the different categories (university life, subject, place, personality, appearance, dormitory, etc) 2. Read the whole text and create six name cards for six girls 3. According to the name card, introduce one of the six girls.
	Stage III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage student's connection of their perceptions and feelings with the text • Encourage student's language output and affective responses 	1. Discussion (1) In this five girls, who Zheng Wei like? Who Zheng Wei does not like? Why? (2) In this six girls described in the text, who do you like best? Why? (3) Look at the movie photo of 'so young' and guess who is who? Do these images fit your imagination when you read the text?

Sample 3 extensive reading: No house, No car (*Meiyou fang, meiyou che/没*

有房，没有车)

Text	Procedure	Objective	Tasks
No house, no car (30 minutes)	Stage I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate students' world schemata • Arouse students' interests in this new text 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What factors will you consider for getting married? 2. In your country, will a girl marry a man without stable job, house and car?
	Stage II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand students' vocabulary • Arouse students' learning interests • Enhance students' ability of summary • Help students be familiar with one component of target culture 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the lyrics of the song and comprehend it. 2. Watch the MTV of the song and guess every guy's occupation. 3. Semantic filed: collect the words describing the occupation of the guys in this MTV 4. Discussion: what happened to these guys? Briefly describe their situations.
	Post-reading (10 in)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students' critical thinking. • Promote student's cultural understanding. • Promote student's intercultural language learning. • Encourage students to connect their feelings and life experience with the text. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) What are your feelings after learning this song? (2) What social phenomenon is reflected in this song? Does this phenomenon exist in your country? (3) In your opinion, why 'house' matters to Chinese people? (4) Do you have any suggestions for these poor boys?

Appendix 11 Original Texts of Students' Interviews

Transcripts Quoted in this Thesis

Page	Student code	Chinese original texts
141	S4	我不喜欢那个 Practical Reader, 我觉得非常奇怪知道吗? 然后生词不是那个重要的生词, 我记得, 不是去年, 我忘了, 一个生词是 ice sculpture.....我可能不会说 foot, 但是我会说 ice sculpture, 知道吗? 我觉得我非常喜欢今年的课文, 今年的电影.....不喜欢那个 textbook。
141	S10	我喜欢学习很不同的新词语, 因为我要做, 我不喜欢用共同的词语解释我的看法, 一样的词语。
141	S3	(我学到了)那个, 中国有钱的人我们叫高富帅, 然后这个没有钱的人叫屌丝, 这个我是特别学到的东西。因为我以前学的都是有钱人和没有钱的人, 穷人这样子。恩, 就是在这一个学期中, 我学到了很多不同的东西。
142	S15	特别是现在, 我和我男朋友分手了, 我可以用很多词, 比如说闺蜜啊, 现在我靠我的闺蜜和朋友的支持。恩, 也帮我同喜同悲, 现在我感觉是无助。恩, 我觉得我有点想他, 因为我的男朋友是很老实的人, 也是随和的人, 我们俩住在一起所以分手以后我应该搬了, 所以我很难过。
142	S8	我们不但看到中国的流行文化, 而且我们学了中国的俚语。比如说, 我们学过闺蜜, 铁瓷, 电灯泡和结拜兄弟, 因为我知道中文俚语, 所以我现在可以跟我的中国朋友说话。也了解中国的电影和电视。我认为, 如果中国人听到我用中文俚语, 他们认为我更认真。一些主题教了我们流行的短语, 我们学习了人在职场主题, 如果我申请在中国工作, 这些新词将很有益的。例如, 待遇、辞职、和简历, 我很喜欢看到杜拉拉, 虽然人物说话很快, 我不得不读中文字幕, 但是这是很好的听中国流行短语的机会。
145	S7	尽管我学过很多次, 每次我上网找资料都有很多生词, 我已经学了四五年, 我还得用词典, 让我伤心.....。
146	S6	都不太难, 但是都有好几个生词..... 但是如果你不知道, 不认识这一个字, 你能会看懂, 不一定每一个字都认识。
153	S8	刚开始我觉得比较难, 我觉得里面说得快, 但是我觉得非常好, 我应该听很快的语言, 但是现在我觉得我的中文越来越好!
153	S8	最困难是他们说得很快很快很快, 所以我听不懂, 但是如果我看

		这个电影，第一个，英文字幕，然后第二次，我看没有字幕的，因为我知道故事，我知道别的人，所以第二次我可以听中文
158	S4	我在课的时候我不喜欢说因为有别的人，会说啊，S4 的汉语说得真不好.
163	S15	我觉得这个学期我学得越来越好，我第一次作业只有 58%，但是现在越来越高
175	S12	今年学的特别有意义，不像往年的，有点不一样，就学些节日啊，民族，音乐什么的！今年学到的东西比较偏向于社会，生活，人的想法
177	S12	比如《最难就业季》，虽然它也是用歌的方式来表达，但是说明了中国现在找工作很难的现象。听过那首歌之后，我打电话问了一下在中国读，刚刚读完大学的表弟，他读会计专业，然后他也觉得找工作很难。他就说毕业就等于失业。然后失业之后就没什么了。
177	S13	我会问中国朋友。他们说在中国比在澳大利亚难，因为好公司都要用很聪明的人，还有从很有名的大学毕业才能进入好公司。有能力的父母帮他们的儿子找工作，而有些没有能力的父母的儿子虽然很聪明，可是却找不到好工作，他们只能在蜗居里。
181	S5	这个 semester，我比较喜欢，因为有很多我可以学的现在中国社会情况，他们怎么样想的，因为我很早移民在这里，我们想的都是我妈妈、爸爸那个时候的情况，没有实际.....所以这个 semester 对我非常好，因为有很多不同的社会现象，亲情家庭是说现在这个年代的。...什么友情啊，还有那个职业，没车没楼，剩女剩男，蜗居，.....背景文化我学很多很多。我只是听过以前，但是没有实质上的去了解。
181	S16	我觉得这个学期我学了很多东西。因为我们学了很多中国文化还有中国社会问题，还有传统，所以我觉得明白很多。因为以前我不明白很多中国人想去别的国家工作，还有，我不知道为什么。我现在知道了。
182-183	S3	中国的喜宴他们最后的时候会闹新房，他们会在这个房子之中和新郎和新娘玩耍。我觉得这个很特别。我觉得如果我是这个新郎，我会很生气，因为这是一个私人的地方。
183-184	S12	最令我感触的就是那首歌“没有房没有车”，之前我在香港的时候就觉得香港的女孩子就特别现实，这首歌“没有车，没有房”在香港的话我不觉得意外，但是经过那段时间我发现原来中国也慢慢有这个拜金的倾向。
183	S4	我觉得剩女的事.....我不同意，但是我懂为什么他们有这样的看

		<p>法，跟澳大利亚的文化不一样，但是，跟意大利的文化非常像。你们知道我的妈妈是意大利人，我的爸爸是希腊人，我的男朋友是西班牙人，在意大利，我的妈妈有个朋友，她 35 岁，她还没结婚，还没有男朋友。大家觉得她 Lala，她是 Lala，但是没有人告诉她你是 Lala 吗？但是大家都觉得。在意大利，在大家都信教，所以如果她是 Lala，不能告诉她的父母。因为跟中国一样有面子，第一个是面子，第二个是家人和亲人，第三个是幸福，重要的事。在西班牙不一样，在西班牙是幸福，然后是家人，然后是面子.....（剩女的事）是个很重要的事，在澳大利亚没有人这样想，但是在澳大利亚有很多意大利人，很多西班牙人，希腊人，他们有一样的看法，</p>
185	S13	<p>每个星期的作业也帮我学到了很多，作业常常问一些对比题目来让我比较中国文化和我的母国的文化，所以有时候我要查很多关于这个题目的资料，花时间去查资料让我更了解中国的文化，中国人的观点还有现代中国很多的社会现象。</p>
195	S1	<p>我觉得有些在我们国家比中国，那方面有点难。虽然我是澳洲人，但我妈妈教我都是用中国的文化来教我.....有些不知道怎么写，没有那么不同，很多都差不多。</p>
203	S5	<p>哦，这个最好！学到很多很多，我以前课文那边呢，我有一段时间我要 give up, 我不想去学，因为我在山东大学也是念课本，回家，太死板，太过死板，念这个，念这个，你不用来上课，也知道老师将会讲这些。但是这个 semester 呢，你不来上课，you miss out something. 这是最好对学生的 encouragement. 我觉得这个 semester 我们学很多很多，maybe 可能是比较难，但是你不会很死板，尤其是我们那些年轻人，太死板。</p>

Appendix 12 A sample of Students' Role Play Transcripts

《杜拉拉升职记》

Cast:

Rose → 玫瑰 (S6)

Lala → 杜拉拉 (S10)

David → 大卫 (S2)

INTRO

(解说员：两年以后，大伟住在泰国。他当导游工作，在船山给游客介绍观光景点。在泰国有一个外国会议，美规的欧洲公司和杜拉拉的美国公司都派人参加了会议。在大伟的船山观光的时候，这三个人见面了。)

拉拉：(walks up to david) 大伟！是你吗？

大伟：阿，是杜拉拉吗？是我大伟，我真是惊呆了！为什么你在泰国？

拉拉：我代表 DB 公司来参加会议！全世界的分公司都来了。这也太惊奇了，我以为再也见不到你了。你为什么在泰国？

大伟：因为我离开公司以后，我没有工作，我不喜欢压力大的工作，所以我找到了一个安静的生活。我觉得在泰国没有压力，也不忙，现在我住在泰国。

拉拉：哦好好，我明白。但是我不懂为什么你没有跟我说再见。我给你打过很多次电话，但是没有接通。

大伟：对不起，我还真不知道你给我打过电话。。。哎呀。。。(rose walks up)

玫瑰：哦，大伟？！和杜拉拉！？我真不敢相信我的眼睛！为什么你们都在泰国？都参加会议吗？对不对？你们仍然在一起吗？结婚了没有？

拉拉：哈哈。。。不是，我已经两年没看见大伟了。今天刚巧见到你们，这是很奇怪！

大伟：我同意！

玫瑰：不好意思，我不知道你们分手了。(awkward silence)

大伟：没关系，来，坐坐！我们都坐下来聊聊吧。(they sit)

拉拉：美规我听到你的欧洲公司成绩很好，祝贺你！(he)

玫瑰：谢谢，你太客气了！我知道你也是一个大老板！哈哈，你的公司是我的公司的竞争！哈哈，你公司的成绩也很好啊！

拉拉：对不起，我有点不舒服，我想回去休息。（gets up to leave）

玫瑰：好，希望你觉得好一点。我可能会在会议上见到你，好，再见！

大伟：（stand up to speak softly）你需要什么东西吗？我们也应该聊一聊，好吗？

拉拉：看吧。

大伟：旅游团结束以后，我来找你。

（拉拉 departs 一大伟 sits back down）

（解说员：海啸袭来，把船翻过来，每个客人都在船上，翻转到海洋。幸运的是，没有人受重伤。）

杜拉拉：大家没事吗？

大卫：没事没事，玫瑰在那儿？

玫瑰：救命啊，救命啊，我不会游泳！

解说员：大卫去帮玫瑰。

大卫：玫瑰，你没事吗？

玫瑰：没有了，现在你在这里！

大卫：好！我们应该帮助大家安全。

（解说员：大卫，玫瑰和杜拉拉帮大家安全。他们找到一座小岛，很废弃的，孤立，很安静。大卫，玫瑰和杜拉拉找到一石头在上面一起坐。）

大卫：我打电话给边境巡逻了，他们说来一个小时先来。等一下！

拉拉：哎呀！我的礼服被破坏了。

玫瑰：小声一点，这件礼服还不贵，你为什么大惊小怪。

拉拉：这个出差一直是一个耻辱。

大卫：这两年过你们做过了什么？

玫瑰：离开 MD 公司以后，我去欧洲游行。

拉拉：欧洲怎么大你到哪里啊？

玫瑰：法国，西班牙，苏格兰，瑞士，荷兰，瑞典，比利时还有希腊。去过了六个月。

大卫：你去了这么多的国家，你几时在欧洲公司开始

玫瑰：去年中旬！一旦我申请我立即得到了这份工作。他们给了我一个位置作为一个科技楼主任。

拉拉：只有 18 个月，你是怎么得到这么高的位置？

玫瑰：他们看着我的简历，看到我以前在 MD 公司的位置，觉得我可以做这个职务。

拉拉：你要面试吗？

玫瑰：不要！

大卫：为什么？

玫瑰：因为他们喜欢我的简历，我以前的职位很高了。我已经有素质，没有必要接受记者面试。

大卫：工作好吗？

玫瑰：工作不错，可是很累。每个星期我需要确保最佳的演示给老板。这份工作非常排水。

拉拉：待遇好不好？

玫瑰：钱好！同事都好每的很友好。我希望能有更少的工作时间。拉拉你呢?? 过了这两年你做到什么？

拉拉：我依然在 MD 公司，在过去的两个年度我没变过。我老了，皮肤变黑了，头发越来越短，越来越白。我觉得这个生活很寂寞。

大卫：甚至没有一个约会马？

拉拉：我有去过几个相亲。但是他们都从第 3 楼的会计师企业。每得都枯燥和乏味，不有趣。

玫瑰：拉拉你已经 36 岁了你还没找到一位男生！小心啊你才是一个剩女。太专注于工作，没有时间玩儿。

拉拉：你呢！你的年龄都大了，你还都没有丈夫。

玫瑰：我的爱情生活很复杂，你不明白。

拉拉：大卫，过这两个年你去哪儿？

大卫：离开 MD 公司的时候我去美国看家人去过了一个月。而不是回到中国，我来这里。我想享受一个放松的生活方式因此我来泰国找到这个巡航导工作

拉拉：你们过这两个年做很有趣的事，我很羡慕。

=====

拉拉：有人来找我们！

(解说员：边境巡逻到了。在船上，他们坐在一起，ROSE 是睡着了。)

大卫：拉拉，对不起。因为我两年前消失得时后，没有告诉你。真的对不起。

拉拉：你知道吗？我每天晚上等你给我打电话。你不知道我有多担心你。接下来的时间，如果你要消失，告诉我。

大卫：你变了。之前，你总是担心自己，现在你担心我。

拉拉：是谁的错？你一言我个样子。

大卫：现在你高兴吗？喜欢你的工作吗？

拉拉：不高兴。现在我是 MD 公司的人力资源经理。我取得了有一点，会实现更。

大卫：你看你又来了！就当 I 刚刚什么都没说... 你一点儿也没变！(Jokingly)拉拉：工作很压力，但是我还要会实现更。现在，我可以在一个较高的位置，但我已经学会不要总是把我的工作，我的首要任务。我错过了一些重要的事件，和失去了几个朋友。

大卫：对，我根你说了。在生活中，还有其他的东两比工作更重要。我高兴你终于明白了。这两年的时间，每天我想，“尽管我消失，我觉得拉拉仍然会是同一个人。”但是呢，我错了。

玫瑰：你们应该已经结婚...!(玫瑰醒了。)

拉拉：哎！你不睡觉吗？！

玫瑰：你们两个都很可爱。我知道你们仍然彼此相爱。当我们在讨论一起在岛上，我可以看到这一点。拉拉，之前大卫和我在一起，但现在呢，他看你的方式不是他看着我的方式。还有拉拉，如果你想向他提问，问他。不回避他。你曾经是一个非常积极的人，现在你正在等待的事情提亮你。某事是大卫。

大卫：玫瑰，发生什么了？

玫瑰：没什么，我这样说，在我的角度来看，你们在等待什么呢？当你结婚，拉拉，我想成为你的伴娘之一。我知道我们从来没有相处得很好，但我喜欢你，我想你和大卫一起属于。我希望我们成为闺蜜。

大卫：拉拉？你觉得什么样啊？

拉拉：这很奇怪。现在我不知道，但我们结果可能成为朋友。

大卫：当然，你可能会成为朋友！但我的意思是，玫瑰说我们结婚的事，你觉得什么？

拉拉：结婚？！现在，这闺蜜比我们结婚重要。

玫瑰：说的好！(To David)大卫，怎么办呢？不要再次的逃跑了，好吗？

(他们都一起笑。)

Here, we assume that a friendship has been built and a wedding is possible. To be continued.

Appendix 13 List of Chinese literature writers' names

A-L	M-Z
Ai Mi/ 艾米: P42	Mian Mian/ 棉棉: P10
Ba Jin/ 巴金: P19	Mu Zimei/ 木子美: P10
Bi Shumin/ 毕淑敏: P25	Murong Xuecun/ 慕容雪村: P42
Chih-Heng Tsai/ 蔡智恒: P41	Ning Caishen/ 宁财神: P42
Chun Shu/ 春树: P10	Shao Jun/ 少君: P42, P195
Cui Jian/ 崔健: P8, P43	Shi Kang/ 石康: P40
Dajun/ 大军: P44	Tu Ya/ 图雅: P42, P195
Ji Xianlin/ 季羨林: P25	Wang Hailing/ 王海鸽: P40
Jiang Zilong/ 蒋子龙: P21	Wang Lili/ 王莉莉: P29
Jin Yong/ 金庸: P8	Wang Meng/ 王蒙: P25
Gao Xingjian/ 高行健: P29, P31	Wang Shuo/ 王朔: P8, P9, P40, P46
Guo Jingming/ 郭敬明: P10	Wei hui/ 卫慧: P10, P29
Guo Moluo/ 郭沫若: P19	Wu Jinliang/ 吴金亮: P21
Han Han/ 韩寒: P10, P42	Xiao Fuxing/ 肖复兴: P25
Lao She/ 老舍: P19	Yu Guangzhong/ 余光中: P25
Liu Liu/ 六六: P40	Zhang Erfeng/ 张二丰: P44
Liu Yong/ 柳永: P7	Zhang Jie/ 张洁: P21
Liu Zhengyun/ 刘震云: P8	Zhang Xianliang/ 张贤亮: P21
Lu Xun/ 鲁迅: P19	Zhu Ziqing/ 朱自清: P19

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