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**The Teaching and Learning of Chinese in
English Primary Schools:
Five Exploratory Case Studies in the
West Midlands region of the UK**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work, except where due acknowledgement is made, or where specific reference is made. This thesis has not been submitted for any higher degree at another university.

Abstract

This study examines four aspects of teaching Chinese in English primary schools – participants’ motivations, teachers’ backgrounds and subject knowledge, the teaching of Chinese and participants’ experience – and potential relationships between them. Building on a previous survey of Chinese teaching in English primary schools (CILT 2007), it provides a more detailed picture of teaching and learning Chinese and has important implications for practitioners and policy makers.

Five case studies were conducted in four English primary schools to investigate the teaching and learning of Chinese. Mixed methods were used to collect data, including a structured questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, lesson observations and field notes.

The findings suggest strong relationships between teachers’ backgrounds and their subject knowledge. These impact upon their teaching as a result of their priorities and preferences in teaching Chinese pinyin, characters, culture and language. This study identifies gaps in different aspects of teachers’ subject knowledge, informing government that the training of future teachers of Chinese should involve either training English primary class teachers in Chinese or equipping Chinese heritage teachers with primary pedagogical skills. Pupils’ motivations and experience suggest that the former may be more successful, as teachers’ pedagogy seems to outweigh their knowledge of Chinese in motivating and maintaining pupils’ interest.

The content of Chinese teaching is unregulated and hotly debated. Pupils’ opinions and experiences of very different teaching styles suggest that Chinese culture and written characters should be included in teaching Chinese. However, this finding has implications for teacher training and pupil study practices.

In addition, this study suggests that pupil expectations constrain teachers’ teaching, and that head teachers play a very important role in the development of Chinese teaching in schools. This study informs government that there is an urgent demand for appropriate guidance for primary teachers of Chinese, as current governmental guidelines are unsuitable for and unused by teachers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Every child should have the opportunity throughout Key Stage 2 to study a foreign language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations (DfES, 2002, p.15).

1.1 Research Background

English government policy concerning language education in primary schools has been ambivalent in recent years. The 2002 National Language Strategy (DfES, 2002) suggested that language learning should be an entitlement for all pupils across Key Stage 2 (KS2), but a government White Paper (DFE, 2010) failed to take up this idea. The New National Curriculum, to be published in 2014, will again include language as a compulsory subject for KS2 (DFE, 2013b).

At present, primary schools in England are at various stages of introducing languages into their KS2 curriculum, and the majority of schools offer French (Ofsted, 2011). However, there has recently been growing interest in teaching and learning Chinese in England. “Learning Chinese” is regularly discussed in the media, for example BBC News (2007) and The Telegraph (2010) have both reported on current interest in learning Chinese. While there has been a decline in foreign language teaching and learning of other languages, Mandarin Chinese is on the rise (The Telegraph, 2010). Indeed, the draft National Curriculum for 2014 originally proposed the inclusion of Chinese Mandarin as one of seven languages

that primary schools may offer, although the government has ultimately decided to leave the choice to schools (DFE, 2013a).

Nonetheless, despite this interest, when this study began in 2009 there had been little research in this area in the context of English schools. Existing evidence indicates that the teaching and learning of Chinese is at a relatively early stage in England, especially in primary schools (CILT, 2007). For instance, only a few primary schools have started to offer Chinese, although most schools express an interest in doing so in future (CILT, 2007). Schools face a number of challenges in offering Chinese, including staffing, teaching materials and other resources, as well as the particular difficulties of Chinese for English learners (CILT, 2007). These challenges are unresolved, owing perhaps to a lack of relevant practical and academic support, a fundamental gap in research on teaching and learning Chinese in English schools remains (Zhang and Li, 2010). Addressing this gap is a key motivation for conducting this research. It is hoped that this study will provide useful insights into the current situation of teaching and learning Chinese in English primary schools, and will form a basis for answering questions regarding how we should train appropriate Chinese language teachers, how we should design an appropriate scheme of work for teaching Chinese, and how teachers can maintain children's interest, all of which seem urgent in developing Chinese teaching and learning.

1.2 Personal Interest

My interest in this research is rooted in my own experiences of teaching Chinese. Before I started my PhD, I taught Chinese to primary children aged 7 to 12 in England as an after-school club for a commercial company. Prior to this, my only experience of teaching English primary children Chinese had been my observation of lessons delivered by colleagues in a local school. The company provided advice regarding possible teaching content, examples of teaching slides and advice about the skills required for effective classroom management in English primary schools. I found it very difficult to find other relevant resources and guidelines on teaching Chinese, especially in primary schools, and I wondered whether all primary schools offering Chinese were doing so through after-school clubs, and whether all primary Chinese teachers were like me. I wanted to know whether there were different types of class provision, different types of teachers, and different ways of teaching Chinese.

However, my main motivation in conducting this research was the children's enthusiasm for learning Chinese. The after-school clubs I taught lasted for only ten weeks at each school. The children were excited about their learning of Chinese, and wanted to show off to their friends. I often heard them saying "Chinese is so cool" and "you should so come to our lessons". They were passionate about putting a show together in Chinese at the end of the club and performing it at the school assembly. One school, in particular, invited the head teacher and the parents of all the children who were learning Chinese to watch the children's show during our last lesson, and asked the local radio and newspaper reporter to video, photograph

and interview the children. The school even rented graduation gowns for the children to wear and gave them a certificate of Chinese learning. Some children often asked me why they could not carry on learning Chinese.

Since I started this research journey, I have become more and more passionate about teaching Chinese, not only because it is something I have been eager to research, but also because it has been exciting for me as a native Chinese speaker to establish how the participants of this study perceive Chinese language and culture, and how this influences their learning and teaching. Moreover, this research journey has helped me to reflect on my understanding of my own language and culture. For example, I had never thought of Chinese characters as part of Chinese culture before I started the PhD. Indeed, it was fascinating to be able to research something in which I was really interested.

1.3 Research Questions and Purpose

This study aims to explore the emerging field of primary school Chinese teaching in England, and to provide a general picture of how Chinese is taught and learnt in English primary schools. The research questions are as follows:

1. Why do participants want to undertake Chinese?
2. Who is teaching Chinese in primary schools?
3. How is Chinese taught?
4. What is the participants' experience of undertaking Chinese?

In examining the broad issues listed above, the ultimate goal of this research is to try to ascertain potential relationships between these issues and how they affect each other. This will allow an exploration of the motivations, experiences and progress in learning Chinese of children, teachers, head teachers and policy makers.

1.4 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of six chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, discussion and conclusion. Chapter 2 will provide a detailed background to language education and the teaching and learning of Chinese in English primary schools, as well as the nature of Chinese and the potential barriers encountered by English speaking learners. Chapter 3 sets out the design of the research, and the processes of data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this research, and relates them to the research questions. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of this research, and Chapter 6 summarises this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review presented in this chapter provides a background to the study, explains the choice of research questions listed at the end of the chapter, and underpins the method and methodology of the research. This review presents relevant literature on language learning and teaching, language education in English primary schools, teaching and learning of Chinese, and how these issues affect the teaching and learning of Chinese in English primary schools.

2.2 Learning of Modern Foreign Languages

The first area of research for consideration encompasses the importance of learning new languages, the importance of learning languages in primary school and the theoretical background of language acquisition.

2.2.1 Rationale for and importance of language learning

Language is one of the most important tools used by human beings to communicate with each other. With rapid globalisation, learning the languages of other countries provides the opportunity better to understand people from other parts of the world, and their underlying culture and traditions. Hood and Tobbut (2009) suggest that “respect for other people’s cultures is impossible without respect for their languages” (p.3). The National Languages Strategy (DfES, 2002) states that “languages are a

lifelong skill ... in the knowledge society of the 21st century, language competence and intercultural understanding are not optional extras, they are an essential part of being a citizen” (p.5). It also stresses that “language skills are vital in improving understanding between people here and in the wider world, and in supporting global citizenship by breaking down barriers of ignorance and suspicion between nations” (p.12).

A commonly stated cliché suggests that globalisation is making the world a smaller place than before, and that people need more advanced language and communication skills. Business relationships are bonds between nations which rely on language. Stewart (2007) suggests that one in five jobs in the USA and other highly-developed economies are tied to international trade and it is expected that this trend will continue. Beyond business, many other employment opportunities, such as in education and tourism, arise from knowing more than one language. Success in business demands not only the ability to communicate, but also the astute understanding of others’ views and values. Therefore, learning other languages and cultures is important for the economic survival of all countries (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001).

English has played an important role, as a world language, in the phenomenon of globalisation. Hjarvard (2004) states that “people use English whenever they wish to communicate with others outside their own linguistic community” (p.76). Dearing and King (2007) suggest that learning English “gives access to the dominant world culture and is a condition for mobility and employability in most fields” (p.19). Not surprisingly, English has been provided in the school curriculum

in many non-English speaking countries. In Europe, English is the main foreign language learned in over 90 per cent of schools, and this figure is still rising (Dearing and King, 2006). In the UK, some people are starting to realise that a lack of competence in learning a second language is a disadvantage of being a native English speaker. Dearing and King (2006) state that:

as English becomes a mass commodity, it loses its uniqueness.

The more educated and skilled people of all nationalities can operate in English, the less the advantage of being a native speaker, and especially a monolingual one (p.14).

Learning languages is seen by policy makers as beneficial to both individuals and the nation. It helps nations and individuals to earn a living, and is a fundamental indicator of identity and a major determinant of an individual's world view (Dearing and King, 2006). One aim of the National Curriculum (DCSF *et al.*, 2010) for primary schools is to “make children more aware of and engage with their international communities” (p.5).

As a multicultural nation, many people from other countries come to England to study or work. Dearing and King (2006) suggest that “one of the major benefits of the European Community is the free movement of peoples, opening the door to inter-cultural understanding and the enrichment of life in all its aspects” (p.19).

2.2.2 Rationale for and importance of language learning in primary schools

There is a global trend for school systems to plan for children to learn a language additional to their primary language (Soderman and Oshio, 2008). Soderman and Oshio (2008) identify two reasons for this phenomenon: the “increase in international migration of families for economic and political reasons”, and the “new emphasis in schools on multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual education” (p.298). Many authors have asserted that learning language is beneficial to children (CILT, 2010; Hood, 2006). Hood (2006) states that “learning a foreign language can contribute to children’s overall enjoyment of, motivation for and self-esteem in learning” (p.4). The findings of a survey conducted with primary head teachers by CILT (2011) revealed a similar opinion, namely that “language learning plays a unique role in expanding children’s aptitudes, attitudes and opportunities” (p.1).

Although the teaching of foreign languages in primary schools is high on the agenda in both the English and wider European contexts, English children seem to start to learn foreign languages later than their peers in European nations. Bolster *et al.* (2004) suggest that primary children in European countries such as France, Germany, Austria, Greece and Italy begin to learn foreign languages between the ages of 8 and 10, and this “has exerted an influence on the thinking of politicians in Britain” (p.35). In 2002, the Government published The National Languages Strategy (DfES, 2002) which, for the first time, set the goal of improving teaching and learning and widening participation from an early age. In 2010, the National Curriculum (DCSF *et al.*, 2010) stressed that children should build secure

knowledge of how languages enable different ways of thinking and give access to ideas and experiences of different cultures. It also observed that languages can help children appreciate and understand other cultures as well as their own. This raises an important question: when is the optimal time for children to start learning foreign languages?

This question has been the subject of much debate. On the one hand, some researchers support the idea that language learning should start early, and believe that motivation to learn languages decreases with age (Aplin, 1991; Chambers, 1999; Gardner and Smythe, 1975; Williams *et al.*, 2002). Sung and Padilla's (1998) study, involving 140 primary pupils and 451 secondary pupils learning Asian languages in America, suggests that younger children are generally more motivated. The National Languages Strategy (DfES, 2002) states that schools which already offer language learning in the primary phase have found that pupils who start language learning earlier are generally more receptive to learning languages and are more motivated. Dearing and King (2007) also note that primary children across different ability ranges generally enjoy learning languages.

The advantages of starting to learn languages early have been highlighted in the literature. Firstly, children are believed to be more capable of learning languages when they are young (Jones and Coffey, 2006; O'Neil, 2007). Hunt *et al.* (2005) suggest that there is a traditional hypothesis of "the younger the better", in which younger children are perceived to have an instinctive capacity for both speech and morpho-syntactic development, allowing them to acquire foreign languages in a similar way to their first language (p.372). O'Neil (2007) suggests that young

children are inherently capable of learning the necessary phonemes, morphemes and syntax as they mature. In other words, they have a ‘genetic’ advantage in learning a language. O’Neil (2007) also indicates that learning a second or third language is recognised to be easier in early childhood than later, and that it is particularly important to learn the correct pronunciation at as young an age as possible. Jones and Coffey (2006) hold a similar opinion, namely that children are more successful than adults in terms of learning languages and, even at an early stage, are capable of far more than just copying sounds and symbols when learning languages. Young children’s lack of inhibition seems to help them to acquire a more native-like accent (Cameron, 2001). Bolster *et al.* (2004) study, investigating the issues of language transition from primary to secondary school, suggests that secondary head teachers believe that primary children are far more likely to respond to foreign languages than secondary adolescents because of their lack of self-consciousness and capacity for enthusiasm. Lightbown and Spada (2006) hold a similar opinion, suggesting that younger children are more open to other languages and cultures and less self-conscious about their own foreign language production than older children and adolescents. Jones and Coffey (2006) note that “primary school children also tend to be less self-conscious when presented with a new mode of communication” (p.76). Moreover, learning languages is perceived as a tool to help children develop their self-confidence and self-esteem (Hood and Tobbut, 2009; Muijs *et al.*, 2005). Hood and Tobbut (2009) state that “younger learners have certain advantages over later beginners in aspects of learning potential, motivation and the role that the subject can have in promoting their own self-esteem” (p.3). Jones and Coffey (2006) also point out that the primary school environment is perfect for

language teaching and learning because “the primary teacher has a profound understanding of the whole curriculum and how the different disciplines mesh together” (p.81).

However, it has been argued that younger children’s achievements in learning languages are not necessarily better than those of older children (Burstall, 1975; Burstall *et al.*, 1974; Powell *et al.*, 2000). Instead, younger children may experience some disadvantages in learning languages compared with older children (Soderman and Oshio, 2008). Burstall *et al.* (1974) conducted a ten-year experimental research study in foreign language teaching and found that primary school pupils did reach a higher level of achievement in spoken French than secondary school pupils with an equal period of study time, but secondary school pupils reached a higher level of achievement in all other aspects of proficiency in languages, including reading, listening and writing. Therefore, they suggest that the total amount of time spent actively learning, rather than age, is one of the most important variables in the learning process. Burstall (1975) states that “pupils taught French from the age of eight did not show any substantial gains in achievement, compared with those who had been taught French from the age of eleven” (p.195). Powell *et al.*’s (2000) research report on four surveys and case study visits conducted by the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) finds that secondary teachers feel there is no obvious evidence that the achievements of pupils with prior modern foreign language (MFL) experience are better in reading and writing skills than their peers who have no prior MFL experience. Moreover, although pupils may do better in listening and speaking, this advantage has generally been eroded by the end of KS3 (Powell *et al.*, 2000). Soderman and Oshio (2008) argue that “young children often

do not appreciate the benefits to be gained in learning an additional language”, as “some may be wholly uninterested in doing so”, “some may develop pride in taking on such a challenge”, “some may not yet have a good understanding of their primary language in order to make comparisons”, and sometimes having children learn a new language is connected with parents’ agendas (p.299). Despite the fact that there has been debate about the optimal age for children to learn languages, the starting age of language learning ranges from 5 to 11 across Europe (Jones and Coffey, 2006). Cable *et al.* (2010) believe that if children start to learn languages early they will have more time to learn overall, with potentially high motivation.

In England, the age at which children start to learn foreign languages has been a contested issue. The most recent government decision on language education is that language will be compulsory for pupils from KS2 (age 7) from 2014 (DFE, 2013b).

2.2.3 Theories of language acquisition

There are a number of issues relating to language acquisition, but this review focuses on only two issues that are highly relevant to the study: input and output hypotheses, and differences between first and second language acquisition.

2.2.3.1 Input and output hypotheses

Two hypotheses are particularly relevant to language acquisition: Krashen (1981) comprehensible input hypothesis, and Swain (1985) output hypothesis. On the one hand, Krashen (1981) believed that comprehension is the key to language

acquisition and that language is acquired by understanding language slightly beyond the learner's current level of competence. Krashen (1981) called this level of input "i+1", where "i" is the language input and "+1" is the next stage of language acquisition. Therefore, Krashen (1981) insisted that the most direct approach to promoting language acquisition in the classroom is to enhance children's language intake through meaningful and communicative activities supplied by the teacher, while the least important contributions are explicit information about the language and mechanical drills. In Krashen (1981) opinion:

the best language lessons may be those in which real communication takes place, in which an acquirer understands what the speaker is trying to say ... a reading passage is appropriate for a student if he or she understands the message ... the teacher-talk that surrounds the exercise may be far more valuable than the exercise itself. We teach language best when we use it for what it was designed for: communication (p.10).

On the other hand, Swain (1996) suggested that language output may help learners to process language more deeply than through input, because output stimulates learners to "move from the semantic, open-ended, non-deterministic, strategic processing prevalent in comprehension to the complete grammatical processing needed for accurate production" (p.99). Swain (1996) believed that output has three functions in second language learning: a noticing/triggering function, a hypothesis testing function, and a metalinguistic function. Firstly, noticing plays a consciousness-raising role, as learners may notice a gap between what they want to

say and what they are able to say by producing the target language (Swain and Lapkin, 1995). Secondly, hypothesis testing refers to the idea that comprehensibility or linguistic well-formedness may be tested by producing output (Swain, 1996), so that learners form a hypothesis about how the language works (Corder, 1981). Finally, as learners reflect on their hypotheses by producing the target language, this output serves a metalinguistic function and enables learners to control and internalise their linguistic knowledge (Swain, 1996). However, Krashen (2003) argued that there is little evidence to support Swain's output hypothesis of second language learning.

2.2.3.2. Acquisition of first and second languages

Differences between first and second language acquisition have been identified and Nicholas and Lightbown (2008) suggest that the process of acquiring a first language is simultaneous with cognitive development in infancy. Moreover, the infant discovers the language for him/herself and is not explicitly taught. The process of second/new language acquisition is different from first language acquisition because the learner has already acquired basic language concepts and mechanisms in the first language, through experience of learning and using it. Moreover, the second language learner has already developed cognitive abilities and so learning is not a maturational issue. Oxford (1990) believes that first language acquisition arises from naturalistic and unconscious language use, and in most cases leads to conversational fluency, while second/new language acquisition represents the conscious knowledge of language that happens through formal instruction but does not necessarily lead to conversational fluency of language (p.4).

However, theorists do not agree on the importance of these differences, or even on how children learn a second language. Some authors state that children sometimes only need to transfer the language from one code to another (Clyne, 1987). For example, children who are learning a second/new language have already acquired cognitive concepts and semantic relationships, such as the roles of parents and grandparents and attributes such as shape, size and colour (Nicholas and Lightbown, 2008).

The significance of first language acquisition for second/new language learning (Chinese) is that first language learning experience may influence second language learning (Ghazali, 2006). Children start to learn their first language in a three-level process which involves relationships between sound and meaning, mediated by lexicogrammar, but this fundamental learning system may not apply to second/new language learning, in which the protolanguage stage is absent (Nicholas and Lightbown, 2008). Ghazali (2006) suggests that learners of second/new languages may sometimes be confused by a word or structure that works in their first language. Although these ideas are debatable, Littlewood (1984) concludes that “our increased knowledge of first language acquisition has served as a backcloth for perceiving and understanding new facts about second language learning” (p.4). Ervin-Tripp (1974) held a similar opinion, suggesting that second language learners make use of their prior knowledge, skills and tactics. Ghazali (2006) also suggests that children’s first language learning experience, their learning style and strategies, and their feelings, motivations, demands and emotional states may also affect their second/new language learning. These may also apply to the current study because

English speaking children's and teachers' experiences of learning English may influence their learning of Chinese.

In general, Cameron (2001) proposes that children are active sense makers in language lessons. However, whether or not pupils can make sense of language lessons is based on what they experience in the lessons (Cameron, 2001). The teaching of languages is a related issue which will be discussed next.

2.3 Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages

Language teaching is the background to this study but, as it is such a huge field, it is important to select relevant issues rather than reviewing the general field. Four teaching issues related to this research will be discussed in this section: the language teacher's subject knowledge, use of the target language in language classes, debate about the merits of native and non-native speaking teachers, and the communicative language teaching approach. These issues are reviewed because they are of particular relevance to the settings researched in this study and to the later findings.

2.3.1 Language teacher's subject knowledge

Teacher's subject knowledge has been heavily researched, as it has a major impact on the way in which the subject is presented, the complexity of the subject content and the planning and assessment of learning (Driscoll, 2000). Driscoll (2000) study explores how classroom practice is shaped by teachers' subject knowledge, and suggests that teachers with greater subject knowledge are more effective in

identifying and correcting pupils' errors, and are more able to plan for progression in learning by setting short-term goals and by giving consideration to long-term language development.

Teachers' subject knowledge has been defined in a number of ways (Ben-Peretz, 2011) but most definitions are based on the work of Shulman (1986). He suggested that subject knowledge for teaching is complex and that there are several kinds of teacher knowledge, including content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds. Grossman and Richert (1988), in a less all-encompassing definition, consider teacher knowledge to be "a body of professional knowledge that encompasses both knowledge of general pedagogical principles and skills and knowledge of the subject matter to be taught" (p.54). This clearly does not include some aspects of Shulman's types of knowledge, although these might be inferred as being part of pedagogical principles. In describing the relationship between the two types of knowledge (general pedagogical principles and skills and knowledge of the subject matter to be taught), "teacher knowledge focuses on enabling teachers to fulfil their central role: teaching subject matter domains using appropriate pedagogical principles and skills" (Ben-Peretz, 2011, p. 8).

The importance of the primary language teacher's subject knowledge is a key issue because primary teachers in England have not been trained to teach languages and may be monolingual. Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) conducted a systematic review of the

characteristics of effective foreign language teaching to primary children, and suggested that a teacher's subject knowledge plays a crucial role in teaching languages because the teacher "models the spoken and written language, represents and structures the content, and helps children gain access to a wide variety of materials and learning opportunities" (p.49). Studies of primary language teaching, in particular, have considered the appropriate subject knowledge base for teaching them. Woodgate-Jones (2008) researched teacher trainees' perceptions of their subject knowledge in 18 teacher education institutes offering a PMFL course, and suggested that a PMFL teacher's subject knowledge should include both linguistic competence and intercultural understanding. Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) suggest that PMFL teachers' knowledge should encompass knowledge about:

- "the subject:
 - the foreign language content
 - the skills to use the target language in clearly defined areas for communication
 - the target culture
- subject-specific teaching methods
- age-specific teaching methods
- resources
- primary curriculum
- children as individuals
- children's learning needs" (pp.4-5).

In Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) conception, knowledge of subject and subject-specific teaching methods form part of subject knowledge, while age-specific teaching methods, primary curriculum and children's learning needs relate to primary pedagogy. It is important to consider what "the subject" might include. Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) explain that primary language teachers' subject knowledge should include aspects of linguistics, pedagogy and culture, as well as knowledge about children's individual learning styles and learning needs.

Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) definition of subject knowledge for teaching primary languages is applicable to this study. In considering only the linguistic part of this definition, in light of the models discussed above, it is clear that foreign language content includes not just the ability to use the target language (Chinese, in this case) but also the ability to reflect upon it, use vocabulary to describe it and consider complex issues such as grammar in ways which help the learner to learn. This might include enabling pupils to understand grammar points with reference to the grammar of their own language or to differences from their own language. In this sense, the linguistic aspect includes both cognition and metacognition, as well as language and metalanguage. This means that the type of language ability required of a teacher of Chinese may be related to the background of the teacher, and may also affect how the target language (Chinese) is used in classes.

2.3.2 Use of target language in language classes

Ability to use the target language (TL) in teaching is an important part of the teacher's subject knowledge (discussed above), and research and professional

publications have made this a key issue in effective language pedagogy. This may be because, according to the input hypothesis of language learning discussed in Section 2.2.3.1, the classroom may be the main or only means of exposing students to the TL and it is crucial to maximise students' exposure in the limited class time available (Littlewood and Yu, 2011). Turnbull (2001) states that "the teacher is most often the sole linguistic model for the students and is therefore their main source of TL input" (p.532). Crichton and Templeton (2010) emphasise that it is essential for primary language teachers to develop competence in the TL to provide an effective model for children at this stage in their language learning. CILT (Unknown) identifies several key reasons for using the TL in MFL classrooms: it increases pupils' confidence in speaking and listening skills; it creates a more realistic environment for pupils; it develops vocabulary, both passively and actively; and it helps pupils to prepare for visits abroad. Lee (2003) describes the TL as "a crucial means to a communicative end" (p.161). This phrase highlights the importance of TL in a communicative language teaching pedagogy, in which developing pupils' communicative language competence is the key goal. Block (2005) points out that the English MFL curriculum is based broadly on a communicative approach, so an emphasis on TL use might be expected to be important to English teachers of foreign languages. Unsurprisingly, this is reflected in inspection reports on English language classes. Ofsted (2002) suggests that exposing pupils to the foreign language they are learning by using the TL may help pupils to understand the structures of the language and the way the language works. This would, presumably, apply to teachers of all languages. However, there has been fierce debate, in the context of teaching English and other foreign languages,

as to how and how much TL should be used in language classrooms (Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain, 2009).

On the one hand, some researchers believe that there is no pedagogical or communicative value in using the first language (L1) in language lessons (Ellis, 1984; Krashen, 1981), and that the TL should be the only language present or available to pupils because, the reasoning goes, people are able to learn their L1 using their L1, therefore they should be able to learn a second language using that language. Macaro (2005) refers to this conception as the virtual position, because it barely exists in reality (Macaro, 2009). In some countries, such as China and Korea, where children learn English as their main foreign language, a policy of teaching English through English has been adopted (Jeon, 2008; Littlewood and Yu, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2000). In the 1990s the National Curriculum of England advocated the total exclusion of L1, but this conception has recently shifted to support a considered use of L1, especially for beginners (Meiring and Norman, 2002).

On the other hand, many researchers argue that the L1 can be used as a cognitive tool to assist TL learning (Swain and Lapkin, 2000; Watanabe, 2008), and that the extreme virtual position of excluding learners' L1 completely is untenable and counterproductive to the ultimate goals of communicative TL learning (Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). These researchers hold the opinion that TL may be learnt more easily by making reference to L1 (Littlewood and Yu, 2011), although teachers should be cautious not to overuse L1. Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) refer to this idea as "maximised TL use". Butzkamm (2003) indicates that the

purpose of using L1 is not to minimise the use of the TL, but to help establish the use of the TL as a general means of communication in the classroom. Van Lier (1995) points out that teachers' use of students' L1 may actually help to create more language input for the students, which will promote intake. He also believes that quality of input is much more important than quantity. Turnbull (2001) agrees that L1 may be used to help facilitate the student's intake process and allow the teacher's input to be taken in by the pupil more readily. Moreover, some researchers suggest that over-use of the TL is inappropriate. Macaro (2008) indicates that the notion of teaching entirely through the TL is not an appropriate pedagogy if the learners do not enjoy it, which is consistent with Stables and Wikeley (1999) concern that the predominant use of the TL may be one cause of pupils' lack of enjoyment of learning languages.

Cook (1999) suggests that there are at least two ways of using L1 in the language classroom: one for presenting the meanings of new words or sentences to the pupils, and the other for communicating classroom activities. Littlewood and Yu (2011) suggest that strategies for using L1 may be related to the different teaching stages of language lessons. They believe that at the presentation stage L1 should be used to clarify the meanings of the new language to the students; at the practice stage, L1 may be used to elicit TL structures; and at the production stage, the teacher should design activities starting from L1 situations as input to stimulate TL use. They also suggest important features for maximising TL use, including teachers building their own confidence in using TL, appropriate communication strategies (such as repetition, substituting with similar meanings and exemplification), and starting from simple TL. Once the teacher has developed more confidence and more

effective communication strategies, and the students have gained more TL experience, L1 use may be reduced gradually and TL used more (Littlewood and Yu, 2011). Turnbull and Dailey-O’Cain (2009) suggest that L1 may be used as a “cognitive and meta-cognitive tool, as a strategic organiser, and as a scaffold for language development” (p.183).

In the UK, Ofsted (2011) points out that the use of TL is very limited in primary language teaching, causing pupils to hear less of the TL than might be possible and to miss opportunities to practise the language. Some researchers have posited possible reasons why TL is not used by teachers as much as it should be: McColl (2010) suggests that teachers may be worried that if they use too much TL, some pupils may fail to understand the lesson. CILT (Unknown) indicates that using the TL is often a challenge for teachers, and research into primary languages shows that teachers may not have much language which they are able to use (Ofsted, 2011). This is discussed in Section 2.4.4, regarding primary language teachers and their training.

2.3.3 Native and non-native speaking teachers of languages

Teachers’ ability to use the TL in teaching languages, as well as their subject knowledge, may be related to their background, including their language background. Therefore, whether language should be taught by native speaking teachers (NSTs) or non-native speaking teachers (NNSTs) has been discussed by many researchers, mostly in the context of teaching English as a second language,

but also as an issue in foreign language teaching (Moussu and Llurda, 2008) and language teacher supply in England (Whitehead and Taylor, 2000).

Cook (1999) suggests that native speakers are often assumed to be better teachers than non-native speakers. Schools see having a native speaking language teacher as an advantage. For example, a school in London used the slogan “learn French from the French” (Cook, 1999). However, this conventional theory has been challenged and many researchers argue that NSTs are not necessarily better language teachers than non-native speakers. Medgyes (1992) argues that “a teacher’s effectiveness does not hinge upon whether he or she is a native or non-native speaker of English” (p.348). Modiano (1999) believes that proficiency in speaking the language is no longer determined by birth, but by the capacity to use the language properly. Whitehead and Taylor (2000) suggest that NSTs face a range of linguistic, pedagogical and cultural challenges which may be barriers to teaching language successfully in schools.

Three main disadvantages faced by NSTs are discussed in the literature. Firstly, NSTs’ achievements in the language may be perceived by students as an unachievable goal. Kramsch (1998) suggests that “traditional methodologies based on the native speaker usually define language learners in terms of what they are not, or at least not yet” (p.28). Cook (1999) agrees that students may feel overwhelmed by NSTs who have achieved a perfection that is out of students’ reach, and the students may prefer fallible, NNSTs who present them with a more achievable model. Secondly, there is often a communication gap between NSTs and their students as they come from different cultural and language backgrounds (Benke

and Medgyes, 2005). Cook (1999) suggests that “the prominence of the native speaker in language teaching has obscured the distinctive nature of the successful L2 user and created an unattainable goal for L2 learners” (p.185). It has also been argued that NSTs may be less efficient in introducing the TL to learners. Cheung (2002) investigation of student perceptions of NSTs and NNSTs teaching English at Hong Kong University revealed that, despite the fact that the students made positive comments on NSTs’ English proficiency, knowledge of English speaking cultures and skills in using English effectively, they also agreed that NNSTs are good at grammar, understand their students as second language learners and have common cultural knowledge. Medgyes (2001) compares the teaching of NSTs and NNSTs, noting that NSTs are more proficient in the language and in using the language confidently, while NNSTs have limited insights into the intricacies of meanings, and often have doubts about appropriate language use. However, NNSTs may provide students with a better learner model, teach language learning strategies more effectively, supply more information about the TL, better anticipate and prevent language difficulties, be more sensitive to their students, and benefit from their ability to use the students’ mother tongue (Medgyes, 2001, P. 436). Benke and Medgyes (2005) also believe that NNSTs take a more structured approach to introducing grammar and are better at dealing with grammatical difficulties, especially those encountered by L2 learners. Kramsch (1998) holds the opinion that NNSTs’ experience of switching back and forth between their own language and the TL may enhance their understanding of the demands of the learning situation, and enable them to guide their students better through this process. Benke and Medgyes (2005) point out that NNSTs, being on the same wavelength as their

students, may promote language learning more effectively. Clearly, it would be unwise simply to assume that NSTs are the best option for teaching Chinese in primary schools.

2.3.4 Communicative language teaching and its implications

Communicative language teaching (CLT), an innovative approach to language teaching derived from British linguistics (Richards and Rodgers, 2001), has been influential since the late 1970s (Littlewood, 1981). The goal of CLT is the teaching of communicative competence (Richards, 2006) by focusing not only on the forms of the language but, more importantly, on what people may do with these forms when they want to communicate (Littlewood, 1981). The term “communicative competence” was coined within language education by Hymes (1966), who believed that the goal of language learning is to understand “the competence that underlies and informs such narratives” (Hymes, 2003, p.vii). Richards (2006) summarises the following aspects of language knowledge required for communicative competence:

- knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions;
- knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g. knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication);
- knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g. narratives, reports, interviews, conversations);

- knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g. through using different kinds of communication strategies) (Richards, 2006, p.3).

Consequently, language learning is seen as resulting from processes such as:

- Interaction between learners and users of the language
- Collaborative creation of meaning
- Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language
- Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding
- Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language
- Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence
- Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things (Richards, 2006, p.4)

Richards and Rodgers (2001) describe the aim of using a communicative teaching approach as to “make communicative competence the goal of language teaching” and “develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication” (p.66). Before the adoption of CLT, language learning was usually perceived to be under the control of the teacher, because language teaching focused mainly on grammar and forms, and language was learnt by producing correct sentences, not by making

mistakes (Richards, 2006). Following the development of concern for communicative approaches to language teaching, in recent decades language teaching and learning has developed a focus on creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language (Block, 2001, 2005). For example, classroom activities have changed from activities such as the memorisation of dialogues toward the use of pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and other activities aimed at getting learners to communicate with language (Richards, 2006). This has real implications for the role of the teacher, as in CLT classrooms language teachers talk less but listen more and become active facilitators for their students (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Students need to participate in classroom activities based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning (Richards, 2006).

CLT still dominates the pedagogy of languages in English schools (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). However, it is also important to consider the use of CLT in Chinese schools and whether this is something of which Chinese teachers also have experience. In the 1980s, there was a top-down movement to promote the use of CLT to reform language teaching (mainly English) in China, but this movement failed to make the expected impact (Hu, 2002). Hu (2002) suggests that the Chinese culture of learning was the key constraint because it conflicted with CLT in several important respects. These included “philosophical assumptions about the nature of teaching and learning, perceptions of the respective roles and responsibilities of teachers and students, learning strategies encouraged, and qualities valued in teachers and students” (p.93). Liao (2004) also indicates three potential barriers to using CLT in Chinese schools: large class size, grammar-based tests, and a lack of communicative components in text books. Therefore, teachers of Chinese in

English primary schools who have been educated in China are likely to have a completely different experience of language teaching and language learning, which may influence their teaching. Given this situation, and Pajares (1992) assertion that it is very difficult for teachers to overcome their own experiences as learners, it is likely that Chinese teachers and pupils may not use or expect to use a communicative approach.

This study will explore how teachers use a CLT approach in teaching Chinese in English primary classrooms.

2.4 Language Teaching in English Primary Schools

Language education encompasses a range of complex issues in English primary schools, and these are the background to the setting of this study. This section discusses the background to language education in England; the choice of languages for primary schools; the provision of languages; the teachers and their training, evaluation and progression; the children's motivation and experience; teachers' beliefs; and guidelines and resources. These all affect each of the classes in which the research for this study took place, as well as the activities and beliefs of the teachers involved.

2.4.1 Background of language education

England offers a productive setting for learning languages because of its linguistic diversity (McPake *et al.*, 2007). The National Curriculum (DCSF *et al.*, 2010)

emphasises that English society is “shaped by the contributions of a diverse range of people, cultures and heritages” (p.4), and states that one of its aims is to make children more aware of and engaged with their local, national and international communities. Research conducted by Scottish CILT, CILT and CILT Cymru showed that in 2005 over 200 languages were in use in England, over 100 languages in Scotland, and under 100 in Wales. It also established that the number of plurilingual children in UK schools was growing (McPake *et al.*, 2007). McPake *et al.* (2007) suggest that linguistic diversity is beneficial for improving international relations and trade, cultural enrichment, social inclusion, educational advantage and linguistic advantage. However, the situation of language education in England is currently confused, as there was a dramatic drop in the number of students taking a language GCSE in 2010 (Guardian, 2010a). The Guardian (2010b) suggests that the number of students taking a language GCSE decreased from 78 per cent in 2001 to 44 per cent in 2009, especially in French and German which have halved since 2001, while French has dropped out of the top ten GCSEs for the first time. This can be traced to ambivalent policy on learning languages in this country.

Prior to the 1990s, language was an optional subject in English schools (Coleman *et al.*, 2007; Hawkins, 1996). The number of students taking GSCE languages, mainly French and German, was increasing before language became a core subject of the National Curriculum (Coleman, 2009; Macaro, 2008). In 1988, the National Curriculum introduced a modern foreign language as a statutory subject, and this was fully implemented in the early 1990s: learning languages then became compulsory for all pupils aged from 11 to 16 (Coleman *et al.*, 2007). This policy significantly increased the number of students taking a GCSE in language (Coleman,

2009; Coleman *et al.*, 2007), but it seems to have demotivated pupils from learning languages (Stables and Wikeley, 1999). The adopted approaches to teaching languages, especially the emphasis on TL teaching and the imposition of language for all, are considered not to be suitable for all pupils (Coleman, 2009; Macaro, 2008; Stables and Wikeley, 1999). Moreover, languages are perceived by pupils as a difficult subject, and by schools as a threat to their rankings (Coleman, 2009; Stables and Wikeley, 1999). Therefore, when in the National Language Strategy of 2002 it was decided to make languages optional for KS4 but an entitlement for all children at KS2 (7-11), the number of students studying languages at KS4 reduced dramatically (Ofsted, 2008). This has been corroborated by CILT's annual large-scale survey of MFL teaching in England, which has documented a steady decline in pupils taking languages at KS4 (CILT *et al.*, 2009). However, this policy did help to increase the number of primary schools offering languages (Dearing and King, 2007). Nineteen primary foreign language "Pathfinder" authorities were selected across the country to develop language programmes, and these programmes have been evaluated positively. The entitlement for KS2 pupils to learn languages was highlighted by the Languages Review (Dearing and King, 2007), while the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum (Rose, 2009) concluded that "languages will become a statutory requirement of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2 from 2011" (p.106). (King, 2009) suggests that "the progressive introduction of languages into primary schools is going well. Schools are well on the way to the target of a language entitlement for all pupils in Key Stage 2 by 2010" (pp.8-9). Language learning is currently only compulsory for KS3 (Years 7, 8 and 9). However, the policy is to be changed again. With the introduction of the new

National Curriculum 2014, the government has decided to make languages compulsory for KS2 from 2014 (DFE, 2013a).

At present, primary schools in England are at various stages in introducing languages into their KS2 curriculum, and the majority of schools still offer French (Tinsley and Board, 2013). Ofsted's modern languages survey report (Ofsted, 2011) shows that language teaching and learning achievement are generally good in 60 per cent of primary schools, pupils' enjoyment of language learning is high, teaching is good in two thirds of the observed lessons, and senior leaders are very committed to introducing modern languages into primary schools, although it is not clear how these conclusions were drawn.

The number of primary schools participating in language learning has been increasing over the past decade. Powell *et al.* (2000) suggest that approximately 21 per cent of schools were providing foreign languages for pupils at KS2 in 2000. By 2004, the figure had increased to 44 per cent (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). According to (Wade *et al.*, 2009) report of a longitudinal survey of the implementation of national entitlement to language learning at KS2, 92 per cent of schools offered their pupils the opportunity to learn a language within class time at KS2 in 2008. In 2010, a CILT (2010) survey of a hundred local authorities in England found that between 81 and 100 per cent of primary schools were teaching languages in class time. In Tinsley and Board (2013) report on the 2012 Language Trends Survey, 97 per cent of participating primary schools were offering languages to their pupils within class time.

However, the provision of language learning has varied across schools. Hunt *et al.* (2008) suggest that foreign language teaching in England ranges from language “encounters” (language “tasters”) to language after-school clubs and language awareness programmes, as well as languages (mainly French) fully integrated into the curriculum. Therefore, language provision in UK primary schools is not standardised. Hunt *et al.* (2005) describe MFL teaching initiatives at KS2 in England as “sporadic and patchy” (p.377). Tinsley and Board (2013) also note huge variations in the languages offered and the situations faced by different schools in their report. Despite the different types of provision, the aim of most primary schools is to raise pupils’ awareness of language, such as knowledge of language, rather than to target linguistic competence (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). Wade *et al.* (2009) agree that the aim is mainly to develop an enthusiasm for language learning. Therefore, language education tends to be a light-hearted, fun experience in primary schools (Muijs *et al.*, 2005). This is reflected in the teaching, as language in English primary schools is not systematically developed from an early stage, but focuses mainly on speaking and listening (Ofsted, 2011). Cable *et al.* (2010) suggest that language teaching is orientated predominantly towards the development of speaking and listening skills. (Ofsted, 2011) indicates that pupils’ achievements in listening and responding are stronger than in reading and writing, their progress in reading is less good than in speaking, and writing is the least developed skill in most primary schools. Writing, in particular, is not always planned and, if it is planned, is limited to pupils copying and filling in gaps on worksheets (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Ofsted, 2011).

The light-hearted and fun experience of teaching suggested by Muijs *et al.* (2005) is also reflected in the time spent on language education and the lack of formal assessment in primary schools. The KS2 Framework (DfES, 2005) recommends the allocation of one hour of curriculum time to languages every week. However, PMFL lessons are typically 30-40 minutes once a week at KS2 (Cable *et al.*, 2010), even though it is evident that when more time is devoted to PMFL children achieve much more (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). Powell *et al.* (2000), Hunt *et al.* (2005) and McLachlan (2009) indicate that the lack of curriculum time for languages may be because schools tend to emphasise core National Curriculum subjects, such as English, mathematics and science, in order to raise pupils' performance in tests. Language education seems not to be given equal status with regard to formal assessment compared with other subjects in primary schools. The National Curriculum (DCSF *et al.*, 2010) states that "primary schools should use the level descriptions for reporting for English, mathematics and science. They do not have to use the level descriptions for other subjects" (p.11). As assessment often shapes the actual curriculum taught – the washback effect (Cheng and Curtis, 2004) – this may reduce schools' emphasis on languages. This is discussed later in this section. Driscoll *et al.* (2004a) argue that considerable investment of curriculum time and other staff time would have been required to meet the entitlement of MFL teaching at KS2 in 2010, but most schools did not think the demands were too great, on top of other curriculum demands. Cameron (2001) suggests that "the time available in busy school timetables for language teaching is too short to waste on activities that are fun but do not maximise learning" (p.2). In 2006, an independent review of the primary curriculum (Rose, 2009) was commissioned to address the issue of

curriculum time for languages (and other issues), as a result of which it was reported that many teachers stated that the existing curriculum had so much prescribed content that they did not have enough time to teach it in depth. Despite this, the new National Curriculum will include compulsory language for KS2 from 2014 (DFE, 2013a).

Moreover, assessment and recording in language education in English primary schools is inadequate and largely informal (Ofsted, 2011). Muijs *et al.* (2005) evaluated Pathfinder projects and state that “monitoring of pupil progress was patchy and varied across the year groups and across the case study schools within Pathfinders” (p.81). Hunt (2009) indicates that, even though some schools have good assessment practices, assessment in most Pathfinders is generally underdeveloped, and there is a lack of development of formalised procedures. Ofsted (2005) and Ofsted (2008) suggest that the majority of schools have not developed procedures for assessing and reporting on pupils’ progress in language learning. Ofsted (2011) carried out a survey of 92 primary schools in England and found relative weaknesses in assessment and self-evaluation. Although there were various informal assessments, including “can do” statements and/or records in mark books, these were not followed up. Informal assessment included providing oral feedback, using mini whiteboards, correcting errors sympathetically, and self and peer assessment (Ofsted, 2011). Nonetheless, the planning for progression throughout KS2 remained a weakness, partly because the content taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6 was similar to that taught in Years 3 and 4 (Ofsted, 2011). Ofsted (2011) points out that this was a result of schools introducing language learning to all year groups at the same time, starting in September 2010, with insufficient long-

term consolidation or progression as the pupils progressed to higher levels. In teaching Chinese, in particular, there is currently no language assessment information for primary schools.

The reasons behind the lack of formal assessment in primary language education have been explored. Muijs *et al.* (2005) suggest that there is a worry that assessment may put too much pressure on staff and pupils before the teaching of languages has been built up. Ofsted (2005), Ofsted (2008) stresses that teachers have a fear that formal assessment may undermine children's confidence. Jones and Coffey (2006) indicate that assessment is perceived as "squeezing out the joy and motivation that is currently unbridled by, for example, national testing requirements" (p.103) and that teachers tend to emphasise the fun factor in learning. Hunt (2009) states that "assessment is viewed as an additional burden for primary teachers and a threat to pupils' enjoyment of languages" (p.214). Moreover, senior staff may not be sufficiently confident to evaluate language lessons, especially if they have no prior experience of teaching them (Ofsted, 2011). Therefore, the future progress of language learning and teaching is hard to predict. Few schools plan for progression, although most of them are aware of it (Ofsted, 2011).

In response, official guidance has promoted language assessment (DCSF, 2007; Language and CILT, 2010). The Language Ladder (DCSF, 2007) sets a series of "can do" statements to assess children's language learning outcomes. However, it is not widely used in schools, and Wade *et al.* (2009) suggest that assessment materials designed by the schools themselves are more popular.

In general, head teachers, language co-ordinators and most teachers involved in language teaching are reported to be enthusiastic and committed (Cable *et al.*, 2010). Hood (2006) suggests that school staff feel that languages may enrich the experience of children in school. Cable *et al.* (2010) indicate that staff involved in language teaching believe that language not only enriches and broadens the overall curriculum provision, but may also make substantial contributions to children's personal and social development, as well as to their literacy development in English. Many head teachers also perceive language learning as contributing to a school ethos which values diversity and increased tolerance and understanding of other people (Cable *et al.*, 2010). Many teachers suggest that language learning is beneficial for children, as it helps them to develop confidence, self-esteem, positive attitudes to learning and a wider world view. Cable *et al.* (2010) believe that language learning has an impact on children's attitudes towards learning, their personal and social development and their communication and literacy skills. Most children in Cable's study also held positive attitudes, were generally motivated to learn languages, and enjoyed it when it was fun and when they were motivated by the language learning process itself (Cable *et al.*, 2010).

2.4.2 Choice of languages in primary schools

Dearing and King (2006) suggest that the question of which language to study will always be an issue in English-speaking countries. Graddol (2006) suggests that people who want to learn English are increasing in number and decreasing in age, and English speakers take it for granted that English is the dominant world language. French is presently the most commonly offered language in English schools,

followed by Spanish (Tinsley and Board, 2013). Muijs *et al.* (2005) note that “French is by far the most dominant language in the Pathfinders ... most schools had chosen French: this is the ‘default’ language” (p.23). Wade *et al.* (2009) state that:

French was the most commonly offered language, available in around nine out of ten schools offering a language in class time at KS2. Spanish was also popular, offered by a quarter of schools teaching languages, while German was offered by 10 per cent of schools teaching languages. A much smaller proportion of schools offered Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Urdu (p.17).

French has been the dominant foreign language taught in England for principally historical reasons. In England, languages are most often taught by generalist class teachers in primary schools (Driscoll, 2000), and it appears that if a primary teacher him/herself is reasonably competent in a language, this is likely to be French. Therefore, this is the language in which they feel most confident. Bolster *et al.* (2004) suggest that “French had been chosen as it was a language with which most primary teachers were felt to be more confident and because of parental choice” (p.37). Moreover, when head teachers are choosing what languages to offer, their decisions are usually based on the expertise of staff members or the head teachers themselves, their personal interests, an audit of staff skills, and the choices of local secondary schools (Cable *et al.*, 2010). In addition, culture may also be seen as a motivation to learn French, as France and England are neighbours, and people frequently go to France for holiday or work. This may also be a reason for choosing

other European languages, such as Spanish and German. As Powell *et al.* (2000) indicate, European languages, though not necessarily French, are preferred by parents.

Besides French, some other languages are provided by schools. In the Pathfinder evaluations, Muijs *et al.* (2005) found that a few schools offered Italian, or a combination of French and Italian, as well as pilot tasters in Japanese and Mandarin Chinese. Muijs *et al.* (2005) suggest that the schools sometimes offer a particular language on an opportunistic basis, such as when a staff member (teacher) who can speak another language is available to teach that language. However, this may potentially give rise to a problem of inconsistency, because the teacher may then leave the school. Moreover, some schools provide different languages each term (Barton *et al.*, 2009), despite doubts about this approach to language learning (King, 2009).

Compared with mainstream French and Spanish, other languages which used to be or were sometimes called community languages, but are now also called modern foreign languages, including Urdu, Panjabi, Somali, Chinese, Polish, Italian and British sign language, have not been given equal status in provision (Ofsted, 2008). However, there is growing concern about the emphasis on French and dominant European languages such as German and Spanish. McPake *et al.* (2007) suggest that language provision in England is relatively limited, both in terms of the range of languages offered and in relation to numbers. Muijs *et al.* (2005) believe that it would be risky if KS2 pupils were only to learn French rather than other languages which are used more widely. The Languages Review (Dearing and King, 2007)

addressed the importance of widening the range of languages offered at primary level beyond French and highlighted the potential role of world languages, including Eastern languages. Over the past decade, there seems to have been an increasing demand for languages of other countries outside Europe, including Chinese. CILT *et al.* (2005) suggest that while only four per cent of students who chose French as their GCSE continued to study it at A level, the proportions for Turkish, Japanese and Chinese were much higher, at 30, 31 and 76 per cent respectively. This suggests that there are greater opportunities to develop community language provision, and a demand for developing the diversity of language provision beyond French, German and Spanish. The National Curriculum Primary Handbook 2010 (DCSF *et al.*, 2010) lists the “major European and world languages” that children should study after age 7 and this includes Mandarin (p.28). The draft National Curriculum originally suggested that from 2014 all primary schools would have to choose one language from French, German, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish, Latin and Ancient Greek to offer to their KS2 pupils (DFE, 2013b). However, the final draft dropped this list, leaving the choice to schools.

Decisions about what languages to offer in primary schools are usually made by head teachers, based on the available teachers, the languages offered in local secondary schools, the availability of resources, and the personal interests and expertise of staff members (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). Little is known about why they might choose a lesser taught language like Chinese or the impact of this choice for pupils.

2.4.3 Guidelines and resources for language teaching

The Primary Framework for Languages (DfES, 2005) marked the first time that teachers in primary schools in England were given a single nationwide framework within which to work. This Framework offers support for primary school teachers in building their own courses. In addition, a scheme of work for KS2, which is available for French, German and Spanish, was published in 2007. Jones and McLachlan (2009) suggest that most PMFL teachers are aware of the framework and use it as a core reference, but adapt it to the curriculum content. It provides a systematic approach to teaching PMFLs, but it is not statutory. It is also affected by how teachers interpret the PMFL curriculum (Woodgate-Jones, 2009).

With regard to teaching Chinese specifically, a scheme for teaching Chinese Mandarin to KS2 pupils was published by TDA in 2010, the aim of which was to help:

HanBan teachers arriving in the UK needing clear guidance on how to work in a way that other teachers in primary schools can support and understand; secondary teachers working with primary feeders gaining help as to what primary pedagogy looks and feels like; newly trained Chinese teachers working at primary level needing to save time whilst allowing them to add their own touches and adapt their style to the needs of each class (Chinese Staffroom, 2010).

However, it is not clear whether teachers of Chinese are using this scheme in schools.

The DfES (2002) has drawn attention to poor support for language teaching. It suggests that there are too many schools and teachers working in isolation, without access to support networks, and that there needs to be greater collaboration between schools and with further and higher education institutions to embed and extend best practice and to share specialist facilities and resources. Bolster *et al.* (2004) study of language transition from primary to secondary school suggests that some primary foreign language teachers feel isolated in their role regarding coordination between the school and outside agencies. Dearing and King (2006) point out that having a partner school has become “one of the main motivational drivers for language learning as well as a major rationale for languages in our schools” (p.36). The DfES (2002) has also proposed the development of partnerships with schools in other countries, including France, Germany, Spain, China and Russia. The British Council (Unknown) is making efforts to support language teaching in England. It offers many projects and initiatives to promote international links, intercultural understanding and global awareness.

2.4.4 Primary language teachers

Various types of primary language teachers teach primary languages (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). Languages in primary schools are most often taught by generalist primary teachers whose main area of responsibility is not MFL (Powell *et al.*, 2000), followed by peripatetic teachers mainly from secondary schools, and volunteers or

parents (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). The terminology for primary teachers is surprisingly subtle. The term “class teacher” means that the teacher teaches the class across the curriculum (possibly, but not always, including languages). The primary class teacher is, therefore, a generalist teacher. However, not all generalist primary teachers have their own class. In addition, primary languages may be taught by teachers who are trained as primary teachers but now teach mainly languages. These teachers are called primary language specialist teachers. It is important that not only their current role but also their training are indicated in this way.

In their evaluation of primary language Pathfinder programmes, Muijs *et al.* (2005) found that languages are normally taught by class teachers, and sometimes by foreign language assistants or visiting teachers from secondary schools. Therefore, primary language teachers are either language specialists without primary training or primary teachers who have a detailed knowledge of the pupils but no specialist MFL teaching knowledge (Hunt *et al.*, 2005; Qualifications and Curriculum Agency, 2001).

The type of teacher relates to the teacher’s subject knowledge discussed earlier. The advantages and disadvantages of both primary generalist class teachers and specialist teachers are discussed in the literature (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b; Hunt *et al.*, 2005; Muijs *et al.*, 2005). The advantages of primary generalist class teachers teaching languages include their in-depth knowledge of pupils’ individual needs, their good rapport with pupils, their knowledge of activities suited to the cognitive development of the age group and to the range of learning styles, their ability to integrate the foreign language into other relevant topics and daily

routines, and their ability to act as a role model to pupils as language learners themselves (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b; Hunt *et al.*, 2005; Muijs *et al.*, 2005). The disadvantages of primary generalist class teachers teaching languages are related to their limited ability to speak and write the language or identify and correct pupils' errors, and their lack of first-hand knowledge of TL culture (Hunt *et al.*, 2005). Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) suggest that primary class teachers are more likely to know a few words or have only basic conversational competence than to be fluent in a language. In comparison, the advantages of specialist language teachers include their better knowledge of the TL, their awareness of and ability to correct errors, their ability to discuss the language more systematically, their longer-term view of foreign language learning to inform planning, their ability to extend pupils linguistically, their good models of pronunciation and accuracy, their first-hand experience of the target culture, and their confidence to respond flexibly (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Hunt *et al.*, 2005; Muijs *et al.*, 2005). The disadvantages of specialists are their lack of primary experience, their lack of knowledge of pupils and their achievement/development beyond language lessons, their inexperience in using appropriate resources, their inadequate knowledge of primary pedagogical options, difficulties in liaising with class teachers, difficulties in linking the language to the wider curriculum, and their lack of involvement in planning meetings or with the school as a whole (Muijs *et al.*, 2005). Bolster *et al.* (2004) research into language transition from primary to secondary levels indicates that some secondary language specialist teachers have neither the interest nor the pedagogical experience to teach primary children's

languages. Secondary teachers do not teach in the same way as primary teachers, which may be problematic for pupils and teachers (Cable *et al.*, 2010).

In English primary schools, generalist class teachers are perceived as more suitable for teaching languages (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b; Ofsted, 2011). Wade *et al.* (2009) report that there has been a decline in the number of peripatetic specialist teachers and an increase in the number of primary class teachers who have a background in language or who have received language training recently. Cable *et al.* (2010) state that “the head teachers who selected a class teacher approach often made claims for this as the most sustainable model” (p.134) based on their study of language learning at KS2. Rowe *et al.* (2012) study of the impact of primary modern languages also suggests that the model of a skilled primary language subject leader, working in collaboration with enthusiastic generalist class teachers, is emerging as a consistent preference. However, using generalist class teachers to teach foreign languages still seems not to be a perfect solution. Sharpe (2001) suggests that the ideal situation is language being taught by a primary trained generalist with additional specialist language training and class teachers able to support the primary specialist. Rowe *et al.* (2012) agree that “the model of a primary trained specialist subject leader who can demonstrate, enthuse and inspire, in combination with enthusiastic and committed class teachers, willing to take on further training, will provide the most positive way forward” (p.145). In England, most primary schools have a specialist teacher on the staff, and almost all schools have established contacts with local authority advisors or consultants at different stages, but specialist teachers can only act as consultants for colleagues or teach some classes in larger schools (Ofsted, 2011). Moreover, primary language teacher

supply appears to be inadequate, which means that responsibility for language teaching across a whole school often falls on a single teacher (Hunt *et al.*, 2005). This lack of qualified primary language teachers may also lead to unstable language provision. Driscoll *et al.* (2004a) suggest that 60 per cent of all schools offer the language they teach simply because there is a teacher available with a particular language expertise to teach it. Moreover, some schools that have ceased to offer PMFL have done so because teachers with language expertise have left the school. The DfES (2002) suggests that the shortage of MFL teachers, especially at primary level, is a great threat to the success of language teaching in primary schools (DfES, 2002).

The problem of finding a suitable teacher to teach languages in primary schools is related to the supply of primary language teachers. McLachlan (2009) states that “teacher supply currently appears to be inadequate, with responsibility for language teaching across schools often resting on the shoulders of a single teacher” (p.194). Satchwell (2006) proposes that “teacher needs, initial teacher education, and continuing professional development need to be improved” (p.49). In teaching Chinese, this issue is particularly relevant, if largely undocumented, as few English teachers are likely to be trained to teach Chinese, since primary Chinese training is not nationally available. This leads to the issue of primary language teacher training.

The shortage of teachers with appropriate subject knowledge was initially identified in the 1970s (Burstall *et al.* 1974) and is an ongoing concern for primary language education (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Powell *et al.*, 2000). Staffing appropriate primary language teachers also remains a problem (Muijs *et al.*, 2005). Powell *et al.* (2000)

recommend that initial training for primary class teachers should include foreign language teaching and learning. Sharpe (2001) holds the same opinion, suggesting that this will be needed if primary foreign languages are eventually to be made a statutory subject. Driscoll *et al.* (2004b) also believe that training is important for the expansion of primary MFL, not only for initial teacher education, but also for in-service teachers, as high quality training may help to identify teachers' needs and support them in developing both confidence and competence, to sustain their enthusiasm for teaching PMFL and maintain their language skills (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b). Ofsted's (2008) survey report on initial teacher education indicates that there is great demand for primary language teacher training in England. Rowe *et al.* (2012) also believe that it is important to include primary foreign languages within primary initial teacher education courses.

Training priorities for primary teachers have been suggested by some researchers: Driscoll *et al.* (2004a) indicate that primary teachers' linguistic competence and confidence should be priorities for training. They recommend that foreign language content and the skill to use the TL in clearly defined areas for communication, the target culture, subject-specific teaching methods, age-specific teaching methods, resources, primary curriculum, and children's learning needs should all be included in the training in order to support, promote and develop effective practice and coherence in schools. Muijs *et al.* (2005) recommend that primary teachers should receive appropriate methodological training for the key stages and the subject. Reports of inspections also make recommendations: Ofsted (2005), Ofsted (2008) points out that primary teachers need additional specialist feedback on their language teaching, such as how to increase the use of the TL in the classroom. Cable

et al. (2010) suggest that there has been an ongoing need for teachers to develop their personal language skills, receive further training in the teaching of literacy and intercultural understanding, develop cross-curricular links, and ensure progression in children's learning and assessment.

With regard to languages which are less frequently taught in primary schools, including Chinese Mandarin, Urdu, Panjabi, Somali and Polish, the demand for appropriate teacher training is even more urgent (Ofsted, 2008). Ofsted (2008) conducted a survey of teachers teaching these languages and found that the majority did not have qualified teacher status, only a quarter of them were qualified to teach languages in the UK, and barely a fifth had a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The quality of teaching by teachers with a PGCE in these languages is consistently good (Ofsted, 2008). However, few teachers are trained to teach less commonly taught languages: "In 2006/07, there were only 35 trainees in England studying to teach Arabic, Bengali, Japanese, Mandarin, Panjabi, Turkish, or Urdu with one of five initial teacher training providers" (Ofsted, 2008, p. 5). Ofsted (2008) gives some possible reasons: firstly, the number of PGCE courses in these languages is limited; secondly, only flexible courses are able to recruit trainees; thirdly, all initial teacher training providers have difficulty in finding suitable school placements because schools may not want to offer one of these languages, especially if they are not confident about recruiting staff to teach them. The current study will consider the issue of teacher provision in the context of teaching Chinese to primary children.

2.4.5 Children's motivations for learning languages

One of the key issues in research into learning a language has been pupils' motivations, as motivation plays a vital role in academic learning in general, and particularly in learning foreign languages (Csizér and Dörnyei, 2005). Oxford and Shearin (1994) suggest that motivation is widely considered to be a determining factor in second language development. Coleman *et al.* (2007) indicate that motivation has been considered to exert a crucial influence at all levels of learning, including the choice to begin learning, to persist in learning foreign languages and to take examinations. Given the wide scope of research into language learning motivation (Dörnyei, 2003), this section discusses only key concepts related to this study.

Relatively traditional concepts of language learning motivation include Gardner's (1985) integrative orientation motivation and instrumental orientation motivation. Integrative orientation refers to a learner wanting to learn a language because of a desire to identify with the culture of that language; while instrumental orientation means that the learner wants to learn a language motivated by external factors such as passing examinations (Gardner, 1985). However, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) argue that it is necessary to seek new conceptions and interpretations that extend or elaborate on the meaning of Gardner's theory. Dörnyei (2003) summarises three alternative theoretical approaches: self-determination theory, attribution theory and goal theory. The main terms related to self-determination theory are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 2003). Barton *et al.* (2009) define extrinsic motivation as being "fed by the prospect of rewards, sometimes tangible rewards

such as stickers or prizes” (p.152). Lamb (2001) calls intrinsic motivation “the desire to learn for its own sake” (p.85). Barton *et al.* (2009) also add that intrinsic motivation is related to pupils’ enjoyment of language learning. Attribution theory “links people’s past experience with their future achievement efforts”, as learners’ previous learning successes or failures may considerably shape their motivation for later learning (Dörnyei, 2003, p.8). Goal theory refers to learners being motivated by specific goals in learning languages.

According to the literature, children’s motivations for learning languages can be separated into five main aspects. Firstly, a desire to travel to TL countries and to use the language is a key motivation. Dearing and King (2007) suggest that young children think learning languages will help them make new friends, go anywhere they want and have more fun abroad. In their “discovering language” project, Barton *et al.* (2009) found that over two thirds of pupils in their research believed that they needed to speak other languages when travelling abroad. The second type of motivation discussed is that of interest in the TL itself. Barton *et al.* (2009) suggest that pupils feel that the variety of learning different languages makes their life more interesting. Nikolov (1999) has studied the motivation of Hungarian children (aged between 6 and 14) for learning English and suggests that most thought that learning English was “fun”, “interesting” and “easy”. Dearing and King (2006) suggest that some children believe there will be a new world for them if they learn languages. A third type of motivation is a positive attitude towards native speakers such as language teachers. In a study of cultural and linguistic diversity in the curriculum of primary schools in France, French primary pupils interviewed by Helot and Young (2005) thought that native language teachers could

bring “live culture” to the classroom and help them understand the languages better. Muijs *et al.* (2005) suggest that many pupils appreciate their class teacher’s expertise in the foreign language, but think the class teacher relies too heavily on games, with insufficient pupil participation compared with native speaking teachers. A fourth aspect of motivation is a willingness to use the TL to communicate: Oxford and Shearin (1994) suggest that some students want to make friends with people from TL countries. Finally, another motivation for children may be the benefit of learning languages for their future: in response to a questionnaire for Coleman *et al.* (2007) study of UK pupils’ motivation for language learning, some KS3 pupils suggested that they wanted to learn languages because they thought it would be useful for job hunting in the future.

It may be seen from the literature that English pupils’ motivations for learning languages are mainly integrative (Gardner, 1985) or extrinsic (Barton *et al.* (2009). This may be because language education has not been given equal status with English, maths, and ICT (DCSF, 2010), however most children may have the option of learning a language for fun.

Dörnyei (2001, p.29) discusses the role of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom (see Figure 1). Dörnyei (2003) believes that appropriate teaching practice in the L2 classroom should cover a wide range of areas from “making the teaching materials relevant to the learners” through “setting specific learner goals” to “increasing learner satisfaction” (p.24). Therefore, it is also important to consider the teachers’ teaching while investigating the learners’ motivation.

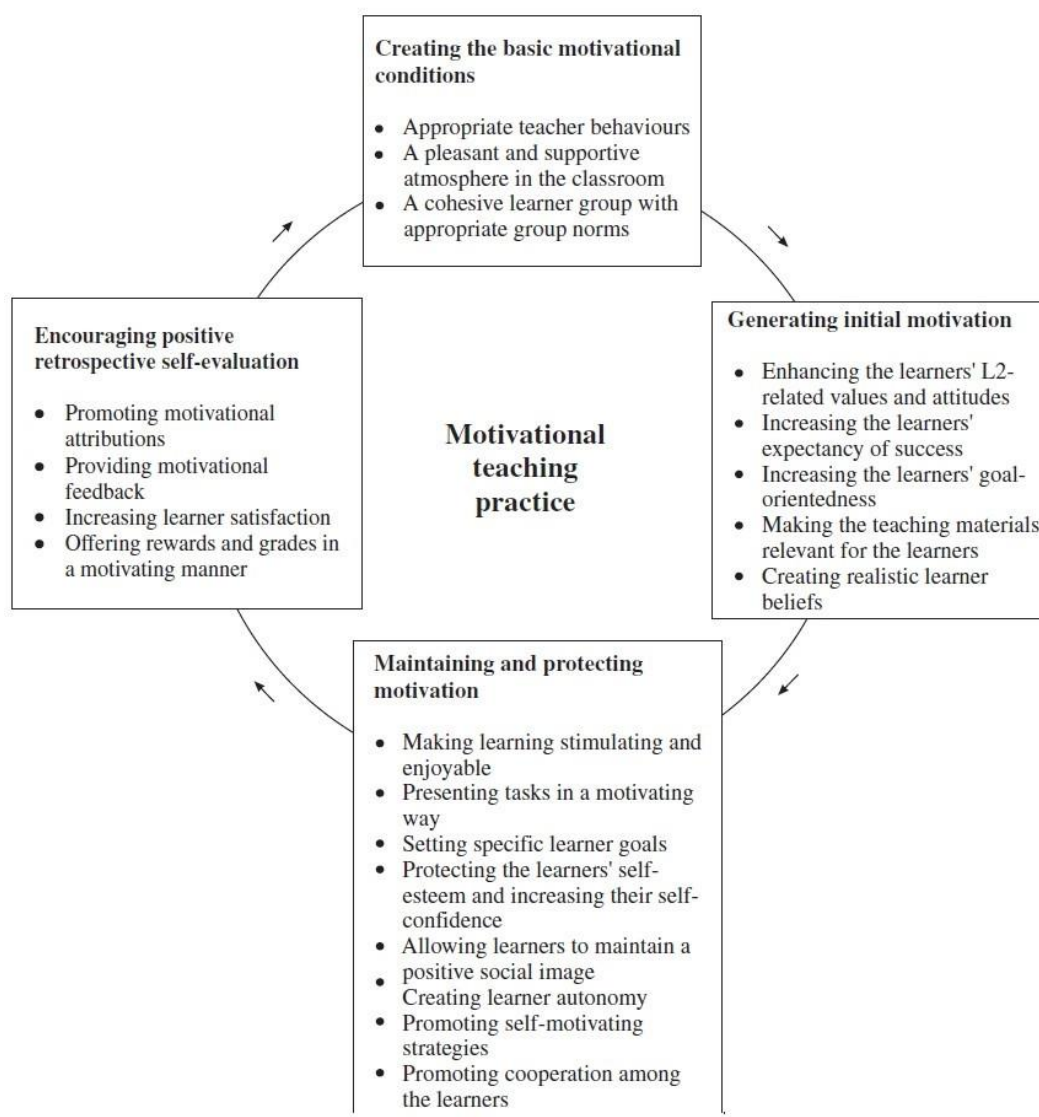


Figure 1 - Motivational teaching practice

Research also suggests that children's motivation for learning languages decreases with age (Chambers, 1999; Phillips and Filmer-Sankey, 1993; Williams *et al.*, 2002). Williams *et al.* (2002) noted that Year 7 students had a greater need for language learning and had higher integrative orientation than Year 9 students, based on their study of secondary school pupils' motivation for learning languages. There

may also be gender differences. Enever and Watts (2009) study of two primary language Pathfinder projects suggested that:

the girls felt significantly more enthusiastic and confident about their abilities as FL learners than did the boys. The girls liked the subject, felt they were good at it, wanted to continue and were prepared to take risks as well as practice in order to improve their skills. The views of the boys were much more mixed (p.225).

In addition, there are different types of motivation towards different languages. Williams *et al.* (2002) find that boys tend to prefer German to French, as they think French is more about “love and stuff”, while German is more about “the war, Hitler and all that” (p.520).

In England, children’s motivation for learning foreign languages has been perceived by some researchers to be low (Stables and Wikeley, 1999), possibly related to the dominance of English (see Section 2.4.2). Stables and Wikeley (1999) suggest that because their home language is still the dominant world language, British students’ extrinsic motivation is inevitably lower than that of their peers in other countries, where failure to speak English or other languages is seen as severely limiting. Some researchers (Evans, 2007; Macaro, 2008) suggest that children’s motivation for learning languages has recently decreased dramatically (as discussed in Section 2.4.1). Macaro (2008) indicates that language is often perceived to be the most difficult subject in the curriculum, and students generally do not like the idea of learning languages. However, in the context of English primary schools, children’s motivation is generally high compared with secondary schools (Cable *et al.*, 2010;

Muijs *et al.*, 2005), although there are some concerns about long-term motivation, as the children may not wish to continue to learn languages in secondary schools (Muijs *et al.*, 2005). Coleman *et al.* (2007) conducted a survey of KS3 pupils in over 10,000 primary schools to investigate their motivation for learning languages. They suggest that pupils' motivation is modestly positive, but will need to be sustained at a higher level. This may be because language education tends to be a light-hearted, fun experience in primary schools (Muijs *et al.*, 2005); hence, the children may have the option of learning language for fun. Muijs *et al.* (2005) indicate that children tend to lose interest after a year when the TL becomes more difficult. Moreover, pupils' motivation may decrease later on if they have been learning similar things repeatedly (Powell *et al.*, 2000). Dearing and King (2006) suggest that English pupils' motivation cannot rely solely or primarily on instrumental motivation, as occurs in learning English in other countries, and that language lessons must engage pupils.

There is a debate in the literature as to whether children's motivation for language learning is related to government policy or to pedagogy and individual factors. On the one hand, some researchers hold the opinion that government policies must take great responsibility for the decline of language learning motivation. Coleman *et al.* (2007) indicate that, even though official voices support and encourage language learning, policies may not be very supportive. The decision of the National Language Strategy to shift MFL as a compulsory core subject from KS4 to KS2 has caused a dramatic drop in language uptake at KS4, and may significantly influence the motivation of KS3 learners. Evans (2007) suggests that because languages are not given prominence in the curriculum, many students and their parents consider

them not to be important. On the other hand, some researchers believe that the motivation for learning languages is relevant to the teaching and learning itself. Macaro (2008) argues that students' motivation might be better if learning languages were not compulsory. Macaro (2008) also suggests that predominant use of the TL may also cause pupils' lack of enjoyment of language learning. Other authors believe that children's motivation for learning languages is influenced by the social climate. Coleman (2009) notes that the UK has the lowest proportion of secondary pupils learning a foreign language among European countries. Coleman *et al.* (2007) also point out that the prevalent opinion of British politicians and media is that English is enough because of its international status, which discourages English children from learning other languages (Coleman *et al.*, 2007). Burstall *et al.* (1974) also indicates that the views of the children's parents, relatives, neighbours and family friends may impact on children's motivation for learning languages.

These complex backgrounds are the basis for investigating children's motivation for learning Chinese in this study, as there is no direct evidence about this in the existing research.

2.4.6 Children's experience of learning a language

Generally, primary children are enthusiastic about learning MFLs (Muijs *et al.*, 2005). Young children usually find MFLs more fun than other subjects, and are keen on foreign language learning (Enever and Watts, 2009; Hunt *et al.*, 2005). Bolster *et al.* (2004) suggest that children in primary schools have positive attitudes

towards other countries, and see language learning experiences as fun and enjoyable. Barton *et al.* (2009) indicate that the majority of pupils interviewed in their research expressed clear enthusiasm, and agreed that they were keener on learning languages after they had some experience of learning them. Ofsted (2011) note that it is clear that pupils enjoy their language learning in primary schools.

Barton *et al.* (2009) state that “it goes without saying that enjoyment of the language learning experience is a principal objective of any primary scheme” (p.151). Hunt *et al.* (2005) suggest that the two most influential factors in young children’s language learning enjoyment are the classroom activities and the teachers. This is reflected in Cable *et al.* (2010) longitudinal research on language learning at KS2, which suggests several things that children like in language learning: the personal characteristics of the teachers, learning with choral repetition and chanting as a whole class, working in pairs and groups, singing songs, and doing interactive and creative activities. They also note several things which children do not like, such as persistent repetition of content already known, lack of challenge in tasks, limited opportunities to develop skills, emphasis on accuracy in languages, too much TL, over-emphasis on written accuracy, and other children misbehaving in class. Moreover, the children seem to enjoy listening and speaking more than reading and writing (Cable *et al.*, 2010). The hard work involved in language learning has been perceived as being difficult and not enjoyed by pupils. This may include learning long/hard words or many words, learning a whole sentence, having to take in too much, or learning different and new pronunciations (Jones and Coffey, 2006, p.90). However, none of these issues has been explored in relation to children learning Chinese, so this is an important area considered in the present study.

2.5 Teaching and Learning of Chinese

Having reviewed the language teaching background to this study, this section will concentrate on issues specific to Chinese. These include the impetus to learn Chinese, the choice of Mandarin Chinese, characteristics of the Chinese language and how it affects teaching, challenges in learning Chinese, and strategies for learning Chinese.

2.5.1 Impetus for learning Chinese

Why children and teachers might choose to study Chinese is relevant to this study. With a significant increase in the international influence of the Chinese economy, more and more people are interested in learning Chinese. Learning Chinese has become a global trend (Li (2008) and is now being learnt on almost every continent for a wide range of purposes (Duff, 2008a). Between 2000 and 2004, the number of people participating in the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK, a Chinese language level test) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland increased by 57 per cent (The People's Daily, 2006b). According to the Chinese Ministry of Education, more than 30 million people are learning Chinese overseas, and over 2,500 universities in 100 countries offer Chinese courses (The People's Daily, 2006b). The Ministry's National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language estimated that the number of foreigners learning Chinese around the world would reach 100 million in 2010 (The People's Daily, 2006a). In England, learning Chinese has gradually become more popular. The BBC News (2007) reported that the number of non-Chinese people learning Mandarin Chinese had soared to 30 million by 2007, and asked "will it

change the status of English as a global language?” (BBC website, 2007). Graddol (2006) noted that “Mandarin has emerged as the new must-have language”, because of the population of people speaking Chinese Mandarin and the economic, as well as business influence of China” (p.63).

The reasons for learning Chinese have been investigated by some researchers. Firstly, a fifth of the world’s population speaks Chinese, and the People’s Republic of China is playing an increasingly important role in the world (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001). The BBC News (2006) observed that “China used to be called a sleeping giant. Now, as the world’s fastest growing major economy, it is well and truly awake.” Chinese is the most widely spoken home language after English and French in Canada and after English and Spanish in America (Liu, 2008). It is also a valuable community language, as well as a language for international communication (Duff, 2008b). The US National Security Language Initiative describes Chinese as a critically-needed language with respect to addressing the economic and security needs of the nation (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). American business organisations ranging from technology to transportation, as well as food and lodging, have indicated that Chinese is one of the languages most often demanded in current business activities, and a lack of language skills has proved to be a significant barrier to their business participation in the overseas market (The Language Flagship, 2009). Wang and Higgins (2008) have concluded that the impetus for learning Chinese in England arises from three factors: the UK has lagged compared with other European countries in terms of expanding Chinese studies; the Chinese government has been trying to increase the number of non-Chinese Mandarin speakers in the world; with increasing globalisation and the

importance of China in the world's economy and politics, there is a need for the British business community to learn Chinese (Wang and Higgins, 2008).

2.5.2 Which Chinese?

There are at least eight major dialect groups of Chinese, which vary so dramatically in pronunciation that some almost cannot be understood by speakers of other dialects (Hudson-Ross and Dong, 1990). Two dialects are used extensively overseas: Mandarin and Cantonese. Mandarin (a term which is not used or recognised in China) is called "Putonghua" (standard language) in China. It is the standard Chinese of the People's Republic of China, and is based on the Beijing dialect and a combination of several northern dialects (Hudson-Ross and Dong, 1990). It was set by the State Council of China in February 1956 as the official language spoken in China (China Education and Research Network, Unknown). Putonghua is used in mainland China and Taiwan, and since the 1997 handover to China is learnt in Hong Kong. Cantonese is a dialect used mainly in Guangdong province (known as Canton in Cantonese), some rural areas in Guangxi province, Hong Kong, Macau and many overseas Chinese communities (China Education and Research Network, Unknown). Although there are many spoken Chinese dialects, they are all written in the same way (Hudson-Ross and Dong, 1990). In 1955 the State Council of China decided that simplified characters should be used for writing Chinese (Ministry of Education, 2006), reducing the number of strokes in order to make them easier to learn and write. Hong Kong and Taiwan did not adopt simplified characters and still use traditional Chinese characters (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001), although most people also learn simplified Chinese.

The result of this situation is that almost the whole of the huge population of China (1.3 billion) writes Chinese using simplified characters. Most people in China speak Putonghua (Mandarin) Chinese for official and formal purposes, and may well also speak another dialect. At the end of the 1990s, 53 per cent of people in China used Putonghua, and 95 per cent wrote using simplified Chinese characters. The government set the goal of standardising the use of Putonghua and simplified Chinese characters in China by 2010 (Wang, 2006). However, there are overseas Chinese communities in the UK and America which rely on the Cantonese dialect and traditional characters. This situation has given rise to some confusion in the literature. Higgins and Sheldon (2001) note that “the written language of Cantonese uses different characters from Mandarin” (p.112), which is not the case. They both use simplified Chinese, but because Hong Kong did not adopt simplified Chinese characters, Cantonese speakers from Hong Kong write Chinese in the traditional way.

Because of the colonial link before 1997, there are many Hong Kong Chinese in the UK, most of whom speak Cantonese (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001). Consequently, Cantonese is provided in some schools. In 1998, this Chinese language had the fourth largest number of A level modern language entries (above Italian) and the sixth largest number of GCSE entries, but most of these were native speakers or of Chinese heritage. Two per cent of the population of England (CILT, 2009) are British Chinese speakers, but they are most likely to speak Cantonese. The introduction of Putonghua, therefore, continues to mean the introduction of a foreign language, so British Chinese speakers may not be best placed to teach Putonghua (Mandarin). The issue of whether to teach Cantonese or Putonghua

(Mandarin) has been resolved in a footnote to the National Curriculum (DCSF *et al.*, 2010) which uses the term “world language” and mentions Mandarin as one of the world languages. It does not emphasise community languages or Cantonese. The draft National Curriculum (DFE, 2013a) also originally included Mandarin as one of seven language choices for pupils at KS2.

In summary, Mandarin (Putonghua) is the type of Chinese most likely to be taught because of its demand in the Chinese speaking world. It is most likely to be taught using simplified characters and pinyin.

2.5.3 Characteristics of Chinese Languages

Wang *et al.* (2003) suggest that “Chinese presents the highest contrast to alphabetic systems such as English” (p.190). Chinese is a very different language from English, and this has implications for learning, so it is important to analyse these as a background to this study.

Firstly, Chinese Mandarin (Putonghua) has two written systems: characters and pinyin. Characters are the basic units of the Chinese writing system (Wang *et al.*, 2003). Unlike alphabetic languages, such as English and Spanish, the Chinese writing system employs an ideographic system (Perfetti and Tan, 1999), which means each character represents a meaning. Tse *et al.* (2007) describe it thus: “Whereas the letters in alphabetic languages represent sounds, the characters in ideographic languages represent meanings” (p.375). For example, the character 日 means sun, the character 月 means moon, and the combined character 明 means

bright. However, there is little correspondence between the characters and their pronunciation (Sung and Wu, 2011). Liu (2005) notes that there are no explicit grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules in Chinese characters, and although there is some relationship, it is very non-specific.

Pinyin is the official Romanisation system used in mainland China. It was established as the international standard transcription system for Chinese Mandarin by the International Organisation for Standardization in 1979 (Zhou, 1986) and as the phonemic spelling system for Mandarin (Fu, 1998). Pinyin provides an alphabetic coding system for Chinese (Guan and Liu, 2011). Both characters and pinyin are discussed in detail in this section because they are key issues in the teaching of Chinese.

Chinese characters are important, not only as a means of communication but also as a key element of Chinese culture and history. The characters are the oldest surviving written language and a link to the original pictographic meaning. (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001) suggest that Chinese characters originated as stylised pictures of objects, perhaps 10,000 years ago (p.111). However, today the characters are not pictures and the ideographic origin of many pictographic characters is not obvious (Tse *et al.*, 2007). Chinese characters include three elements: shape, sound and meaning (Shen, 2005; Zhu, 2002). Zhu (2002) suggests that only the form belongs to the characters themselves, while sound and meaning are what the characters represent. Many researchers (Shen and Ke, 2007; Shen, 2005; Sung and Wu, 2011) explain that Chinese characters are constructed via three-tier orthographic structures: characters, radicals and strokes. Radicals are the basic orthographic units

of characters, and strokes are the basic building materials for radicals (Shen, 2005, p.50; Wang *et al.*, 2003). Chinese characters can be classified into two categories according to their physical structure: integral characters and compound characters (Shen, 2005). Integral characters, such as the characters 人 (person), 口 (mouth), 火 (fire), 木 (tree), and 田 (field), contain only one radical and cannot be divided further into different radicals (Sung and Wu, 2011). Normally, integral characters show some ideographic origins of Chinese characters, although some are less obvious than others after thousands of years of transformation. Figure 2 provides some examples (Lily, 2008). The five characters in the picture, from top to bottom, mean sun, moon, carriage (nowadays also car) and horse.



Figure 2 - Integral characters

The integrals can become radicals, to be combined as new compound characters (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001). Approximately 90 per cent of Chinese characters are compound characters (Tse *et al.*, 2007; Zhu, 1987). Some compound characters have more than one radical and these radicals are combined to produce a meaning. For example, the character 木 means tree, and the character 林 means forest; the character 女 means woman, 子 means son, and the compound character 好 means good, because in ancient times Chinese people believed it was good to have a wife

and a son. Some compound characters include a phonetic radical and a semantic radical: the former suggests the pronunciation of a character while the latter implies its meaning (Zhu, 1987). For example, the characters 妈 are pronounced as /mǎ/, 乃 is pronounced as /nǎi/, 且 is pronounced as /qiě/, and 未 is pronounced as /wěi/. As mentioned earlier, 女 means woman. Therefore, 妈 is pronounced as /mā/ and means mum, 奶 is pronounced as /nǎi/ and means grandma, 姐 is pronounced as /jiě/ and means elder sister, and 妹 is pronounced as /mèi/ and means younger sister. However, Zhu (1987) suggests that only about 26 per cent of Chinese characters are actually pronounced like their phonetic radicals after thousands of years of evolution of the Chinese language.

Strokes are the smallest unit in a character, and there are 24 basic strokes which can be combined in different ways by following certain stroke positional constraints to form radicals (Sung and Wu, 2011). There are no rules about how many strokes a character may have (Shen, 2005).

Written pinyin represents syllables, composed of an initial consonant and a following final (vowel), usually with a tone (Fu, 1998). There are 21 initial consonants, 23 final vowels and four tones in pinyin in addition to a neutral tone (Zhang, 2006). Each syllable of pinyin is represented by an “initial”, a “final” and a “tone”. The initial is the onset sound of the syllable – usually a consonant. The “final” is the syllable “rime” – usually a vowel and consonant. The tone is the inflexion used to pronounce the syllable correctly. There are four tones characterised by their fundamental frequency contours: tone 1 is a flat pattern, tone

2 is a rising pattern, tone 3 is a falling-rising pattern, and tone 4 is a falling pattern (Fu *et al.*, 1998). There is also a neutral tone without these four patterns. Tones are very important in pinyin, because syllables spelt using exactly the same initials and finals but with different tones may mean completely different things in Chinese pinyin. For example, the syllable /mā/ (tone 1) is the sound for character 妈 which means mum; /má/ (tone 2) is the sound for character 麻 which means linen; /mǎ/ (tone 3) is the characters 马 and 码 which mean horse and size respectively; and /mà/ (tone 4) is the character 骂 which means scold.

To summarise, the learner must know the parts of characters called radicals and how these are combined into characters, and must memorise characters and combinations of characters, as most words have more than one character. In addition, the learner must remember the sound associated with each character. Pinyin may help foreign learners to record the sound with Roman letters and tone marks.

2.5.4 Challenges to Learning Chinese

Because of the nature of Chinese, the meaning and sound of each Chinese character must be learned individually by rote, and Chinese readers generally need to know about 3,000 commonly used characters out of a total of 87,019 (Sung and Wu, 2011; Wong *et al.*, 2010). Moreover, Chinese characters represent meanings but do not indicate pronunciation. Therefore, Chinese pupils who learn Chinese as their first language learn by heart and memory. It is a tradition that Chinese children must say

and copy the characters over and over again until they can be reproduced from memory without error (Tse *et al.*, 2007). The skill of using pinyin must also be mastered in Chinese schools (Tse *et al.*, 2007). Tse *et al.* (2007) suggest that traditional methods of teaching Chinese in China follow a bottom-up sequence, from learning how to write characters, to sentences, to paragraphs and then whole passages. Teachers also place considerable emphasis on the order of strokes in the character and the exact position of each stroke (Ministry of Education, 1996). Guan and Liu (2011) explain that Chinese pupils are taught the appropriate stroke sequences for individual characters, which become motor programmes (allographs) in memory with repeated writing practice. To ensure that pupils memorise the characters, Chinese teachers require them to practise writing every character many times until it can be recalled automatically, and it is common for pupils to write each character up to 100 times before they remember it (Ministry of Education, 2001). The teachers also use dictation frequently to assess pupils' learning progress, and pupils' knowledge is judged by their ability to write the equivalent of the speech they hear, without error. If pupils make mistakes, they have to write the characters correctly at least ten times, and if the pupils still fail to remember the characters, the exercise will be repeated again and again until they can (Tse *et al.*, 2007). It may be seen that memory and rote-learning are the main learning methods for Chinese pupils, and that learning to write and recognise Chinese characters may be laborious, demanding and sometimes exceedingly tedious (Tse *et al.*, 2007). Children in China learn both pinyin and characters in their literacy lessons, and Chinese characters are usually introduced earlier than pinyin, when children are aged between three and five (Chen and Zhang, 2007). Pinyin is systematically

introduced at Grade 1 in Chinese primary school (Ministry of Education, 2003), and some kindergartens and pre-schools may teach the children pinyin for early literacy (Du, 2009). It is worth noting that Chinese children are exposed to Chinese phonology for many years before learning pinyin in school (Bassetti, 2006), and they are learning the Chinese that is already in their spoken language vocabulary (Guan and Liu, 2011).

Learners of Chinese whose first language is an alphabetic language, such as English, face some particular challenges because of fundamental differences between learning alphabetic languages and Chinese (Bassetti, 2006). Cook and Bassetti (2005) believe that speakers are usually unaware of language units which are not represented in their own writing system. For instance, readers of an alphabetic writing system are aware of phonemes, and literate Arabic speakers are aware of consonant-vowel units, and so on. (Tse *et al.*, 2007) suggest that in learning alphabetic languages the number of letters and morphemes is usually fairly limited, whereas the number of characters in the ideographic language of Chinese is huge. In alphabetic languages, as long as children have mastered the phoneme blending rules, they are soon able to invent words of their own and can often impeccably decode the sound of a word without knowing its meaning. However, Chinese characters represent the spoken language in a largely irregular and unsystematic way (Everson, 1998). Nation (2001) suggests that, in order to become fully literate in Chinese, learners must know how to pronounce, recognise, produce and understand the meanings of commonly used characters, so that they can form words, phrases and sentences correctly. All of this requires a considerable amount of effort. Liskin-Gasparro (1982) suggests that Chinese is considered to be one of the most

challenging languages for non-native speakers to learn. Five key challenges for Western learners of Chinese have been identified in the literature.

The first challenge is the lack of correspondence between characters and their pronunciation (Sung and Wu, 2011). BBC News (2006) has reported that “Chinese script poses problems for English, as there is no alphabet in reading Chinese, but just thousands of characters”. It is even more difficult because there are large numbers of homophones in Chinese (Wong *et al.*, 2010). Wang and Higgins (2008) suggest that “whereas in English there are several thousand possible syllables, in Mandarin there are only 420 different syllables, or 1200 including the four tones, so that most sounds have many different meanings” (p.92). Many characters with different meanings share the same pronunciation. For example, the characters 立 (stand), 丽 (beautiful), 利 (benefit/sharp), and 力 (strength/power) are all pronounced as /lǐ/. Furthermore, the exact meaning of the characters must be distinguished by its context or phrases. For example, 力 means strength in the phrase 力量, but means power in the phrase 权利. Meanwhile, there are several Chinese characters that can be pronounced differently in different contexts. For example, the character 好 in the phrase 很好 is pronounced as /hǎo/ and means good; but in the phrase 好奇, it is pronounced as /hào/ and means tend to. Therefore, it may sometimes be time consuming and frustrating for Western learners to learn Chinese characters (Wang, 1998). Native speakers of Chinese are exposed to the pronunciations of characters years before they study them (Bassetti, 2006), but this is not the case for Western learners. Western learners have to learn the characters and their pronunciation at the same time.

The second challenge is Chinese pinyin and its tones. Although pinyin uses Roman alphabet letters, which provides children with a way to encode and decode the way Chinese is spoken, it does not share the phonology of English. Some sounds do not appear in English phonics, such as the sounds of “x” and “q”. This means that learning pinyin is an additional demand on beginners of Chinese. Wang *et al.* (2006) suggest that for speakers whose native language is non-tonal, tone presents great difficulties, as the functional association between the characteristics and the segmental structure is unfamiliar to them (Bluhme and Burr, 1971; Shen, 1989). Therefore, learning pinyin involves learning new content and knowledge about language, even if the blending and segmenting skills used in both English and pinyin are the same (c-a-t=cat, q-ī-n-g=qīng).

The difficulties of learning Chinese characters and pinyin may have implications for non-Chinese learners of Chinese. The nature of Chinese characters and pinyin has led to debate about the degree to which learners should learn Chinese characters and/or pinyin, even when they start to learn both oracy and literacy at the same time. There is also debate about when pinyin and characters should be introduced. The main area of debate regarding teaching Chinese to children from English backgrounds who have just started to learn Chinese is whether or when pinyin and/or characters should be introduced (Everson, 1998; Hu, 2003). There is conflicting evidence about this issue. On the one hand, some researchers hold the opinion that Chinese characters are too difficult for English background children to learn. Kirkpatrick (1995) suggests that no Asian language should be taught at primary school level to non-Chinese background children because the substantial script difference between European and Asian languages means it may take English

background learners four times longer to attain basic proficiency (Kirkpatrick, 1995). Everson (1998) conducted research among Chinese beginners at university level, and his research findings also suggest that pinyin should be taught before learners attempt to read or write Chinese. As Everson (1998) suggests, there is a strong relationship between knowing the meaning and the pronunciation of a word, and memorisation of characters is likely to be unsuccessful without firm oral language support. However, Everson's research was carried out with university students, and it may not be fully representative of the situation for primary Chinese learners. As discussed above, the new phonology of pinyin and the demands of the characters may present greater challenges for children. A study by Chung (2007) shows that for more experienced learners the presentation of characters before the English or pinyin improves acquisition of these characters. However, this study was also carried out with older and more experienced learners.

On the other hand, some researchers believe that Chinese characters can and should be introduced to primary students. The National Chinese Curriculum Project of Australia (Department of School Education, 1993) suggests that Chinese characters should not be seen as a deterrent, as they are often the crucial factor in children's enjoyment of learning Chinese. The significant difference between Chinese characters and Romanised script gives Chinese an aesthetic appeal to children, and makes the learning both relaxing and challenging (Department of School Education, 1993). Hu (2003) research gives some weight to this point. Hu (2003) conducted experimental research in an Australian primary school with four groups of Year 2 and Year 3 students, based on the hypothesis that primary school students are well able to learn Chinese characters at an early stage of learning Chinese. In Hu (2003)

research, two experimental groups from each year were introduced to characters before pinyin, while the other two were introduced to pinyin before characters. Her research findings demonstrate that the two experimental groups were able to recognise more characters than the groups who were introduced to pinyin first, and vice versa. Moreover, the experimental groups' achievement was slightly higher than the other two groups. This shows that young primary children can do very well in learning Chinese characters, as long as the teaching methods are appropriate, and suggests that Chinese characters should not be seen as a difficulty in teaching Chinese. There is currently little research evidence on the practice or theoretical underpinning of this issue for younger children, and the current study attempts to explore teachers' views on this issue.

Thirdly, the grammar of Chinese is totally different from English, which may be a challenge for learners, as with any language. Chinese deals with past and future, singular and plural, time and place using syntax, vocabulary selection, morphology and spelling. Chinese has relatively few words, does not use spelling to indicate morphology and uses context very heavily. There are some prominent grammatical structures in Chinese which may cause learners great difficulties (Hu, 2010). These are often related to the use of "particles", which are characters which have no individual meaning in Chinese but indicate a grammatical feature. There is no English equivalent. In Chinese, there are also measure words between the number and the noun in Chinese: it is not an apple, but it is one "ge" apple. Different measure words are used for different nouns. For example, one "zhang" chair, one "duo" flower, two "fu" pictures. These "measure words" may be very difficult for learners to learn at the very beginning. Moreover, the sentence order of Chinese is

different from that of English. For example, “thank you very much” in Chinese would be “very much thank you”. All these grammatical differences pose difficulties for English learners. These issues mean that programmes which try to plan progression in language learning, such as the framework for KS2, cannot generalise across languages successfully, and must be specific to each language.

The fourth challenge is that the learning and teaching styles of Chinese-educated teachers may give rise to difficulties for Western-educated students, who normally expect that the approaches used will be engaging, challenging and enjoyable, and that students will have opportunities to work collaboratively and creatively with one another (Duff, 2008b). However, the strategies needed for learning Chinese, as mentioned above, are based on Confucian heritage cultures and may also be related to the demands of the Chinese language, which involves memorising characters with little phonological link to pronunciation (Medwell *et al.*, 2012). This is, however, a contrast with the particular version of communicative language teaching represented in Western teaching, such as in English classrooms (Block, 2001; Block, 2005).

Last, but not least, since the pedagogy of Chinese for Western children is at a relatively early stage compared with other European languages, it has not been well researched for alphabetic learners. In terms of both theory and practice, the teaching of Chinese seems to be lagging behind by a generation or more in comparison with developments in the teaching and learning of other languages, such as English (Li, 2008). This may give rise to difficulties in learning Chinese, since people are still at an early stage in trialling an effective way of teaching and learning Chinese.

2.5.5 Strategies for Learning Chinese

Despite the many challenges facing English background pupils learning Chinese, some strategies have been suggested in the literature. The most common are memory strategies and rote-learning strategies for Chinese and Japanese students who learn the characters as their first language (Ballard and Clanchy, 1991; Mori *et al.*, 2007). For Western learners of Chinese, Chen (2009); Wang (1998); Yin (2003) suggest that memory strategies and repetitive practice of writing characters, followed by reading aloud with pinyin are also effective strategies. Jiang and Cohen (2011) indicate that learning Chinese characters demands considerable use of memorisation. Shen (2005) concludes that orthographic knowledge-based strategies and metacognitive strategies relating to the systematic preview and review of characters are efficient strategies for learning Chinese characters. Orthographic knowledge-based strategies refer to “analysing a new character, applying learned orthographic knowledge (radical knowledge and the knowledge of character formation), and identifying previously learned radicals or components that are semantically congruent with the new characters” (Shen, 2005, p.61); while with regard to metacognitive strategies, “having students analyse their own character learning processes and results may improve their metacognition as well as encouraging them to acquire metacognitive learning strategies” (p.62).

However, all the research mentioned above seems to have been conducted with adult Chinese learners. There has been more research on teaching Chinese to primary children in Australia. The experimental research conducted by Hu (2003) among pupils in Years 2 to 4 of an Australian primary school suggests some ways

of overcoming the difficulties discussed above. Firstly, Hu (2003) proposes that the teaching should focus on the basics when teaching characters, because although there are over 3,000 Chinese characters in daily use, there are only 214 basic radicals. Secondly, the picture method should be used to teach characters where possible, because this may provide children with an opportunity to look at the character and its picture. Thirdly, teachers need to deal with schema conflict (cultural difference, system difference, language difference, etc.) appropriately, as children with an alphabetic language background may be stuck when they start to learn an ideographic language, unless the very different language is introduced to them in an acceptable way. Moreover, Hu (2003) also suggests teaching Chinese in two separate tracks for oral and written Chinese, so that children learn to speak Chinese adopting the thematic format, and learn to read and write Chinese characters from the most basic ones to those of a more complex pattern, and from characters of fewer strokes to characters with more strokes (p.67). Methods used by teachers in English primary schools to teach Chinese are explored in this study.

2.6 Chinese in English Primary Schools

Although Chinese learning and teaching has been taking place for a long time in the UK, it is generally confined to weekend community schools for Chinese background children, and very few other schools and universities (Zhang and Li, 2010). Mandarin Chinese teaching is at a relatively early stage in England compared with some other Western nations, especially in primary schools (CILT, 2007). Ofsted (2008) suggests that Chinese has not been given equal status with European languages in terms of curriculum provision and the resources allocated to it because

it has been seen as a community language. However, the English government has recently realised the importance of learning Chinese, and Chinese learning and teaching has developed substantially only in the last five to six years (Zhang and Li, 2010). The HSBC Global Education Trust, the British Council and some individuals have had a considerable impact on this development (Zhang and Li, 2010). For example, since 2002 HSBC and the British Council have organised an annual conference on educational cooperation with China and a Chinese speech competition, and these have become important events in terms of Chinese language teaching and learning for schools (Zhang and Li, 2010). Moreover, the Confucius Programme, financed by Hanban (China's equivalent of the British Council), aims to promote Chinese culture throughout the world, and Hanban gives each school £3,000 to help get the project off the ground (Garner, 2007). The number of Confucius Classrooms is increasing. By the end of 2010, 322 Confucius Institutes and 369 Confucius Classrooms had been established in 96 countries (Hanban, official website). This indicates that the number of schools offering Chinese will continue to rise (Zhang and Li, 2010). "Learning Chinese" has recently appeared all over England in the headlines of media such as The Telegraph, the BBC and so on. The Telegraph (2010) indicates that there has been a decline in the teaching and learning of almost every foreign language except Mandarin, which is on the rise. In January 2009, ex-Prime Minister Gordon Brown said:

if we are to make the most of our relationship with China, we need to understand China better, through our schools, universities, cultural institutions, our businesses and in government. I am determined to do that (The Scotsman, 2009).

This interest in Chinese teaching and learning is promising, but has implications for the practical teaching of Chinese. The next section of this review considers the provision of Chinese, teachers of Chinese, the guidelines and resources available, and the children's motivation and experience of learning Chinese in the context of English primary schools.

2.6.1 Background to teaching Chinese in English primary schools

The most recent nationwide research on teaching Chinese was a survey conducted by CILT in 2007, involving over 1,000 primary and secondary schools, though with a heavy bias toward secondary schools. The survey investigated the provision of Chinese, interest in developing Chinese further, and barriers to offering Chinese. CILT (2007) suggests that few schools provide Chinese, especially at primary schools. Some primary schools have a partner school in China, but only a minority are teaching Chinese Mandarin, although most express an interest in developing Mandarin teaching in the future. Only about half of the schools which do offer Mandarin teach it within curriculum time, while the others teach it only in after-school clubs, occasional taster sessions or annual events such as celebrations (CILT, 2007). Moreover, both Chinese language and Chinese culture, such as calligraphy, Chinese dance, Chinese painting, and Chinese Kongfu are usually offered in classes (Song, 2005). As there are fewer curriculum and exam constraints, primary schools are seen as being more flexible than secondary schools in offering Mandarin (CILT, 2007).

However, a fundamental issue in teaching and learning Chinese in English schools is the lack of relevant research and debate about it (Zhang and Li, 2010). Because learning Chinese is at a relatively early stage compared with other European languages, the pedagogy of teaching Chinese has not yet been well researched. In terms of both theory and practice, this research seems to be lagging by a generation or more on developments in the teaching and learning of other languages, such as English (Li, 2008). Practitioners are still at an early stage in trialling effective ways of teaching and learning Chinese. Although annual conferences on teaching Chinese have been organised by Hanban to enable teachers to meet and share their experiences, these experiences may not be based on research evidence, as many workshops are given by teachers who have come from China and are teaching Chinese in England for the first time.

Furthermore, the teaching of Chinese is not well supported (Zhang and Li, 2010). Zhang and Li (2010) believe that this has not only slowed the development of Chinese learning and teaching, but has also given rise to difficulties in gaining understanding and support from experts who teach other MFLs. Therefore, there is a need for all relevant professionals to develop the teaching and learning of Chinese together, and to work out a common recognised framework for Chinese (Zhang and Li, 2010).

2.6.2 Teachers of Chinese

Staffing is the most common constraint encountered in teaching Chinese in primary schools (CILT, 2007; Zhang and Li, 2010), as knowledge of both British pedagogy

and Chinese language is a rare combination. Primary teachers may have some basic skills in French, for example (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a), but there are few teachers who know Chinese. As mentioned in Section 2.4.4, fewer teachers undertake PGCEs with languages like Mandarin and Urdu than with French, German and Spanish (Ofsted, 2008). Therefore, it is unlikely that many primary teachers who are equipped with appropriate pedagogy will have gained a knowledge of the Chinese language. Hence, most schools which currently offer Chinese do not have a Chinese teacher with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and some are using Chinese foreign language assistants (FLAs) from the British Council (CILT, 2007). Zhang and Li (2010) also suggest that fewer than 10 per cent of the 200 teachers of Chinese in English schools have QTS, and fewer than half of them have any training in teaching languages. Wang and Higgins (2008) suggest that schools need qualified Chinese teachers with an awareness of British culture, but there are few qualified Chinese teachers, even with a certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (p.94). These figures, of course, refer to secondary-level Mandarin. Primary-level teaching is only just beginning, and little data is available, especially in the context of English primary schools. In particular, it is only recently that a couple of universities have started to offer a primary PGCE in Chinese Mandarin (Zhang and Li, 2010), including the University of Warwick.

Given the current staffing difficulties, there are some concerns about teachers who are currently teaching Chinese in England. On the one hand, the system of exchange teachers from China is perceived as unsustainable (CILT, 2007; Higgins and Sheldon, 2001). CILT (2007) suggest that the reliance on Foreign Language and Area Study teachers (FLAs) and teachers without QTS may be an inhibiting factor

in developing Mandarin. For example, FLAs need strong support from local schools while they are teaching because of their lack of an English educational background, but they usually only stay for one year, so schools then have to support new FLAs the following year (CILT, 2007). Higgins and Sheldon (2001) also suggest that the teaching may lack continuity if the teacher changes every year. Moreover, although some schools recruit Chinese teachers locally, this does not secure the sustainability of Chinese teaching because of the relative insecurity of employment (CILT, 2007). On the other hand, native Chinese speaking teachers are not necessarily considered as ideal Chinese teachers in English schools (CILT, 2007; Wang and Higgins, 2008; Wang, 2011). Wang and Higgins (2008) suggest that teachers from China sometimes have difficulties in managing the classroom, disciplining children and maintaining students' interest. CILT (2007) notes that "teachers from China are described as 'lovely' but their lack of familiarity with the English system of discipline, target setting etc. is a problem. They also tend to have a different, perhaps unrealistic, expectation of pupils" (p.12). Wang (2011) concludes that native speakers are not necessarily good teachers of their first language unless they have a complex understanding and practice of the pedagogy. This issue has been identified by researchers in other English speaking countries, such as Australia and the USA (Orton, 2010). For example, Orton (2008) suggests that in Australia, non-native speaking Chinese teachers often criticise native speaking Chinese teachers'

pedagogical practices, especially their reliance on character teaching in primary at the expense of oral work, their inability to assist L2 learners with tone, and insistence on native like accuracy with little regard for developing the communication strategies and

modes of intercultural expression suitable for an Australian bilingual (p.20).

The different educational backgrounds of China and England may be one reason for native Chinese teachers' difficulties in teaching English pupils. Chinese education is influenced largely by the Confucian heritage, which has exerted a great impact on the Chinese collective attitude. Therefore, in the Chinese classroom, the teaching tends to be teacher-centred (Liu, 2008): teachers are perceived as the source and authority of knowledge (Wang, 2011) and students do not tend to ask questions or speak in class (Ding *et al.*, 2008). This is very different from England, where individualism is highly emphasised. In contrast, the teaching of languages in England has adopted a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach (Block, 2005) and the teaching tends to be student-centred (Wang, 2011): teachers usually play the roles of facilitators, observers and participants in the English classroom (Harmer, 2001). Considering the cultural differences, teachers from different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations in teaching. Ding *et al.* (2008) investigated Chinese teachers' perceptions of students' classroom misbehaviour in British schools, and their report suggests that the most troublesome behaviours perceived by Chinese teachers in class are talking out of turn and hindering other children, while in Chinese schools teachers perceive daydreaming to be the most frequent and troublesome behaviour, followed by talking out of turn and slowness. Shen *et al.* (2009) study of Chinese primary teachers' perceptions of students' classroom behaviour problems also found similar results: noisy or illicit talking was ranked as the most frequent behaviour problem in the English classroom, while daydreaming and non-attentiveness were the most frequent problems in China. The

classroom behaviour problems perceived by English and Chinese teachers tend to be different. Moreover, based on research into Chinese teachers' perceptions of their teaching in English schools involving four Chinese native speaking teachers and Chinese heritage teachers, Wang (2011) suggests that some native Chinese speakers do not agree that the CLT approach is suitable for teaching Chinese. One teacher in Wang (2011) study suggested that CLT was not sufficient for beginners because the Chinese characters and grammar need to be practised a lot; another teacher suggested that the fun element of the CLT approach did not suit older Chinese teachers, and did not work for Chinese because of the lack of resources. However, English teachers of Chinese may have different perceptions. The cultural difference may exert an impact on teaching Chinese. These issues relate directly to the current study and are explored herein.

2.6.3 Guidelines and resources for teaching primary Chinese

There are currently two national guidelines for use by primary teachers of Chinese, as discussed in Section 2.4.3. One is the KS2 Framework for Languages (DfES, 2005). This scheme has a strong influence on what is taught and the order in which it is taught by teachers. However, Zhang and Li (2010) note that “it does not meet the demands and objectives of overall curriculum requirements or reflect how L1 English speakers learn Chinese” (p.92). The current study argues that it is inherently unsuitable for the Chinese language. The discussion of Chinese language in Section 2.5.3 above offers a key reason why the Framework for Languages is unsuitable for Chinese: it does not recognise the complexities of teaching Chinese oracy and literacy. It is structured in terms of language concepts such as tense, which are

different in Chinese, and it demands skills such as dictionary use in Year 5, which is much more complex in Chinese and inappropriate for beginner learners.

A Scheme of Work (SOW) for Chinese Mandarin was published in 2010 by TDA, funded by CILT and Bamboo Learning. This was designed in the British context and is the first national guideline specifically for teaching Chinese in this country. TDA (2010) suggests that the pedagogy indicated in this SOW has been combined with academic research and classroom best practice in both MFL generally and Chinese. However, it does not state what academic research was considered. The SOW has six units, and each unit has a particular topic: “All about me”, “Games and Songs”, “Celebrations”, “Appearance”, “Xiao Bao and his Friends” and “Food and Drink”. Each topic includes six specific sessions which introduce Chinese based on the KS2 Framework objectives of oracy, literacy, intercultural understanding, knowledge about language, and language learning skills. The sessions also link to the National Curriculum for primary education. For example, the KS2 Framework objectives for Session 1 of the first unit, “All about me” are IU 3.1, IU 3.2 and KAL, and it also links to the National Curriculum Strands 2 and 3 of the Primary Framework for Literacy, and to 2c and 2d of Geography. Each topic has been designed to be taught across a term (TDA, 2010). The SOW introduces both characters and pinyin at the same time, from the beginning. The Chinese Staff Room provides videos showing the pronunciation of pinyin representations by a native Chinese speaker, called the pronunciation grid. The SOW uses the pronunciation grid to help teachers introduce pinyin to students. Moreover, the writing system of Chinese is also exposed and introduced to students from the first session. The content will be discussed specifically in this section.

Although many textbooks are available, few are based on research evidence and an understanding of how L1 English learners learn Chinese, compared with how they would learn a European language. Wang and Higgins (2008) find in their research that half of teachers are dissatisfied with the available teaching materials, considering them unsuitable for the UK context: while half would prefer to use published materials, the remainder would prefer to produce their own. This situation is improving rapidly, as textbooks, online resources and media become available. For instance, at the 2011 SSAT conference, *Jin Bu* (Bin *et al.*, 2011) and *Primary School Chinese* (Reoch and Martin, 2013) textbooks, as well as online sources, were available for the British context, both primary and secondary. Many authorities are being supportive in providing teaching material. The British Council donates textbooks and runs extensive programmes with the support of the DCSF and HSBC, and Hanban are willing to donate books about Chinese language and culture (Wang and Higgins, 2008). However, these materials may, again, not reflect cultural approaches to teaching Chinese, and Hanban materials do not reflect a Western pedagogy or order for the introduction of language elements. Furthermore, there has so far been little research into Chinese learning and teaching, especially at the primary level in England. The teaching materials which are available now have not been designed on the basis of Western research evidence (Zhang and Li, 2010). The current study explores whether teachers use any of these resource books.

One interesting issue has recently been reflected in different resource books: the introduction of both oracy and literacy at the start of Chinese teaching. As discussed in Section 2.5.2, literacy represents the encoding and decoding of speech in European languages, but this is not the case in Chinese. Therefore, there has been

debate about using pinyin or characters in teaching. Some teachers introduce pinyin alone first, and this is reflected in textbooks for secondary Chinese teaching, such as *Jin Bu* (Bin *et al.*, 2011). This may also be because, in primary language teaching generally, speaking and listening is the primary target, rather than reading and writing (Cable *et al.*, 2010). Some teachers introduce pinyin and characters from the outset, even for young children. This approach can be seen in most current textbooks, such as *Easy Steps to Chinese* (Ma and Li, 2012), which introduces pinyin and stroke order systematically, as well as a few characters, with radicals introduced quite early (within 20 lessons). However, some newer materials such as *Primary School Chinese* (Reoch and Martin, 2013) introduce pinyin later, and concentrate on meaningful dialogues and character recognition at the expense of a systematic knowledge of pinyin. However, there is no research evidence to show which approach is better. This is explored in the current study.

There is currently no national curriculum or scheme of work for teaching Chinese in England (Zhang and Li, 2010). However, some progress has been made, including the Asset Languages certification scheme for Chinese Mandarin (OCR, 2013), which measures the skills of learners against a Languages Ladder.

2.6.4 Children's motivations for and experience of Learning Chinese

Mandarin is attractive to pupils and may stimulate their interest in most schools (CILT, 2007). Generally, children appear to have quite positive views of their Chinese learning. CILT (2007) states that “usually more pupils that had actually

participated in the lessons were keen to ‘experience’ Mandarin and learn something about Chinese culture” (p.23). BBC News (2006) suggests that children find the characters fun and pick up the tones well. However, CILT (2007) suggests that children risk losing their motivation gradually because they do not make the progress they expect. Some learners have expressed their reasons for learning Chinese: “Chinese was interesting”, “Chinese culture is a totally different culture”, “it can help to get jobs and university places in the future”, “hope to go to China”, “it is a good experience in itself” (Higgins and Sheldon, 2001; Wang and Higgins, 2008).

Chinese may be more difficult than European languages for children to learn. CILT (2007) suggests that schools believe that European languages are already seen as hard work by children, in comparison with other subjects, so Mandarin might be very difficult even to start. Wang and Higgins (2008) suggest that some learners find Chinese very confusing, and feel there is a need for more listening and writing practice. Moreover, children who are learning Chinese seem to have little opportunity to practise their Chinese outside the classroom. Higgins and Sheldon (2001) note that most children know someone who has been to China, but few know people outside school who can speak Chinese, apart from local Chinese restaurant staff. Furthermore, children feel that most people around them are surprised to know that they are learning Chinese, and ask them whether it is difficult, or why they have chosen to learn Chinese, or are impressed when they say something in Chinese.

The children's motivations for and experience of learning Chinese have been little explored in previous research, and these will be explored in this study.

2.7 Issues Arising from the Review and Research Questions

This literature review has examined existing relevant research on the relatively new area of teaching and learning of foreign languages in primary schools, as well as issues relating to teaching Chinese in English primary schools, and the challenges raised by the policy situation in primary languages. It has also established that Chinese has become a world language, which interests policy makers and children who have (even more) interest in the initial teaching and learning of Chinese.

Despite reviewing a vast range of relevant research, it appears that few studies have looked at Chinese language education in the primary phase in England. The motivations for introducing Chinese into primary schools or how Chinese is being provided in primary schools are not known at present. It is not clear who the Chinese teachers are, what materials, techniques or guidance the teachers use to teach Chinese, or how they are teaching Chinese. As this review has demonstrated, many issues are involved, all of which may have an impact on and affect each other. These are the background to the research questions of this study.

The learning and teaching of Chinese to beginners in primary schools in England is a very new area of research (CILT, 2007). This study aims to explore the emerging field, but not to quantify the issues of Chinese teaching and learning. Therefore, it

seeks to investigate how Chinese is taught and learnt in English primary schools, and asks the following questions:

1. Why do participants want to undertake Chinese?
 - What are the head teachers' motivations for choosing to offer Chinese?
 - What are the pupils' motivations for learning Chinese?
 - What are the teachers' motivations for teaching Chinese?
2. Who is teaching Chinese in primary schools?
 - What are the teachers' backgrounds?
 - What is the teachers' knowledge of Chinese?
 - What is the teachers' knowledge of English primary pedagogy?
 - What are the teachers' beliefs about successful Chinese teaching?
3. How is Chinese taught?
 - How is Chinese provided in schools?
 - How do the teachers plan their teaching?
 - What do teachers do in teaching Chinese in the lessons?
 - What do teachers do to evaluate pupils' progress in learning Chinese?
4. What is the participants' experience of undertaking Chinese?
 - What are the head teachers' perceptions?
 - What are the teachers' perceptions?
 - What are the pupils' perceptions?

These sub-questions address substantial issues which are not clearly defined and which are not separate areas. By looking at all of the issues listed above, the ultimate aim of this research is to try to establish possible relationships between these issues

and how these issues influence each other. For example, as argued in the literature review, motivation and beliefs are closely related to language education. These may influence or arise from planning, teaching and assessment practices. All these issues are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 3: Method and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

As little research has been undertaken into teaching and learning Chinese in the context of English primary schools, the issues investigated by this research are new. Therefore, this is exploratory research, aimed at collecting data to capture features of the teaching and learning, the views of participants and the relationships between them. This chapter will discuss the research paradigms, design, sampling and methods, data collection and analysis, and the validity, reliability and ethical issues of this research.

3.2. Research Paradigms

In this section, the relationship between theory and research and ontological and epistemological considerations are considered.

Bryman (2008) indicates that the relationship between theory and research depends on whether theory guides research (deductive approach) or research suggests theory (inductive approach). In a deductive approach, the researcher deduces a hypothesis on the basis of existing theory, and the hypothesis determines how data should be collected. In an inductive approach, the researcher generates or reflects upon theory based on the data collected. As this study explores an emerging field, an inductive approach is more appropriate.

Ontology is concerned with the nature of being and existence, and in the context of social research it refers to the fundamental nature of how reality exists (Bryman, 2008). The main argument is whether reality exists externally to social actors or is constructed from the social actors' perceptions and actions (Bryman, 2008). Blaikie (2007) suggests two opposite positions: realism and idealism. Porta and Keating (2008) describe these as realism and nominalism, and Bryman (2008) as objectivism and constructionism. On the one hand, realists and objectivists believe that social phenomena and their meanings exist independently of the social actor (Bryman, 2008; Porta and Keating, 2008). On the other hand, nominalists, idealists and constructionists argue that social phenomena and their meanings do not exist independently, but are products of social actors (Blaikie, 2007) and are continually being accomplished by social actors (Bryman, 2008). This study adopts a broadly constructionist position to explore the perceptions, motivations and experience of participants of teaching and learning Chinese through questionnaires, interviews and informal chats. Although lesson observations and field notes were also collected to capture features and patterns of teaching and learning Chinese in English primary schools, and the reality seems to exist externally, the interpretation of lessons and events are believed to be influenced by the researcher's own cultural and language background and research experience.

Epistemology deals with how reality can be studied. Hammond and Wellington (2013) describe it as "what we believe about and how we come to know and understand the world" (p.57). Similarly to ontology, there is a major debate about epistemology, which focuses on whether the social world can and should be studied in the same way as natural sciences (Bryman, 2008). The two opposite positions are

defined as positivism on the one hand, and interpretivism (Bryman, 2008), anti-positivism (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) or phenomenology (Gill and Johnson, 1991) on the other. Positivists holds the opinion that social reality can be studied through natural science research methods. In contrast, interpretivists argue that different research approaches are necessary because of qualitative differences between social realities and natural science (Blaikie, 2007). Moreover, positivist research normally looks for the causes of social phenomena but does not consider the subjective states of individuals to a great extent (Miles and Huberman, 2008), while interpretivist research is concerned with how individuals make sense of the reality around them (Bryman, 2008). As this study aimed to collect participants' perceptions in order to understand their motivations and experience of teaching and learning Chinese, and to observe how Chinese is taught and learnt by different participants from different backgrounds, a version of interpretivism was adopted.

This study aimed to understand the social phenomenon of teaching and learning Chinese in English primary schools and the participants' motivations and experience, from the perspectives of social actors who are teachers, pupils and head teachers, and through observing and interpreting lessons and events. It is believed that reality is constructed from the participants' minds and experience, and from the researcher's interpretation of the observations.

3.3. Research Design

In order to answer the research questions and explore relationships between features of teaching and learning of Chinese in primary schools and the views of the

participants, multiple case studies were selected as the research design, involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This approach enables a researcher to present detailed descriptions and examine patterns across cases (Merriam, 1998). This section considers the background to the case study approach in order to explain and justify its selection.

3.3.1. Case study approach

This section begins with a discussion of why a case study approach was chosen for this research. Yin (2009) discusses five research strategies: experiment, survey, archival analysis, history and case study. Experiment investigates the “how” and “why” questions of contemporary events and requires control over behavioural events; survey researches the “who”, “what”, “where”, “how many” and “how much” questions of contemporary events; archival analysis looks into the “who”, “what”, “where”, “how many” and “how much” questions of both contemporary or past events; history investigates “how” and “why” questions of past events; and case study explores “how” and “why” questions of contemporary events (Yin, 2009).

This study aimed to explore “why” participants want to undertake Chinese, “who” is teaching Chinese, “how” Chinese is taught and learnt, and “what” is the participants’ experience of undertaking Chinese, as well as investigating possible relationships between them. The focus of interest was to explain motivations and experience with supportive information and background, rather than to describe quantity or frequency questions such as how many pupils are learning Chinese and

how many schools are offering Chinese in the UK. Therefore, experiment, history and case study were potential research strategies, according to Yin (2009).

Yin (2009) claims that experiments are used when the researcher can manipulate behaviour directly, precisely and systematically, and they are usually carried out in a laboratory or field setting where isolated variables and groups of people can be controlled or treated in different ways. However, this study aimed to consider experiences and motivations in a particular setting (primary classes) which, in itself, was likely to shape and be a product of the motivations and experiences being studied. This research concentrated on natural conditions without control, as this was precisely the situation under study; therefore, experiments were not appropriate for this study. Yin (2009) believes that a historical method is usually used to deal with the past, when the researcher must rely on documents and cultural and physical artefacts. However, this study focuses on the contemporary situation of Chinese teaching and learning in English primary schools, which is developing rapidly (CILT, 2007). Therefore, a historical method was not considered to be an ideal research strategy. The unique strength of case study is its ability to deal with all sorts of evidence, including documents, artefacts, interviews and observations (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) suggests that case study is a preferred approach for examining contemporary issues where the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. This is exactly the situation when investigating children and teachers engaged in learning and teaching Chinese in primary classes. For this reason, case study is an excellent way to study the situation as a whole and aspects of the situation of interest.

3.3.2. Multiple case studies

The choice between a single case study and multiple case studies will, inevitably, affect the outcomes of the study. Yin (2009) describes five typical situations for using a single case study:

- 1) when testing a well-formulated theory;
- 2) when the case is unique or extreme;
- 3) when the case is representative or typical;
- 4) when the case is revelatory;
- 5) when the case is longitudinal (Yin, 2009, pp.47-49).

This research involved an exploratory study of Chinese teaching and learning in English primary schools, and there was no existing theory or pattern to test in this area. Therefore, in one sense, each class was unique. Indeed, each pupil's experience was unique. In another sense, each pupil's experience of language learning was longitudinal. A single case study would be most interesting for these reasons but would not reveal patterns across a number of classes. However, it was also important for this study to investigate different patterns and features across different cases, in order to establish the extent to which they influenced the participants' motivations and experiences. Herriott and Firestone (1983) suggest that multiple case studies are often considered to be more compelling, making the overall study more robust. Merriam (2009) agrees that "the more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be" (p.49). Moreover, compared with a single case study,

multiple case studies are less likely to risk misjudging and/or exaggerating an event (Miles and Huberman, 2008). Moreover, as the researcher was inexperienced in the settings, it was important to establish which features of the case were routine and which were significant – multiple case studies could help with this. Last, but not least, this study aimed to explore multiple Chinese teaching situations to provide a greater scope.

Stake (1995) suggests that, in the context of education, the cases of interest are people and programmes. Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that a case study typically investigates the characteristics of an individual unit, such as a child, a class, a school or a community. For the purposes of this study, a case included Chinese language teachers, a class of pupils, and the head teachers' perceptions about their motivations and experiences, as well as the teaching and learning undertaken by teachers and pupils over a period of one or two terms. This research examined five unique examples of Chinese learning and teaching in primary schools. Whilst each was a unique case, it was expected that there would be some interesting patterns across them.

Many researchers have demonstrated the advantages of using a case study in research. Eisenhardt (1989) describes a case study as “a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings” (p.534). Punch (2009) indicates that the targets of a case study are to “understand the case in depth, recognising its complexity and its content in its natural setting ... and its holistic focus is to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case” (p.119). Merriam (1998) suggests that “A case study design is employed to gain an

in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” (p.19). She states that the interest of case study is in discovery rather than confirmation, in context rather than a specific variable, in process rather than outcomes. This is precisely relevant to the current study, which is one of discovery, in the context of a teaching and learning process. Moreover, a case study can usually be used to provide description, test theory or generate theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). This study aimed to provide some description of the current teaching and learning of Chinese in English primary schools and the perceptions of those involved, and to generate some potential initial theories.

However, a main criticism of the case study approach is that its findings cannot be generalised (Bryman, 2008) given that generalisation is not the basis of the validity of case studies, as in more positivist types of research. Cases do not purport to represent a population. Stake (1995) argues that case study is not usually used for generalisation but for particularisation, as every single case is different. Marriam (2009) suggests that the strength of case studies as qualitative research is to “account for and include difference”, but not to “eliminate what cannot be discounted” or “simplify what cannot be simplified” (p.52). More importantly, the reliability and validity of a case study are largely dependent on how well the researcher generates theory out of the findings. Therefore, this study did not seek to generalise the teaching and learning of Chinese in all English primary schools, although some common patterns were expected to be discovered across cases. More importantly, this study aimed to understand the features and relationships within and across cases. Reliability and validity will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.6.

3.3.3. Research strategy

Newby (2010) suggests that there are three main research approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Quantitative research can be used to deal with probabilities, while qualitative research is needed to understand how to change a situation because it can be used to deal with people's perceptions (Newby, 2010). Bryman (2008) suggests that quantitative research is more appropriate for teasing out the importance of a number of different causes of a social phenomenon, while qualitative research is more suitable for finding out how participants interpret their social world. Moreover, to investigate a topic on which no research has been done before, qualitative research is more likely to serve a researcher's needs, as it is typically related to the generation rather than the testing of theory (Bryman, 2008). As this study investigates the learning and teaching of Chinese in English primary schools, which is a topic that has not been researched before, with the aim of establishing participants' motivations and experience largely by collecting data on their perceptions, qualitative research suits the needs better. However, this study also aimed to identify patterns in pupils' motivation for and enjoyment of learning Chinese across different cases based on both qualitative and quantitative data, although much less quantitative than qualitative data was collected. Therefore, mixed methods were deemed to be the most appropriate research strategy for this study.

Johnson and Christensen (2008) suggest that mixed methods research is used for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. Case study is normally associated with qualitative research (Yin, 1981); however, it may

involve both qualitative and quantitative methods (Eisenhardt, 1989). Punch (2009) suggests that, in a case study approach, “one case (or perhaps a small number of cases) will be studied in detail, using whatever methods and data seem appropriate”, and “the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of this case as possible” (p.119). Therefore, multiple sources of data and multiple data collection methods are likely to be used for case studies (Punch, 2009). Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that case studies typically use combined data collection methods, including archives, interviews, questionnaires and observations, and the evidence may be both qualitative and quantitative. Moreover, Eisenhardt (1989) notes that “the combination of qualitative and quantitative data types can be highly synergistic” (p.538).

For this study, the majority of data was collected qualitatively. The qualitative data was used to explore the participants’ motivations, perceptions, beliefs, backgrounds and so on, as well as relationships and meanings between and within them. A small part of the data was collected quantitatively, in order to supplement the qualitative data.

3.4. Sampling

Merriam (1998) suggests that there are two basic types of sampling which work well for case studies: probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is usually used for quantitative research purposes to generalise the results of a study, where the sample attempts to represent the population of a phenomenon. Non-probability sampling is usually used for qualitative research purposes to

explore events, as well as the relationships between them, and selects a sample which does not attempt to represent the whole population, but is chosen purposefully for a particular reason (Merriam, 1998). This study aimed to explore how Chinese is taught and learnt, including the motivations and experiences of children, teachers and head teachers, as well as investigating relationships between these issues. The aim was not to generalise, but to discover. Non-probability sampling was selected in this study. The most common strategy of non-probability sampling is purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998), which aims to select cases with rich information to study in depth which are insightful for the research (Paton, 2002). Merriam (1998) describes six main types of purposeful sampling: typical sampling, unique sampling, maximum variation sampling, convenience sampling, snowball or network sampling, and theoretical sampling. To select the schools in this study, network sampling and snowball sampling were considered from the very beginning, because there were very few primary classes in which Chinese was taught, and fewer still in which the teacher would welcome a researcher into the class to examine what was happening. The initial sample aimed not to choose replicating cases, but to find a range of examples of primary classes in which Chinese was taught, to offer interesting, illustrative cases. The researcher's supervisor was consulted to establish whether she knew of any schools that offered Chinese, and the internet was searched to try to find any schools that offered Chinese. The first case (Case A, School 1) was recommended by the supervisor; the second case (Case B, also in School 1) was suggested by the head teacher of School 1; the third case (Case C, School 2) was mentioned by staff in School 1, and then contact was made with School 2; the fifth case (Case E, School 4) was recommended by the teacher

of School 2; and contact with the teacher of the fourth case (Case D, School 3) was made through a mutual friend of the researcher. The sample method used for this study may also be described as opportunity sampling. Holah (2009) suggests that the opportunity sampling technique aims to select participants from people who are available at the time that the study is carried out and who fit the criteria sought by the researcher. A key factor in the selection of this study was the teachers' willingness to participate and the consent of the head teachers and pupils. Stake (1995) suggests that it is better to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to inquiry, as well as with participants who are willing to comment on certain material. This was very important for the current study so that the head teachers, teachers and pupils would talk about their views, and a good relationship with the teachers would elicit more data and more honest discussion.

Moreover, in case studies, the researcher not only needs to sample the cases – the first level of sampling – but must also sample the participants and their activities within each case – a second sampling level (Merriam, 1998). This sampling is not a quantitative sample to produce representative findings; it is a qualitative sample which aims to allow the researcher to present a full and clear picture of the object of study and contribute this examination of the phenomenon to the field (Somekh and Lewin, 2006), which is especially important for a case study. Within each case, it is very difficult to capture the views and activities of every pupil, teacher and head teacher, as well as the teaching and learning activity. Hence, only relevant views, classroom activities and school events were selected and used for this study, to ensure that as full a picture as possible was obtained of all these issues within a realistic time frame.

Yin (2009) suggests that multiple case study research should include between four and ten cases. Because the nature of this study is to examine the research questions in depth, the researcher planned to select a few cases to consider in depth and over a longer period of time, within the research period. Stake (1995) suggests that not all cases are likely to work out successfully, and factors beyond the control of the researcher or even the teacher may mean that not all cases can be successfully researched. It was planned that six cases would be selected at the beginning, including schools offering Chinese in different ways from each other. Ideally, each of these schools would be unique and so they would be selected not as representative of the population, but as individual cases which would add to the sum of available information about this topic. However, as revealed in the literature review, few primary schools currently provide Chinese in England. Consequently, the options for sampling were limited. In the end, only five cases in four schools were identified, just one case more than the minimum number suggested by Yin (2007). Each case included the Chinese language teacher, a class of pupils and the head teacher. The period for conducting the research for each case varied from 10 weeks to 15 weeks. A detailed timetable is presented in Section 3.6.

3.5. Research Methods

The nature of the data to be collected guides the selection of the research instruments. The majority of the issues to be explored in this study were invisible and unobservable (research questions 1, 2 and 4). However, the information to be collected was relatively clear, and not such that participants might be unwilling to share it with a stranger. Hence, self-report data was collected. As discussed in the

literature review (Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6), the views of those involved in the setting were important to this study, especially as this was an exploratory research study.

The advantages of the self-report method include interpretability, richness of information and practicality (efficient and inexpensive) (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007). The overarching critique of the self-report method is the credibility of the data, because there may be response biases (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007; Razavi, 2001). However, self-reports may become credible if there is sufficient reinforcement (Jones *et al.*, 1961) or repetition (Paulhus, 1993). Both the advantages and weaknesses of the self-report method were taken into account in the research method design and the interpretation of the data.

Some issues (questions 2 and 3) which this study aimed to address are observable. Hence, in order to establish some features and patterns of Chinese classes, observations and field notes were also collected.

In this study, a pupil questionnaire, an initial teachers' interview, a final teachers' interview, an observation structure, and a head teachers' interview were planned at the start. The details of the design are discussed below. These methods were evaluated by considering validity and reliability through a pilot study. Stimulated recall was also planned at the beginning but was withdrawn, and field notes were added after the pilot study. Details of how these research instruments were designed are discussed in the next sections, with an explanation of the modifications made after the pilot study in Section 3.5.5.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

Newby (2009) suggests that questionnaires are one of the most popular instruments for gathering data because they are relatively quick and simple. This study administered a questionnaire to all pupils across the five cases. The reason for using a questionnaire in this study was to obtain a preliminary picture of the pupils' motivations, enjoyment and experience of learning Chinese. However, there are a few limitations in the use of questionnaires, including its entirely word-based nature and the lack of flexibility in responses (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, the collected data may not be entirely accurate, as participants may not answer every question carefully and patiently because it is word-based, or they may be put off writing additional comments relating to the questions. In order to minimise the limitations of the questionnaire, its administration was planned and piloted. As Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest: "the presence of the researcher is helpful in that it enables any queries or uncertainties to be addressed immediately with the questionnaire designer ... it typically ensures a good response rate" (p.344). Moreover, some important issues emerging in the questionnaire were explored in later observations and interviews. For example, where a number of pupils suggested that they did not enjoy their learning of Chinese, the observations tried to establish possible causes.

The questionnaire in this study was semi-structured. Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that a structured questionnaire is usually composed of closed questions, which need to be piloted and refined in order to cover as many possible responses as can be reasonably foreseen in the final version; an unstructured questionnaire is composed completely of open-ended questions, which enable respondents to answer however

they want; and a semi-structured questionnaire involves both closed and open-ended questions, with a clear structure and focus, but also enabling respondents to offer their own opinions. In this study, the topic which the questionnaire aimed to explore regarding the pupils' motivations for and enjoyment of learning Chinese had not been investigated previously in the context of English primary schools. Therefore, it was difficult to provide optional answers for the pupils to choose, so open-ended questions seemed necessary. Miles and Huberman (1994) also suggest that open-ended questions are more suitable than closed questions for exploratory study. The pupils' experiences of learning Chinese were investigated using Likert scale questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Many researchers (Cheng, 1993; Coleman *et al.*, 2007; Riley, 2009) have used rating scales to test learners' motivations for and attitudes towards learning foreign languages. Cheng (1993) suggests that scales are more relevant to younger school children's experiences, and can be understood by them better. Oppenheim (2004) states that "children tend to write much more slowly than they can read and they are often taught to start every answer by repeating the question" (p.141). Therefore, the questionnaire included some rating scale statements, using a four-point scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

The questionnaire contained three sections. The first section had only one open-ended question, asking about the pupils' motivations for learning Chinese. The second section contained twenty-eight rating scale statements for four cases of KS2 and fourteen statements for one case of KS1. These statements covered issues relating to the pupils' enjoyment and experience of learning languages in general and learning Chinese in particular; the four language skills of Chinese, the pinyin

and characters, and the Chinese lessons; their continuity in the future; their confidence in learning Chinese; their interest in Chinese; and whether they learnt Chinese outside the lessons. For the KS1 class in this study (Case D), because the pupils had not been learning some elements, such as the characters and pinyin, the number of statements was reduced. These rating scale statements were designed on the basis of questionnaires used by Coleman *et al.* (2007) in their research into English pupils' motivation for languages and Riley's (2009) study of Japanese university students' beliefs about learning English, as well as the personal experience of the researcher and her supervisor. The third section had two open-ended questions, asking what the pupils enjoyed most and least about learning Chinese. Considering the ages of the primary pupils, the beginning of each open-ended question was also written in the answer (Oppenheim, 2004). See Appendix 1 for the questionnaire for Cases A, B, C and E (KS2), and Appendix 2 for the questionnaire for Case D (KS1).

Several aspects were considered in order to improve the validity and reliability of the questionnaire data. Firstly, the conduct of this questionnaire was based on a rubric and refined during the pilot study (Case A). The use of language, the length of the questionnaire, the rubric, the administration and the pupils' understanding of the questionnaire were evaluated through the pilot study. Secondly, the rubric specified exactly how the questionnaire would be administered, including the use of practice questions. Moreover, the pupils were assured that they could ask questions if there was anything they felt was difficult to understand, or if they were unsure of anything during the administration of the questionnaire. Last, but not least,

the questions and statements were kept as simple and brief as possible, and positive and negative questions/statements were balanced (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

3.5.2. Interviews

Bryman (2008) suggests that “interview is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research” (p.436). Merriam (1998) agrees, emphasising that interviews are a very important method used in qualitative research. Interviews may enable participants, both interviewees and researcher, to discuss their interpretations of their world (in this study, their teaching and learning of Chinese), and to express how they regard situations from their own perspectives (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). In case study, Yin (2009) notes that interviews are one of the best approaches to collect information about human affairs or behaviours or, in the case of this study, participants’ experiences of teaching and learning Chinese. They are an excellent way to assess and understand people’s perceptions, experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge about a situation (Paton, 2002; Punch, 2009). This study aimed to explore head teachers’, teachers’, and pupils’ opinions in terms of their motivations for and experience of teaching and learning Chinese, as well as the teachers’ backgrounds. Therefore, interviews were seen as ideal for collecting the data for this study.

Different types of interviews have been defined by different researchers. Yin (2009) suggests three types of interview: in-depth, focused and structured. In-depth interviews allow the researcher to ask respondents about the facts of a matter as well as to collect their perceptions with insights; a focused interview is usually used

to corroborate certain facts that the researcher thinks have already been established; while a structured interview is more like a formal survey, to collect quantitative data as part of the case study evidence (Yin, 2009). In this exploratory research study, it was necessary to establish participants' detailed insights into their learning and teaching of Chinese. Moreover, emerging issues needed to be investigated further. Therefore, the interviews in this study were in-depth interviews, according to Yin's (2009) classification.

Punch (2009) also discusses three types of interview: unstructured, group and structured. In Punch's opinion, a structured interview is designed with pre-established questions and has little space for variation by the respondent; in group interviews, the researcher usually works with several people and functions more as a facilitator than as an interviewer; in comparison, an unstructured interview is usually used to understand the complex behaviour of people as well as explore people's interpretations and meaning of events and situations (Punch, 2009). In this study, the focus of the interviews with participants was established from the literature review, the lesson observations, visits to the schools and personal experience. This offered a list of issues for exploration. However, as this research was exploratory and there was little relevant research evidence, the interviews also aimed to encourage the participants to provide more information and insights. For example, when teachers replied to what they thought about pupils' motivations, they might also suggest something about how the pupils' backgrounds impact on their motivations. Issues like this were difficult to prepare in advance but highly relevant to the study, and needed to be explored further with the teachers. Therefore,

the interviews for this study were between structured and unstructured, according to Punch's definition.

Merriam (1998) also suggests three types of interview: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The structured interview is like an oral form of written survey with predetermined questions, but may not help to access participants' perspectives; in contrast, unstructured interviews are particularly useful when the researcher does not have enough information about the phenomenon being studied, with open-ended questions seeking participants' opinions and perceptions; semi-structured interviews are usually guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, to explore respondents' ideas (Merriam, 1998). Merriam's (1998) definition of semi-structured interviews served the purpose of this study perfectly. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) agree that the researcher should use a prepared list of questions as a guide only, and should follow up on relevant replies made by the interviewee.

Having considered the features of the interview method and the different types of interviews, in-depth semi-structured interviews were deemed to suit the purpose of this study best. Four types of interview were planned: head teacher interviews, initial teacher interviews, pupil group interviews and final teacher interviews. All the teachers of Chinese and the head teachers were interviewed individually. However, as there were at least thirty pupils in each case, except Case E which only had nineteen, it would have been too time-consuming to interview every pupil individually. Therefore, the sampled pupils in the final cases were interviewed in three different ability groups, and each group included four pupils, with a balance of boys and girls. The reason for conducting the interviews with pupils in groups

was that group interviewing is perceived to be useful in encouraging interaction between group members when the interviewees are children (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Cohen *et al.* (2011) state that “group interviews of children might also be less intimidating for them than individual interviews”, and it “enables them to challenge each other and participate in a way that may not happen in a one-to-one, adult-child interview and using language that the children themselves use” (pp.374-5). Moreover, in order to obtain a variety of opinions from different pupils, the interviews were conducted with three groups of pupils of high, medium and low ability, after evaluation through the pilot study. These pupils were identified and selected by their class teachers.

All the interviews were originally designed based on the literature review, the personal experiences of researcher and supervisor, and the results of the pilot study. For each interview there was a list of questions, but some relevant and interesting issues outside the listed questions were also explored and discussed with the participants based on their replies. As the interviews were expected to offer insights and opinions of the participants toward their teaching and learning of Chinese, the questions for the four interviews were open-ended. Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest a number of advantages of using open-ended questions in interviews:

They are flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that she may go into more depth if she chooses, or to clear up any misunderstandings; they enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondent’s knowledge; they encourage cooperation and help establish rapport; and they allow the interviewer to make a

truer assessment of what the respondent really believes. Open-ended situations can also result in unexpected or unanticipated answers which may suggest hitherto unthought-of relationships or hypotheses (p.357).

The sequence of interview questions was determined and piloted during the pilot study, so that all participants belonging to the same group (teachers, head teachers and pupils) were asked the questions in the same order. By doing this, comparability of responses across the different cases and different groups of pupils was increased (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). However, Cohen *et al.* (2011) point out that the disadvantages of following the same order and same questions with different interviewees are that this may limit naturalness and make the interview less flexible. In order to minimise these disadvantages, the questions were considered and piloted carefully so that they allowed enough space for different participants to think and respond.

Furthermore, Cohen *et al.* (2011) have suggested that it is important for the researcher to keep in mind that the interview is not only a data collection exercise, but also a social and interpersonal encounter. Kvale (1996) also believes that, as the instrument of doing research, the researcher needs not only to be knowledgeable about the subject, but also to be an expert in interaction and communication. Therefore, before the interviews were conducted, the researcher spent several weeks getting to know the head teachers, teachers and pupils, in order to make the interviews more comfortable for both parties. In addition, the language of the interviews was piloted through the pilot study (Case A) and discussed with the researcher's supervisor before they were conducted with the final cases.

Having reviewed all the features and advantages of the interview method, several disadvantages of using interviews were also noted. As Cohen *et al.* (2011) and Robson (1993) suggest, it is very time-consuming. In order to obtain the required data, much necessary time was spent on arranging, conducting, transcribing and analysing the interviews. Moreover, the interview method is open to interviewer bias (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). In order to minimise this bias, the answers were discussed with the researcher's supervisor once the interviews for each case had been completed, with a discussion of how to interpret the participants' answers. Details of the design of each interview are discussed in the next section.

All the interviews were recorded using a voice recorder, once permission to record had been obtained from the participants and they had been informed of the reasons for and purpose of recording. All the participants were assured that the recorded files would only be heard by the researcher, and that their responses would only be used for the purposes of this research.

3.5.2.1. Head teacher interviews

The head teacher interviews aimed to explore the provision of Chinese, the head teachers' motivations and their experience of offering Chinese in the case schools.

There were three sections to the interviews. The first concerned the background to offering Chinese, and the questions covered the provision of languages, the type, form, frequency and length of Chinese lessons, and the search for Chinese teachers. The second section explored the head teachers' motivations for choosing Chinese,

and asked about their reasons for offering languages, and Chinese in particular. The third section investigated the head teachers' experiences of providing Chinese, and contained questions regarding their opinions about offering languages to primary pupils, comparing their opinions on offering Chinese and European languages, the pupils' enjoyment, the age differences in learning Chinese, their interest in developing Chinese in the future, their connections with Chinese partner schools if applicable, the support the schools could offer and access for teaching Chinese, the barriers and successes they had met, their expectations of the pupils, and the pupils' progress. Finally, the head teachers were asked about their perceptions of the assessment of pupils' learning of Chinese. Since it was initially found that the head teacher was a bit awkward in answering this question when it was put in the second section, the question was moved to the end of the interview for the remaining cases. See Appendix 3 for the head teachers' interview questions.

3.5.2.2. Initial teacher interviews

The initial interviews with Chinese language teachers aimed to investigate their background, subject knowledge, planning, motivations and experience of teaching Chinese.

The interviews contained four sections: background, motivations and experience, language skills, and planning. The background section covered questions about the teachers' language and training background, their role in the school, their initial involvement in teaching Chinese and the length of their Chinese teaching experience. The motivation and experience section included a range of questions

asking the teachers' opinions about their motivations, teaching Chinese compared with European languages, children's learning compared with European languages, the choice of Chinese for primary schools, pupils' enjoyment, support from parents, homework, expectations of the pupils and themselves, and the teaching of pinyin and characters. The language skills section investigated the teachers' learning of Chinese, and their own rating of speaking, listening, reading, writing and Chinese culture, as well as their most confident and least confident element of teaching Chinese. The planning section covered questions about resources, materials, guides used by the teachers in planning and teaching, and the content, goals and priorities of their planning, as well as their perceptions about the assessment of pupils' learning of Chinese. It also addressed how the teachers used national documentation, such as the Framework for Teaching Languages at KS2. See Appendix 4 for the initial teacher interview questions.

3.5.2.3. Pupil group interviews

The pupil group interviews were designed to explore in depth pupils' opinions about their learning of Chinese. There were three sections: motivation, learning experience, and learning beliefs. The first section explored their opinions about learning languages in general and learning Chinese specifically, their motivations for learning Chinese, and their choice between Chinese and other languages, if they were given a choice. The second section asked about their enjoyment, their preferences between the four language skills of Chinese, their perceptions of comparing pinyin and characters, language and culture, Chinese and European languages, and their interest in learning Chinese. The last section included questions

asking what made the pupils feel successful in Chinese, the rewards and difficulties of learning Chinese, and their opinions about making mistakes in lessons. See Appendix 5 for interviews with pupils in Cases A, B, C and E, and Appendix 6 for interviews with pupils in Case D.

Lewis (1992), Bailey (2008) and Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest a number of challenges in interviewing children, some of which were extremely relevant to this study, such as that children might see the researcher as an authority figure and feel less comfortable in talking, and they might influence each other's views. In order to overcome these difficulties, the pupils' responses were tested by dividing them into different types of groups in the pilot study, and it was found that the pupils tended to talk more when they were in their own ability groups, rather than in mixed ability groups. Therefore, the pupils were interviewed in their own ability groups in the final cases. Moreover, the researcher spent a long time getting to know the pupils, talking to them and playing games with them before conducting the interviews, in order to minimise any negative influence on them during the interviews.

3.5.2.4. Final teacher interviews

The final teacher interviews aimed to find out about the teachers' beliefs, including their opinions on what motivates pupils to learn Chinese, and what they believe is most important and least important in teaching Chinese, as well as interesting and relevant issues emerging from lesson observations and school visits for each case.

Therefore, the final interviews with teachers in different schools varied slightly. See Appendix 7 as an example.

3.5.3. Lesson observations

The distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather “live” data from naturally occurring social situations. In this way, the researcher can look directly at what is taking place in situ rather than relying on second-hand accounts (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p.396).

Foster *et al.* (1996) suggest that observation has been predominantly used in social sciences research, including educational research. Merriam (2009) identifies a number of advantages of observation as a research method: it enables the researcher to notice things that have become routine to the participants and things that may lead to understanding the context as an outsider; it makes it possible to record participants’ behaviour as it is happening; it provides some knowledge of the context or specific incidents or behaviours that may be referenced for interviews afterwards; and it is the best technique to investigate an activity, event or situation first-hand, especially when the participants are not able or do not want to discuss all topics in an interview. These advantages of observation suited the research demands of this study perfectly. Therefore, observations were also planned as one of the research methods. The observations were expected to detect features and patterns of teaching and learning Chinese across different cases.

Similarly to using interviews as a research method, different types of observation can be used for different situations and purposes. In discussing the role of the observer, Yin (2009) identifies direct observation and participant observation: direct observation takes place in the natural setting of the case, while participant observation needs the researcher to participate in the case. Neither of these is a “pure” category and there are points on the continuum between the two roles, but it is important to the validity of the research conclusions that the reader knows where the researcher stands on this continuum of observer and participant. This study aimed to look at teaching and learning activities, as well as interactions between children and teachers, but not to do the actual learning or teaching. Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that non-participant observation, sitting at the back of the classroom, enables the researcher to code up verbal exchanges between teacher and pupils. Moreover, as a Chinese speaker and a person who looks Chinese, the researcher believed that her participation in the teaching would change the children’s experience of learning Chinese. For this reason, direct observation suggested by Yin (2009) or recording observation defined by Merriam (2009) were appropriate for this study, rather than participant observation.

Discussing the types of observation which might be conducted and how they might be recorded, Punch (2009) identifies structured and unstructured observation. Highly structured observation is more widely used to collect quantitative data because it entails categorising the data before collection and so usually has inflexible categories (Punch, 2009) and may miss the importance of what is less easily recordable (Hammond and Wellington, 2013). Unstructured observation, meanwhile, is usually used for collecting qualitative data because an unstructured

approach can be very flexible, but may not be as tightly focused (Punch, 2009). This study aimed to explore some prepared teaching practices and lesson elements, based on the literature review. However, as this study was exploratory, any other relevant and potentially important issues occurring during the conduct of the observations needed to be noted down as well. Therefore, the observations in this study switched between unstructured and structured, or were semi-structured as they are called by many researchers (Hammond and Wellington, 2013).

Some limitations to observation were considered in this study. Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest a number of disadvantages of the observation method, some of which relate directly to this study, including that the participants may change their behaviour in the presence of the researcher; that what researchers record is sometimes affected by their personal judgement rather than the phenomenon; that if a researcher writes up the observations after the event, the data may be different because of selective memory; and that there is a potential problem of inference because of the lack of other evidence. In order to minimise these limitations and enhance the reliability and validity of the observation data, the researcher spent a lot of time getting to know the participants and talking to them before the official observations started, so that the participants might feel familiar with the observer and behave as if she were not there; the observer also tried to write down as much as possible during the lessons, and then decided what should be used for analysis, rather than risk missing anything important; the interpretation of the data was discussed continually with the research supervisor, to check that the interpretation was heading in the right direction; and participants' behaviour during the observations was checked with the participants afterwards, during the interviews or informal chat,

if there was any uncertainty. For example, one teacher (in Case E) always asked the pupils to comment on each other after they had done some group practice, so the teacher was asked the reasons for doing so during the later interviews.

Regarding what should be observed, Merriam (2009) suggests six main areas, including the physical setting, the participants, the activities and interactions, the conversations, subtle factors, and the researcher's own behaviour, such as his/her own thoughts about what is going on. A list of elements of interest was originally prepared based on the literature review and the personal and research experience of the researcher and supervisor, bearing these six main areas in mind. It was then evaluated through the pilot study. Some further areas of interest were identified during the pilot study (see Section 3.5.5). The finalised observation lists included classroom/school settings related to Chinese, lesson start, teaching content, listening, speaking, reading, writing, understanding of the language, activities, Chinese culture, pupils' responses, teachers' dealing with pupils' mistakes, teachers' encouragement of pupils, teachers' use of target language, teachers' language knowledge, pupils' achievement, and observation comments (the researcher's own thoughts). As much as possible was noted down during the lessons, bearing all of these elements in mind. Merriam (2009) suggests that observation notes should be outlined and summarised as soon as possible, so the observation notes were selected to address elements of the list by compiling them as summary tables on the same day as the observations were conducted. See Appendix 8 for an example of notes and summary tables.

3.5.4. Field notes

Field notes refer both to notes based on observations and to reflective comments made by the researcher based on his/her “feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interpretations, speculations and working hypothesis” (Merriam, 2009, p.131). The observations have been discussed earlier, and field notes here refer to reflective comments. Van Maanen (1988) suggests that field notes are an ongoing stream-of-consciousness commentary on what is happening in the research, involving both observation and analysis. Eisenhardt (1989) stresses two key factors in using field notes in research: writing down whatever impressions occur so that issues that may be important will not be missed; and pushing thinking about the notes by asking questions such as “what am I learning?” and “how does this case differ from the last?” (p.539). Bryman (2008) defines three types of field notes: mental notes, jotted/scratch notes, and full field notes. In this study, the field notes were all full field notes, which were made as detailed as possible and written as soon as possible. See Appendix 18 for some example field notes.

As this was an exploratory research study, there might be many potential issues which had not been noticed before. Hence, field notes were particularly important, forming a research diary for this study. Anything that might be interesting or important was noted down during observations and school visits, as well as the researcher’s own thoughts about the participants’ behaviour and school events. For example, it was noted that the security staff said hello in Chinese to pupils in the school of Cases A and B, because this might suggest that the school had made great efforts to undertake Chinese teaching. Conflict between pupils and teacher in Case

B during lessons was also noted, as it might be highly relevant to the pupils' motivation for learning Chinese if they did not like the teacher. Moreover, field notes may help to accomplish the overlap of data analysis with data collection (Eisenhardt, 1989), which is an ongoing process in this study. For example, when it was found that pupils who were taught by a teacher with a linguistic background actually had very little interest in learning Chinese, it was noted that the teacher's teaching might be constrained by the pupils' expectations, and this was used for data analysis later on.

3.5.5. Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted with Case A, in order to evaluate and finalise the research methods. It was carried out from 4 January to 1 April 2011 over about 12 weeks. The language and patterns of the questions and statements, the issues of interest, the convenience to the participants, and so on were all tested through the pilot study. Details of how each research method was piloted are as follows.

Firstly, in order to test whether the pupils were able to understand the questionnaire questions and statements, and whether the language used was appropriate, the pupils' responses were evaluated during the pilot questionnaire administration. Thus, if there was anything the pupils did not understand, they could point this out straight away. Moreover, the rating scale statements were described in both positive and negative ways, and were mixed up, so that if the pupils' answers were in conflict, this might suggest they did not understand the statement and it would need

to be modified. Having reviewed the pilot questionnaire results, some changes were made, mainly regarding the rating scale statements:

- Statements that described the same thing in both positive and negative ways were reduced to a single question in the final questionnaire. This reduced the questionnaire to a manageable length, because the pilot questionnaire was too long and the children lost focus.
- Some statements with conflicting answers were omitted. For example, quite a few pupils who chose to strongly agree or agree with the statement “I have to listen more carefully in Chinese than other lessons” also chose to strongly agree and agree with “I don’t have to listen more carefully in Chinese than other lessons”. The pupils seemed not to be sure about it. Statements like these were omitted from the questionnaire and added to the pupil group interviews, in order gain a better understanding of their opinions.
- Statements that might be interesting but were difficult to analyse in association with the research questions were also omitted, such as the statement “If I learn to speak Chinese very well, I will have many opportunities to use it”.
- Some statements were rephrased to make the meaning clearer. For instance, the statement “It is not important for me to speak Chinese well, because most people in the world can speak English” was rephrased as “I only need to know English”.

- Statements that included words which pupils at primary stage do not know were replaced in the final questionnaire. For instance, the word “opportunity” was replaced with “chance”.
- Statements about Chinese pinyin, tones, characters and interest in continuing to learn Chinese in secondary schools were added as a result of issues arising in the pilot study.

See Appendix 9 for the pupils’ pilot questionnaire, and Appendices 1 and 2 for the final pupils’ questionnaire.

With regard to the head teacher interviews, the order of the questions was changed and several additional issues arising during the cases were added, including the head teachers’ opinions about introducing pinyin and characters, what they expected pupils to have achieved in Chinese by the time they left the school, and whether they planned to assess the pupils’ learning of Chinese in future.

Regarding the initial teacher interviews, more questions were added following the pilot interviews as a result of ambiguities and new topics raised, including the teachers’ opinions about introducing pinyin and characters, the choice of Chinese in primary schools, and homework. Some questions were rephrased. For example, instead of asking the teacher “How do you plan the lessons?”, the question was changed to “Do you plan the lessons in your head or do you write your plan down?” The reason for rephrasing this question was that the teacher in the pilot case seemed reluctant to talk about it, and asking whether she planned at all might seem insulting.

The planned final teacher interview seemed to work well in the pilot study, so it was not changed.

With regard to the pupil group interviews in the pilot study, the pupils were selected using two different approaches to test pupils' responses. Firstly, two groups of mixed ability pupils identified and selected by their class teacher were interviewed. Secondly, two groups of low ability and high ability pupils respectively were interviewed, identified and selected by their class teacher. It seemed that pupils, especially those described by the class teacher as low ability, tended to speak more in their own ability group than in mixed groups. Therefore, the group interviews of pupils in the final cases were conducted in three groups of high, medium and low ability identified by their class teachers. The order of the questions was also changed in order to put questions asking about the same area together. A question asking the pupils' opinions about learning pinyin and characters was added.

Regarding the lesson observation list, more elements were added after the pilot study, including "lesson start" (how teachers started the lessons), "mistake" (how teachers dealt with pupils' mistakes), and the separation of language learning into listening, speaking, reading, writing and understanding.

Last, but not least, stimulated recall was originally planned because it can be used to explore "learners' thought processes or strategies by asking learners to reflect on their thoughts after they have carried out a task" in second language learning (Gass and Mackey, 2009, p. 25). However, permission to carry out stimulated recall was not given by the schools, so this method was withdrawn. Meanwhile, field notes

were found to be helpful during the pilot study, so these were added as a method following the pilot study.

3.6. Data Collection

The time schedule and order of each research method to be used were also planned, as shown in Table 1.

| Stage | Research process | Time |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Stage 1 | Pupil questionnaire | 2 weeks |
| | Initial teacher interviews | |
| | Head teacher interviews | |
| Stage 2 | Lesson observation | 6-8 weeks |
| Stage 3 | Pupil group interviews | 1 week |
| | Final teacher interviews | |

Table 1: Planned data collection stages

Despite the data collection being planned, practical issues, including half-term holidays, teachers' sickness, school events and participants' availability, affected the planned timescale, so that the actual times taken to collect the data in the research were somewhat longer than planned. Time was also spent getting to know teachers and pupils as well as the lesson routines and features of the setting. This was all part of the case and provided valuable information. Meanwhile, the order of data collection stages did not always take place as planned, as the initial teacher interviews sometimes had to be undertaken after the lesson observation, and the final teacher interviews sometimes could not be conducted after the group interviews with pupils. In this case, if interesting issues emerged from the pupil group interviews that needed to be checked with the teachers, this was done by

engaging in informal chat with the teachers. Most of the case schools taught Chinese to the pupils on a weekly basis, but special school events, strikes and timetable changes in the schools meant that the timescale had to be extended. See Table 2 for the detailed data collection process, including the pilot study.

| Research Process | Dates | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| | Case A | Case B | Case C | Case D | Case E |
| Getting to know teachers and pupils | 4-12 Jan 2011 | Feb, Mar & Apr 2011 | 31 Mar-21 Apr 2011 | 6 Jun-25 Nov 2011 | 8 Nov 2011-21 Mar 2012 |
| Pupil questionnaire | 12 Jan 2011 | 4 May 2011 | 21 Apr 2011 | 4 Nov 2011 | 30 Jan 2012 |
| Questionnaire analysis | 13-20 Jan 2011 | 5-19 May 2011 | 22 Apr-1 May 2011 | 5-10 Nov 2011 | 31 Jan-7 Feb 2012 |
| Initial teacher interviews | 25 Jan & 17 Mar 2011 | 7 & 9 Jun 2011 | 16 Jun 2011 | 24 Jun 2011 | 24 Nov 2011 |
| Head teacher interviews | 18 Jan & 15 Mar 2011 | 18 Jan & 15 Mar 2011 | 7 Jul 2011 | 18 Jul 2011 | 26 Mar 2012 |
| Lesson observation | 19 Jan-30 Mar 2011 | 4 May-29 Jun 2011 | 28 Apr-7 Jul 2011 | 10 Oct-17 Nov 2011 | 8 Nov 2011-13 Mar 2012 |
| Pupil group interviews | 1 Apr 2011 | 19 Jul 2011 | 14 & 15 Jul 2011 | 20 Nov 2011 | 20-26 Mar 2012 |
| Final teacher interviews | 15 Mar 2011 | 11 & 18 Jul 2011 | 15 Jul 2011 | 22 Nov 2011 | 20 Mar 2012 |
| Field notes | Ongoing | | | | |

Table 2: Actual data collection process

The data collected for each case are summarised in Table 3. The numbers refer to how many times it took to finish each research process.

| Research method | Case A (pilot) | Case B | Case C | Case D | Case E |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Pupil questionnaire | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Initial teacher interviews | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Head teacher interviews | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Lesson observations | 10 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| Pupil group interviews | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Final teacher interviews | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Table 3: Data collected from each case – frequency

The pilot study in Case A took place from 4 January to 1 April 2011 over about 12 weeks. Three months later, after the pilot case had been finished, the finalised questionnaire was also used with pupils in the pilot case. The reason for doing this was to be able to compare data from the pilot case with data from the final cases. In the pilot case, interviews with the teacher and head teacher were also undertaken more than once, in order to finalise the interview questions. The lesson observations took place over 11 weeks, and this period was used to pilot and review the observation list and structure. Case B was carried out between February and July 2011. It took a long time because the initial class observed was dropped after five weeks, before there had been a chance to administer the questionnaire and interview the pupils. Therefore, this case was re-started with the same teacher but a different class in May. Case C took place from the end of March until July 2011. It also took longer than planned because the teacher was absent several times on account of school commitments (exchange visits to China and France), and a nationwide teachers' strike occurred during this time. Case D also required changing classes after the observation of four lessons and a first interview with the teacher because the term ended and the pupils in the first class moved up to a higher grade and Chinese became optional to them. Therefore, the case was re-started with a new

class and the same teacher when the new term started. Case E was conducted from November 2011 to the end of March 2012. It also required longer than expected because of school events and the teacher's availability. However, all the planned data were collected over an elongated time period.

3.7. Data Analysis

Yin (2009) describes data analysis of case studies as “the most difficult stage of doing case studies” (p.162), as it usually involves qualitative data, and qualitative data analysis methods are not well formulated (Miles, 1974). Merriam (2009) suggests that the paramount consideration in case study analysis is conveying an understanding of the cases, and the analysis must account for some of the identifying features of this particular type of qualitative research to make the findings clear and understandable. Identifying some features of teaching and learning Chinese in English primary schools was the aim of the data analysis of this study, in response to the research questions.

In this study, each case was, in effect, a study in itself. However, it is also useful to look across cases in a multiple case study like this. Therefore, the data for this study were first analysed within each case separately, followed by cross-case analysis. Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that within-case analysis involves detailed case study write ups, which are usually pure descriptions that help researchers to cope early in the analysis process with the enormous volume of data. Within-case analysis gives researchers a rich familiarity with each case, which helps cross-case comparison. It is also important to carry out cross-case analysis, as this may enhance

generalisability as well as deepen understanding and explanation (Miles and Huberman, 2008). Cross-case analysis often involves listing similarities and differences between cases, and may enhance the probability of capturing novel findings from the data (Eisenhardt, 1989).

The data for this study were largely qualitative, including answers to open-ended questions in the pupil questionnaire, the head teacher, teacher and pupil group interviews, and the lesson observations and field notes. A minority of the data – the results of the rating scale statements in the pupils' questionnaire – was quantitative. Therefore, the data needed to be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The analysis methods are discussed in the next sections.

3.7.1. Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative data analysis for this study was an ongoing process throughout the data collection and data analysis phases (Huberman and Miles, 2008). Wilson (2009) suggests that qualitative data collection and analysis are not always separate, and the analysis of one type of data may sometimes *lead to* collection, rather than following collection. Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that “overlapping data analysis with data collection not only gives the researcher a head start in analysis but, more importantly, allows researchers to take advantage of flexible data collection” (p.539). These exactly met the situation and demands of this study. For example, issues emerging from lesson observations were explored with participants in later interviews, and issues suggested by participants which were relevant but not in the interview plan were observed in lessons. As Merriam (2009) suggests, it is

preferable to analyse data simultaneously with data collection in a qualitative study, and the final product is shaped by both the collected data and the analysis that accompanies the entire process.

As an exploratory multiple case study, this study aimed to ascertain patterns of learning and teaching Chinese across the five cases, and offer some explanations for different patterns. Therefore, the strategies used for qualitative data analysis in this study adopted Yin's (2009) pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis techniques and Merriam's (2009) inductive and constant comparative analysis strategy.

Huberman and Miles (2008) suggest that there are three components of qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and data conclusion drawing/verification. These components of data analysis were used in this study:

- Firstly, the data collected for this study were, indeed, overwhelming and too great to be analysed. Therefore, some irrelevant responses were excluded from the data at the beginning of analysis for each type or set of data. For example, the teachers' detailed talk relating to teaching pupils German or French was reduced in the interview transcription, as was pupils' chat in interviews about games they played in other unrelated lessons.
- Secondly, the data were organised and displayed as tables, charts or narrative texts, with clear explanations for each case and/or across cases.

Some unimportant data were also reduced, such as data about issues explored in the pilot study which were not investigated in the other cases.

- Finally, after all the data from all cases had been presented, some possible hypotheses suggested by the data were formulated. Detailed analysis of each type of qualitative data in this study will be discussed below.

3.7.1.1. Open-ended questions in the pupil questionnaire

Coding was used to analyse the pupils' answers to open-ended questions. As the codes were generated directly from the pupils' answers, this aspect of analysis forms part of the results and will be considered here. Punch (2009) defines coding as the "starting activity in qualitative analysis, and the foundation for what comes later" (p.175). It uses tags, names or labels to attach meanings to pieces of data (Punch, 2009). Coding includes two stages. The first stage of coding is open coding (Merriam, 2009), which helps index the data and provides the basis for later summaries of the data by theme or pattern (Punch, 2009). Codes in the early stage are also described as descriptive codes (Merriam, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994) and are valuable in getting the analysis started and enabling the researcher to get a "feel" for the data (Miles and Huberman, 2008). The second stage is axial coding (Merriam, 2009), which is advanced coding involving labelling and categorising the data (Punch, 2009). Miles and Huberman (2008) call the later codes inferential (or pattern) codes, which require some inference beyond the data and enable the researcher to pull the data together into smaller, more meaningful units.

In this study, the answers to the open-ended questions in the pupil questionnaire were first read through carefully after they had been collected for each case. Key words in the answers were highlighted, and open coding was used with some descriptive codes assigned next to the text. Having open-coded all the questionnaires for each case, axial coding was used, and the descriptive codes of questionnaires belonging to the same case were grouped and noted down, checking also that the codes attached to the questionnaire had appeared in the previous data. After these had been applied to the questionnaire for all five cases, the codes were refined, merged and then placed into categories for comparison.

The pupils' answers to the first question, "why do you want to learn Chinese?" were analysed to identify their motivations for learning Chinese. The answers were first coded and categorised within each case, then the categories were refined and generated across the five cases. The refined categories across the five cases are shown below with explanations. Examples of responses for each category are given in Appendix 10. It should be noted that a single pupil might give an answer that covered more than one category.

- *D/M Lan*: interest in learning a different language or more languages.
- *Travel*: willingness to travel to China and communicate with local people or read signs etc. in Chinese.
- *Chinese*: interest in learning Chinese or feeling that learning Chinese is fun.
- *Teach f/o*: willingness to teach family members or other people Chinese.
- *Fun*: learning Chinese (or languages) or Chinese lessons are fun/interesting.
- *China*: interested in learning about China as a country.
- *Culture*: interest in learning Chinese culture or feeling that learning Chinese culture is fun.
- *Interact*: willingness to interact with others in Chinese.

- *Confident*: feeling confident/good at learning Chinese.
- *Compul*: Chinese is compulsory to learn.
- *Better*: willingness to get better at learning Chinese.
- *Future*: good for future job hunting.

The pupils' answers to the last two questions of the questionnaire "what do you enjoy about the Chinese lesson?" and "is there anything that you don't enjoy about the Chinese lesson?" were analysed, and were expected to show the pupils' learning experience to some extent. Again, the answers were first coded and categorised within each case, and then the categories were refined and generated across the five cases. The refined categories are shown below, with explanations.

Enjoy:

| | |
|---|--|
| WR: writing Chinese characters | Calli: Chinese calligraphy |
| GAM: games | CUL: Chinese culture |
| Tea: the teacher | NOT: nothing |
| NUM: numbers in Chinese | Song: singing Chinese songs |
| SP: speaking Chinese and its tones | Music: Chinese music lesson |
| EVE: everything about the lessons | Craft: Chinese art and crafts activities |
| Dislike: don't like their Chinese lessons | Part: working with their partners |
| Activi: activities in the lessons | Action: speaking the characters with actions |
| Cards: the activity of choosing the right mini character cards when heard | CNY: Chinese New Year decorations and hand craft activities of making zodiac door hangers, lanterns etc. |

Do not enjoy:

| | |
|--|--|
| Tone: tones or speaking | Tea: the teacher |
| Hard: the hard words and/or sounds of Chinese | SONG: singing the songs |
| Work: the work the pupils do in the lessons | GAM: games in lessons |
| Work of WR: the writing work the pupils did in the lessons | SP class: speaking Chinese in front of the whole class |
| NOT: nothing the pupils do not enjoy | Repeat: repeatedly learning the same thing |
| EVE: the pupils do not enjoy everything in the lesson | |

Examples of responses for each category are given in Appendices 11 and 12. As with the answers to the first open-ended question, a single pupil might give an answer covering more than one category.

The data were very rich and the pupils' answers varied significantly. In order to retain features of the answers, a significant number of categories was created, as shown above. However, when comparing the answers across the five cases, it was difficult to compare all the categories. Therefore, only the top four categories that covered the views of most pupils for each case were compared (see Chapter 4).

Moreover, some answers which were not directly related to the questionnaire questions, but which might be helpful in understanding observations/interviews later, were also noted down. For example, several pupils expressed their dissatisfaction with the lessons in their answers and wrote that "It is enjoyable and fun but it isn't. If you want to go to China it will be amazing but I get bored with Chinese sometimes" (pupil questionnaire, Case B). Some pupils mentioned the encouragement they got from learning Chinese and wrote that "When I think I can speak Chinese I feel very proud and think I want to learn more" (pupil questionnaire, Case C). These answers were noted down, and were borne in mind during the lesson observations and interviews, when possible reasons for these answers were explored.

3.7.1.2. Interviews

The interviews in this study were first recorded (Punch, 2009) and then transcribed as written texts. See example transcriptions of teacher initial interviews, final teacher interviews, head teacher interviews and pupil group interviews at Appendices 13, 14, 15 and 16. On average, interviews with each teacher, including both initial and final interviews, took about an hour and ten minutes; interviews

with each head teacher took about half an hour; and interviews with each group of pupils took about forty-five minutes. It usually took about seven minutes to transcribe one minute of recorded interview. Therefore, a good deal of time had to be spent on the interview transcriptions.

There was a huge amount of narrative information and so a form of data reduction and analysis was necessary to identify relevant meanings (Huberman and Miles, 2008). First, the key words of answers were marked carefully after the interviews had been transcribed. As discussed above, interviews with participants contained different sections corresponding to different research questions. Therefore, the interview answers were first categorised according to the research question and sub research questions. The key words were then categorised and tabulated for comparison across cases (see Chapter 4). Only the pupils' answers to questions in group interviews regarding their motivations for learning Chinese and what they enjoyed and did not enjoy were coded and categorised in a similar way as these were in the pupil questionnaire, and these were then compared within each case and across different cases.

3.7.1.3. Lesson observation notes

As mentioned in Section 3.5.3, everything that happened during the lessons relating to teaching and learning Chinese was noted down as far as possible, and then the notes were selected and put into summary tables. Therefore, the initial analysis of the observation notes involved categorising them based on points of the schedule in the summary table (see Appendix 8 for examples of both notes and summary

table). This process required data reduction in order to keep the data manageable and comparable. The aim of the observation schedule was to identify key issues in teaching and learning Chinese in classrooms, but not to record a second-by-second account; rather, a rich account was recorded.

After all the observation notes for each case had been placed into summary tables, the tables were first compared within cases and merged into a single summary table for each case. Then the tables were compared across the five cases. Photographs of pupils' work and lesson activities were also taken during and after the observations, in order to supplement the observation data. For example, a picture of a pupil's worksheet helped to understand how much work the pupils usually did in lessons; a picture of pupils' Chinese homework displayed in the school/classroom might indicate the pupils' enjoyment of learning Chinese. See Appendix 17 for example photographs.

3.7.1.4. Field notes

The field notes were used as supplementary materials. As mentioned in Section 3.5.4, the field notes included interesting behaviour, events, activities, and so on which emerged from the cases, as well as the researcher's own thoughts and reflections on them. See Appendix 18 for some examples of field notes.

The field notes for each case were analysed, together with the other sets of data. Some field notes simply described a behaviour or activities or events, and were used to help understand the cases. For example, a field note that "the teacher spent quite

some time in asking the children to quiet down and disciplining the children” (Case A) might help to understand why one pupil in that case suggested that he did not like learning Chinese because of the teacher.

Some field notes recorded the researcher’s reflections on a particular activity, behaviour or event. Punch (2009) suggests that, as a researcher’s ideas about the data may occur at any stage of data analysis and data collection, it is important to record these ideas because they may be very useful in the future. These notes were already analysing the case, a type of note which Miles and Huberman (2008) call memoing. For example, the field note that “The teacher with better subject knowledge doesn’t mean that he/she can teach better. Even if the teacher is doing it from the aspect of an expertise, the teaching is constrained by the pupils’ expectations” (Case B) was the researcher’s own reflection following an initial interview with the teacher in this case and observation of several lessons.

The field notes were discussed and reflected upon with the research supervisor. Some of the issues which arose were not expected at the beginning. However, they were related and important to this study. Since the main purpose of this study was to look for any relationship between the research sub questions, the field notes might be a crucial bridge leading to a final conclusion.

3.7.2. Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative data in this study were the pupils’ answers to rating scale statements in their questionnaires. These was analysed using the statistical software

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Every statement was named as a variable, and every variable was analysed with the variable of classes (different cases) together. Although rating scale data are commonly treated as interval data, they were treated as descriptive data in this study, because the purpose of using SPSS was to get a precise comparison across these cases regarding some of the pupils' experiences of learning Chinese.

The rating scale data were first used to establish the frequency of pupils' agreement and disagreement case by case. The answers were first analysed within case, and the figures produced by SPSS were then presented clearly in a table for each case (see example at Appendix 19). The tables for all cases were then compared. Cross-tables were also used to identify differences between cases.

3.8. Validity and Reliability

“All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner” (Merriam, 2009, p.209). Bryman (2008) indicates that validity refers to the integrity of conclusions generated from the research, and reliability relates to whether the results of a study are repeatable. Merriam (2009) suggests that they can be approached through “careful attention to a study's conceptualisation and the way in which the data are collected, analysed, and interpreted” (p.210).

Validity includes both external and internal validity. External validity refers to the degree to which the results of the research can be generalised to the wider

population, cases, settings, time or situation. This is also called the transferability of findings (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Internal validity aims to demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data can be sustained by the data (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that in quantitative data, validity may be improved through careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data; while in qualitative data, validity may be addressed through honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data collected, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the research (Winter, 2000). Therefore, validity in qualitative research is also described as credibility (internal validity) and transferability (external validity) (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Merriam (2009) state that in a quantitative study the researcher must convince the reader that the research procedures have been followed faithfully, because little concrete description of what the participant does is provided; whereas in qualitative study, the researcher should provide a detailed depiction in order to show the reader that the conclusions make sense.

Reliability is also described as stability, equivalence and internal consistency in quantitative research (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Stability is a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples; equivalence can usually be achieved through equivalent forms and inter-rater reliability; and internal consistency requires tests or instruments to be conducted twice (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). However, Merriam (2009) argues that it is impossible to achieve reliability in qualitative research in the traditional sense, because what is being studied in the social world is in flux, multifaceted and highly contextual, the information collected depends on who gives it and how skilled the researcher is, and the emergent design

of a qualitative study precludes *a priori* controls. Therefore, in qualitative research, several interpretations of the same data may be made, and these all stand until directly contradicted by new evidence (Merriam, 2009). Hence, in qualitative research, reliability is usually known as dependability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), referring to the fact that if the findings of a study are consistent with the data presented, the study can be considered dependable (Merriam, 2009).

As a multiple case study, this research does not attempt to offer generalisations regarding the teaching and learning of Chinese in English primary schools. It would, in fact, be difficult to do so, as different cases with different participants learning Chinese in different situations may lead to different research results. In this study, although an opportunity sampling approach was taken, as discussed earlier, because few schools were offering Chinese, it was a coincidence that there were four types of teacher within the five cases sampled. However, the data collected, using the same research methods across the cases, were sometimes significantly different from each other (for details, see Chapter 4). Therefore, this study aims to provide a clear and transparent description of the teaching and learning of Chinese in the five cases sampled, and to explain how the conclusions were drawn from the data collected. A detailed consideration of the validity and reliability within each research method used in this study is discussed next.

Firstly, the pupil questionnaire was piloted carefully, as mentioned in Section 3.5.1, in order to evaluate whether the language, structure and rubric could be understood by the pupils. It was also discussed and finalised with the research supervisor. The questionnaire provided both qualitative data with open-ended answers, and

quantitative data with rating scale answers. The validity and reliability of the qualitative data were increased by triangulation, as the same questions were also asked in the pupil group interviews; the validity and reliability of the quantitative data were ensured by standardising and controlling the process of administering the questionnaire, which was conducted following the same procedures across the different cases.

The validity and reliability of the interviews with head teachers, teachers and grouped pupils, as well as the lesson observations, were increased through the strategies of member checks, adequate engagement in data collection, and the researcher's reflexivity, as suggested by Merriam (2009). With regard to member checks, the teacher was often observed asking pupils to praise each other after practising Chinese in the lessons, and it was suspected that the teacher might want to stimulate the pupils' confidence in learning Chinese by doing this; this was confirmed with the teacher in the final interview. With regard to adequate engagement in data collection, although a schedule was planned before the data collection started, a lot longer was spent on data collection than planned, not only because of unpredictable occurrences such as school events and teacher sickness, but also because more time was spent on the cases in order to capture all the features of each case. For instance, there was almost no new behaviour of teachers or pupils during the last observed lesson when it was decided to stop doing lesson observations. With regard to researcher reflexivity, the researcher's interpretations and analyses of data were always reviewed by checking with supervisors and colleagues. For example, the researcher used to write over thirty Chinese characters per lesson when she started to learn Chinese in primary school, but the pupils

observed only wrote, or sometimes only copied, fewer than five characters per lesson. Although the researcher felt that progress might be slow, the research supervisor suggested that such a different language might seem threatening to English speaking learners. The validity and reliability of the data collected in this study increased through rich and thick description about how the data were collected and analysed, and how decisions were made throughout the process.

3.9. Ethical Issues

Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that ethical issues arise from the nature of the research project itself, the research context, the procedures adopted, the data collection methods, the nature of the participants, the type of data collected, and what is to be done with the data afterwards (p.76). In educational research, “ethics is concerned with ensuring that the interests and well-being of people are not harmed as a result of the research being done” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004, p. 101).

This study was carried out in accordance with research ethics. Before the data collection started, an ethical approval form was submitted to the researcher’s academic department for approval. The form provided a range of details concerning ethical issues, including a requirement to read the Guidance for the Ethical Conduct of Research. It also helped the researcher to think through the research methods and the process of data collection, considering the participants’ rights, dignity, privacy, confidentiality and protection. The ethical issues were also covered as part of the Advanced Research Methods course offered by the department. Therefore, ethical

issues were thought through carefully, and the field work started after the ethical form had been approved by the department.

Following this, in order to get access to enter the schools for data collection, a letter signed by both the supervisor and the researcher, which explained the research topic, research purpose, the participants needed, and the promise of data protection, was sent to the head teachers of the case schools (see Appendix 20). Once permission had been obtained from the head teachers, the researcher was put in touch with the teachers, either by email or by school visits. The research and their required involvement in the research were explained to them. Fortunately, all the head teachers and teachers in the study were very interested in the research, and they were happy to be involved and provide help. Therefore, it was not difficult to get permission from the head teachers and teachers. Moreover, during the first visit to the observed case classes, the teachers introduced the researcher and the research to the pupils in a very simple and brief way, and informed them that the researcher would be observing their lessons for a while. The participants were also assured that they had the right to withdraw at any time during the process of the research if they did not wish to continue.

Before the questionnaires were conducted, the purpose of using the questionnaire was introduced, and pupils were assured that the questionnaires would be anonymous and would not be shown to their teachers. Before the interviews were conducted, permission to use a voice recorder was obtained from all participants, and they were assured that the recordings would only be used for research purposes and would again be anonymous. Moreover, before the pupils were interviewed, the

teachers usually asked those who wanted to be interviewed to put their hands up, and selected from those pupils. Therefore, interview consent was obtained from the pupils before they were conducted. For the observations, permission to observe the classes and to take photos of the pupils' work and classroom settings was obtained from head teachers and teachers beforehand.

Ethical issues were also considered throughout the process of data analysis. As participants had been assured that anything reported in this study would be anonymous, no names of schools or private information about any head teachers, teachers or pupils have been included in this report.

3.10. Summary

In summary, this is an exploratory research study adopting an inductive research approach, and occupying a constructionist and interpretivist position. Multiple case studies were conducted to explore the teaching and learning of Chinese in five primary classes in four primary schools. A structured questionnaire with open-ended questions and Likert-scale statements was used with all pupils; two semi-structured interviews were conducted with all teachers; one semi-structured interview was conducted with all head teachers; one semi-structured interview was conducted with 12-16 pupils in groups sampled for each case; eight to ten observations were carried out to observe the Chinese lessons in each case; and some field notes were also taken during the case studies. All of the research methods were evaluated and finalised using a pilot study. The data collected were analysed using a constant comparative analysis strategy (Merriam, 2009). Data from the open-

ended questions of the pupil questionnaire were coded and categorised within and across cases. Data from the Likert-scale statements of the pupil questionnaire were analysed using SPSS descriptive and cross-table analysis within each case and these were then compared across cases. The interviews with the sampled pupils, teachers and head teachers were analysed by selecting key words, and comparing and categorising according to the research questions. Only three questions from the pupil group interviews, which were the same as the open-ended questions in the pupil questionnaire, were coded and categorised similarly to the data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The lesson observations were summarised in a structured table, and then compared across cases, and the field notes were used to supplement the data analysis. Validity, reliability and ethical issues were considered throughout the study.

The next chapter will present the data in relation to the research questions.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1. Introduction

In this study, five case studies (Cases A, B, C, D and E) were conducted in four primary schools (Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4), with four head teachers, five teachers, two Year 5 classes, one Year 4 class, one Year 2 class, and one mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class. A summary of the schools' backgrounds and results from their Ofsted reports is given in Appendix 21.

In this chapter, each case will be summarised and the results presented for each research question. A detailed case summary for each case is given in Appendix 22.

The findings reported in this chapter are based on the data shown in Table 4:

| Research methods | Case A | Case B | Case C | Case D | Case E |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Pupil questionnaire | 32 pupils | 33 pupils | 30 pupils | 30 pupils | 19 pupils |
| Initial teacher interviews | 1 (twice) | 1 (3 times) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) |
| Head teacher interviews | 1 (twice) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) |
| Lesson observations | 10 lessons | 11 lessons | 9 lessons | 10 lessons | 8 lessons |
| Pupil group interviews | 4 groups, 16 pupils | 3 groups, 12 pupils | 3 groups, 12 pupils | 3 groups, 12 pupils | 3 groups, 12 pupils |
| Final teacher interviews | 1 (twice) | 1 (twice) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) | 1 (once) |

Table 4: Data collected from each case – participant numbers

4.2. Why do Participants Want to Learn Chinese?

The motivations of the head teachers for offering Chinese, of the teachers for teaching Chinese, and of the pupils for learning Chinese investigated in this study are presented in this section.

4.2.1. Head teachers' motivations

Head teachers' motivations for choosing to offer Chinese were explored through interviews and sometimes through informal chats.

The head teachers' opinions on offering languages in primary schools were examined. All the head teachers in this study believed that it was important to offer languages to their pupils. Head teacher A (School 1, Cases A and B) suggested that offering languages to the pupils was not only a government requirement, but also a matter of increasing pupils' language awareness and intercultural understanding, rather than language skills. The head teacher said:

In fact they may not be able to hold a conversation in Chinese if they ever went to China, but it doesn't necessarily matter. It's the generic principle that they are learning about other ways of communication and understanding ... not only one language in the world (Head Teacher interview, Case A).

Moreover, head teacher A said that the pupils enjoyed their lessons in other languages, and their learning of other languages and cultures could help them develop an interest in languages generally, and to gain a lot of useful learning skills. Head teacher C (School 2, Case C) suggested that it was important to educate the pupils to become global citizens in the future, as “in 20 years’ time, 15 years’ time, they may need to work anywhere in the world, and without language skills, it will limit their need” (Head Teacher interview, Case C). Head teacher D (School 3, Case D) was reserved about offering languages to primary pupils, and suggested that although the pupils had the advantage of being less inhibited and shy in primary schools, language lessons had to be provided very carefully so that children would not be turned off even earlier than they are turned off at secondary school. Head teacher D stated that “we ought to make sure we don’t put children off the languages ... children need to see the value of learning a language, and that’s why we set along as part of teaching it, as part of being a good global citizen” (Head Teacher interview, Case D). Therefore, the target of teaching Chinese for pupils from Reception to Year 2 was to learn about Chinese culture: head teacher D hoped that the pupils would be curious about the language in KS1. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 learnt French in global citizenship lessons because head teacher D expected that the pupils would realise the need to learn another language while learning about global issues. Head teacher E (School 4, Case E) did not give details about this.

In terms of head teachers’ motivations for offering Chinese in particular, there were both similarities and differences. School 1 offered French before Chinese, but head teacher A felt that it was too difficult to teach French because the staff did not speak French. Although the local authority (LA) sent specialists to support the teaching

of French, head teacher A believed that not every pupil in the school could benefit from this. Therefore, head teacher A was worried about the quality of the experience that the pupils would get from learning French, and thought about offering other languages. Because teacher A, who had been a staff member in the school, originally came from a Chinese speaking country, Singapore, head teacher A decided to try Chinese with support from the LA and a volunteer Chinese native speaking teaching assistant (no qualification). Head teacher A also expressed a passion for and personal interest in undertaking Chinese in the school, and felt that the local resources for teaching Chinese were greater than those for teaching European languages. In School 2, Chinese was already offered before head teacher C came to the school. However, head teacher C was very supportive about offering Chinese in the school, and suggested that it was important to teach Chinese because of the growing importance of China. Moreover, Head teacher C felt that the pupils enjoyed their learning of Chinese very much because the differences between Chinese and English were very stimulating and interesting for the pupils, especially the Chinese culture. In School 3, Chinese had also been introduced by the previous head teacher, but head teacher D believed that the richness and difference of Chinese culture and China interested the pupils much more than European countries. Therefore, head teacher D decided to continue to offer Chinese and, besides, there was a teacher available. In School 4, head teacher E insisted that Chinese would become more important for business and trade in the future and was spoken by many people all over the world. Therefore, head teacher E wanted to introduce Chinese and required teacher E to learn and teach Chinese at the recruitment

interview. Head teachers' motivations for undertaking Chinese are summarised in Table 5.

| Head teacher | Motivations for providing Mandarin Chinese |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Head teacher A (Cases A & B) | Negative experience of offering French before owing to lack of experts and professional support. |
| | Having a teacher available, as well as support from LA specialist, and a volunteer native speaking teaching assistant. |
| | Personal interest and passion. |
| | Having a partner school in China. |
| | More local resources for teaching Chinese than for European languages. |
| Head teacher C | Offered before the head teacher became the head of the school. |
| | Chinese culture is very interesting and stimulating to the pupils. |
| | Growing importance of China. |
| Head teacher D | Offered before the head teacher became the head of the school. |
| | Chinese culture interests the pupils more than European languages. |
| | Having a teacher available. |
| Head teacher E | Chinese will become more important for business in the future. |
| | Chinese is spoken by most people in the world. |

Table 5: Head teachers' motivations for providing Chinese

It may be seen that the head teachers have their own motivations for offering Chinese in different schools, but three common views are shared: that Chinese culture is interesting to the pupils (head teachers C and D); having a teacher of Chinese available (head teachers A and D); and the growing importance of China (head teachers C and E).

4.2.2. Teachers' motivations

Teachers' motivations for teaching Chinese were explored through initial interviews with the teachers. Teacher A (Singaporean Chinese background) suggested that giving pupils an opportunity to speak a language belonging to one

of the world's largest economies, and increasing pupils' confidence in learning Chinese, which is usually perceived as difficult, were her motivations for teaching Chinese. Once teacher A started teaching Chinese, she enjoyed seeing the pupils become interested and make progress in learning Chinese.

The motivation of teacher B (previously secondary teacher, Local Authority MFL advisory teacher, language specialist) for learning and teaching Chinese was heavily influenced by her son's experience of learning Chinese, as it was a book about Chinese brought home by her son several years ago that interested her in learning Chinese, initially independently. Teacher B also felt that Chinese was an interesting language to teach, and that it was important to offer Chinese to primary pupils because of globalisation. Teacher B also enjoyed seeing the pupils realise they had achieved something, such as being able to read and write Chinese characters, which was quite special.

Teacher C (trained English primary class teacher specialising in MFL) was first asked at her recruitment interview by the previous head teacher of School 2 to learn and teach Chinese. However, she soon found the Chinese culture very interesting after she had started to learn and teach Chinese, and Chinese culture became her motivation for teaching Chinese. Therefore, teacher C believed that teaching Chinese to primary pupils was interesting not only in terms of language, but also in terms of cultural experience.

Teacher D (native Chinese speaking, parent of the school) was first recommended by the previous Chinese teacher of School 3 to teach Chinese. He indicated that it

was important for primary pupils to learn different cultures because of globalisation.

Since teacher D had started teaching Chinese, he had found it a great fun.

Teacher E was also first asked at her recruitment interview by head teacher E (the previous head teacher of School 2 who had asked teacher C to learn and teach Chinese Mandarin) to learn and teach Mandarin. After teacher E started learning Chinese, she also became very excited about teaching Chinese, because Chinese and Chinese culture was completely new to her. Teacher E stated that “I think it’s an opportunity that just can’t be missed” (initial teacher interview, Case E). A summary of teachers’ motivations for teaching Chinese is given in Table 6.

| Teacher | Motivations for teaching Chinese |
|-----------|--|
| Teacher A | Originally asked by head teacher. |
| | Chinese belongs to one of the world’s largest economies. |
| | Giving pupils the confidence that Chinese is not difficult. |
| | Enjoy seeing the pupils get interested and make progress. |
| Teacher B | Originally motivated by her son, found Chinese is interesting. |
| | Chinese is an interesting language to teach. |
| | Enjoy seeing the pupils realise their progress, as being able to read and write Chinese characters is special. |
| Teacher C | Originally asked by head teacher. |
| | Interested in Chinese culture. |
| Teacher D | Recommended by previous teacher. |
| | Teaching Chinese is great fun. |
| | Important because of globalisation. |
| Teacher E | Originally asked by head teacher. |
| | Excited about Chinese and Chinese culture, as they are completely new. |

Table 6: Teachers’ motivations for teaching Chinese

4.2.3. Pupils' motivations for learning Chinese

This issue was explored through the pupil questionnaire, with an open ended question, and through the pupil group interviews.

The pupils' answers to the questionnaire were first coded and categorised within each case. As the codes and categories were not pre-set, but arose from the pupils' answers in each case, they are not exactly the same across cases, although some were common. Therefore, the data for each case are presented separately below in Figures 3 to 7, with a complete list of the categorises which appeared across all cases, to provide a general picture of the pupils' answers in each case, while at the same time showing differences as well as some common factors between the cases. The number on the left is the number of pupils who suggested the respective answers. Categories are listed on the right. Twelve main categories were refined from the pupils' answers to the questionnaire, as discussed in the method for this analysis in Section 3.7.1. Sentences rather than codes are used in the charts below, in order to make this clearer. Note that a single pupil might suggest more than one category in an answer.

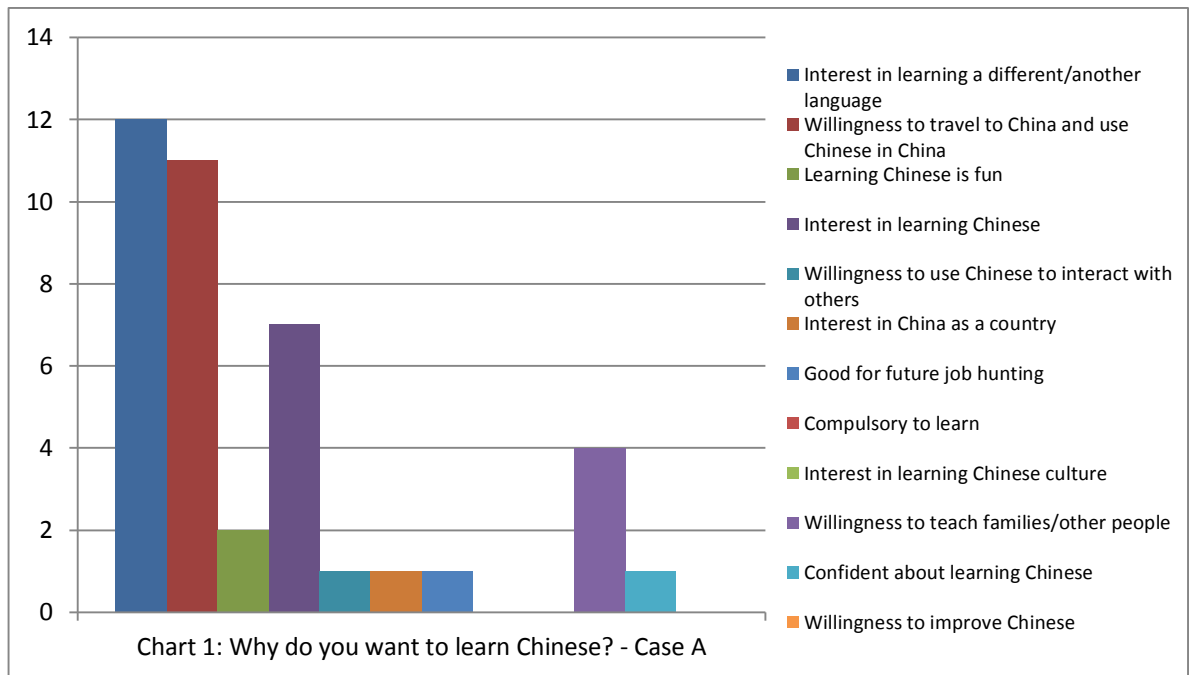


Figure 3 - Why do you want to learn Chinese? - Case A

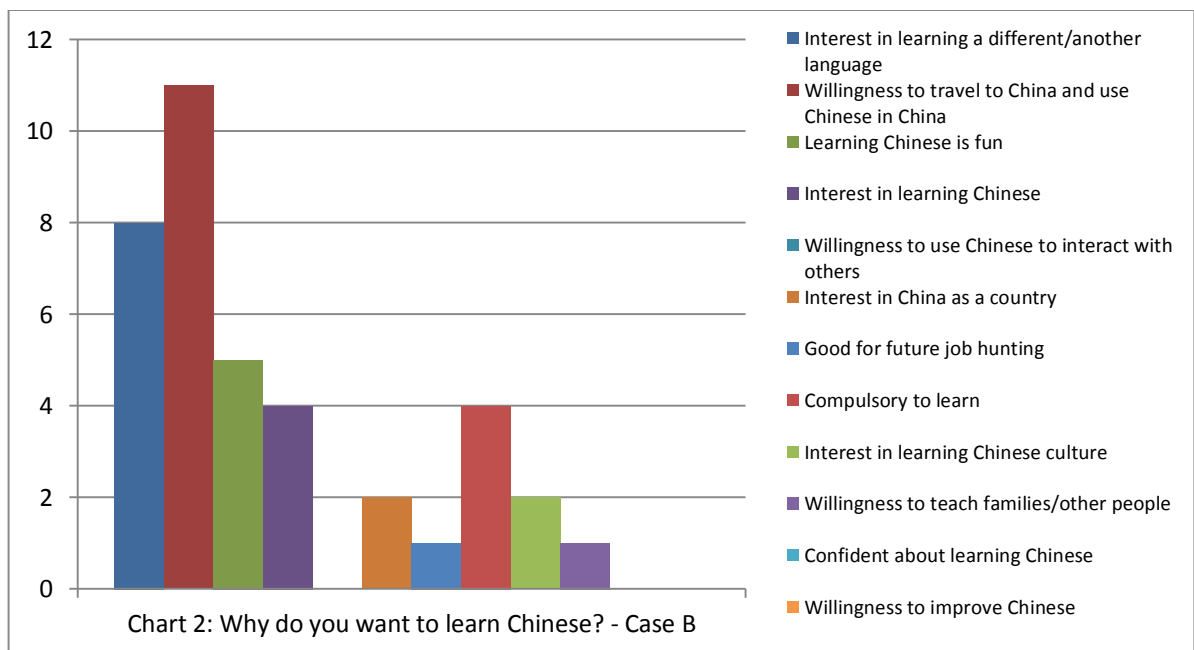


Figure 4 - Why do you want to learn Chinese? - Case B

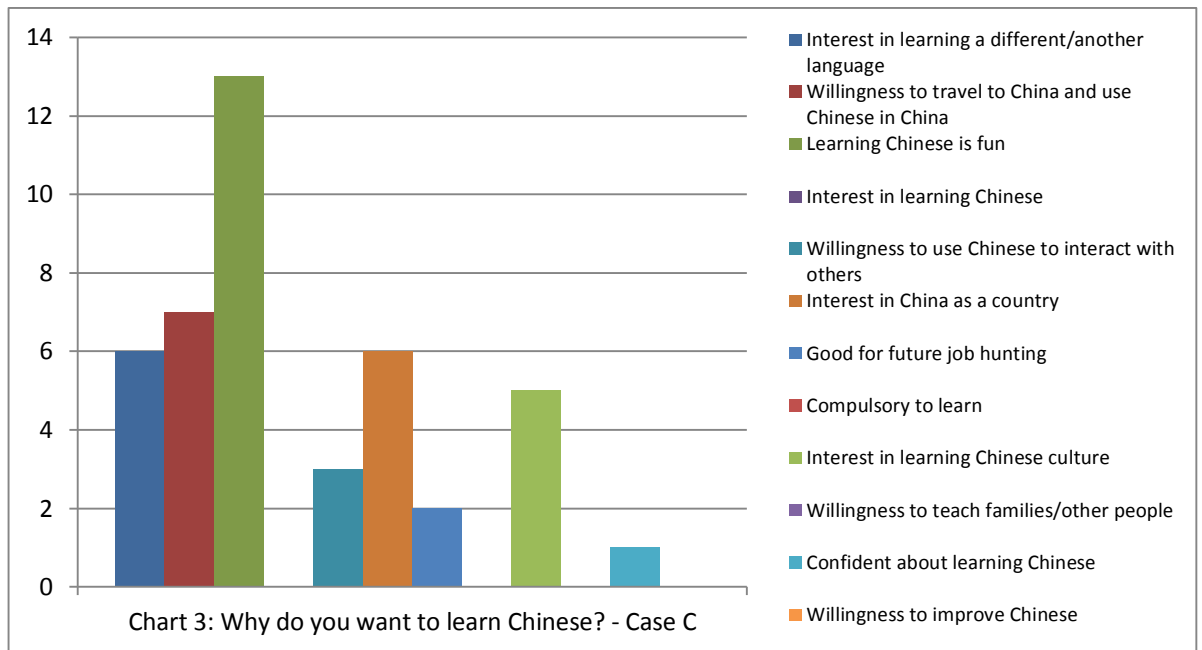


Figure 5 - Why do you want to learn Chinese? - Case C

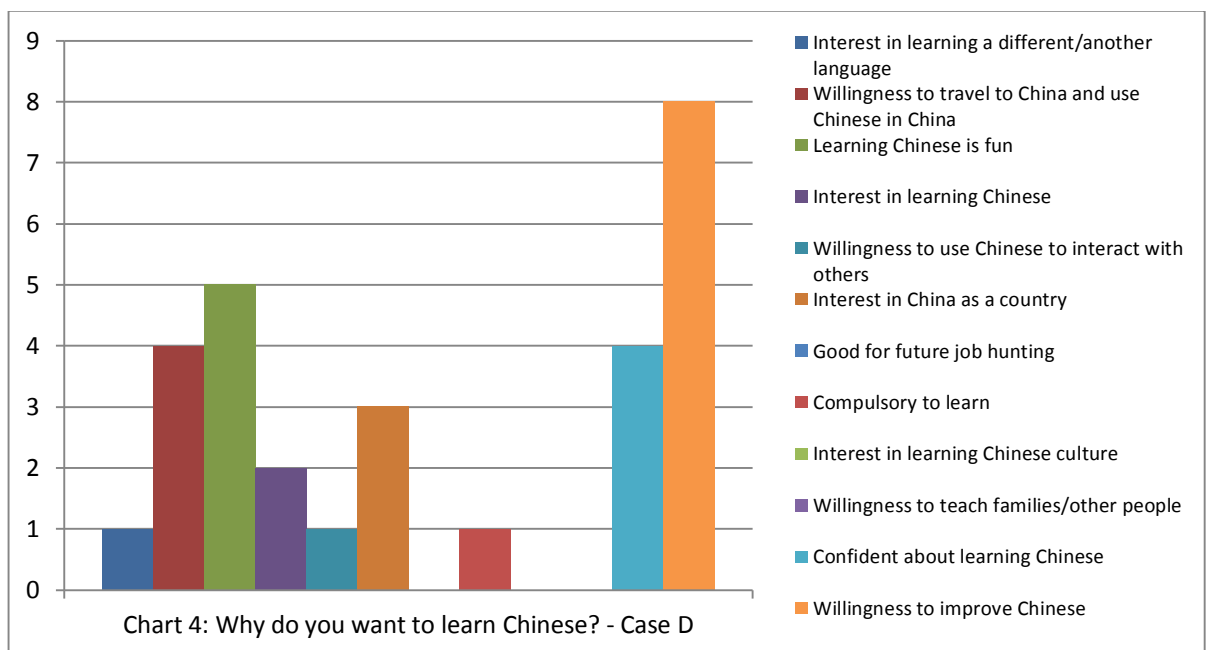


Figure 6 - Why do you want to learn Chinese? - Case D

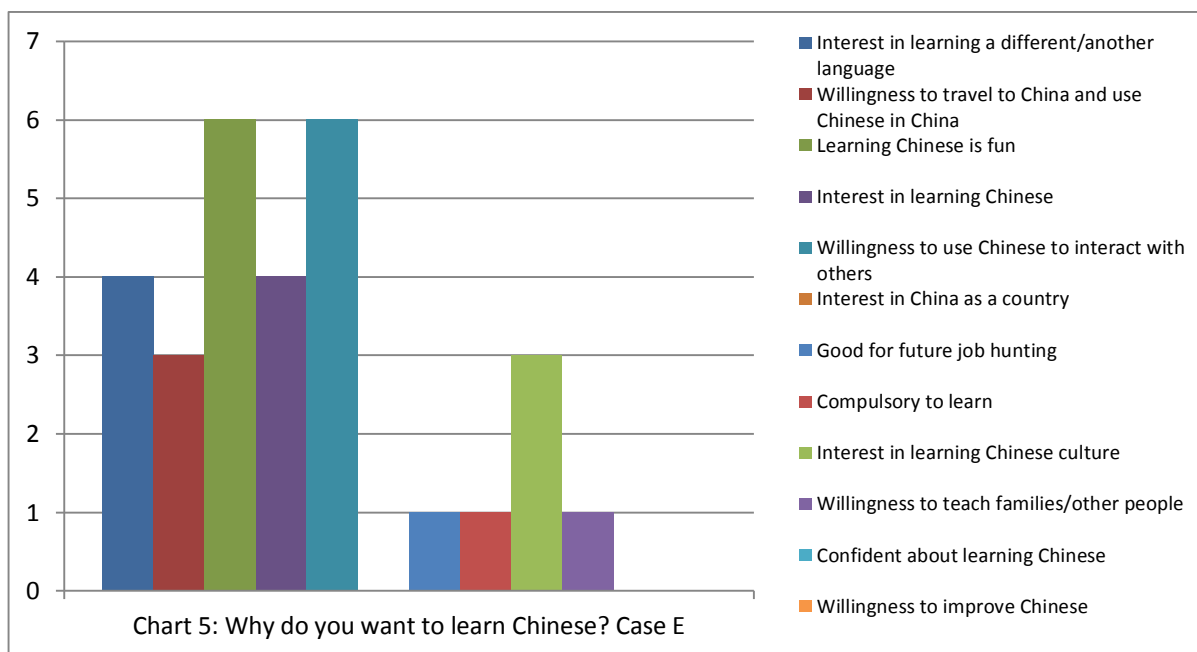


Figure 7 - Why do you want to learn Chinese? - Case E

It may be seen from Figures 3 to 7 that the data are distinctive across the cases, which might relate to unique features of each case. Despite the fact that some categories appear in more than one case, the number of pupils who suggested relevant answers is different. Therefore, the percentage of pupils who suggested relevant answers for the dominant categories in the questionnaires for each case was calculated and inserted into Table 7 for comparison, in order to show variations between cases more clearly, as well as key factors that may be motivations for the pupils learning Chinese. Answers suggested by the pupils in their group interviews were coded and categorised in the same way, since the questions in the interviews were the same as those in the questionnaire. These were then inserted into Table 7 for comparison. Categories appearing in the questionnaire are shown in columns Q, and categories appearing in the interviews are shown in columns I. Because the pupils interviewed had already been sampled, and the number was manageable, their answers are all included in the table. The meanings of the category codes are

explained beneath the table. The percentage figures next to the codes refer to the percentage of pupils in each case who suggested answers related to the categories in the questionnaires and interviews. The fractions in the brackets after the percentages refer to the actual number of pupils who suggested the related answers out of the total number of pupils who submitted questionnaires or were selected for interview. Note that pupils could suggest more than one category in their answers. The same categories across the five cases are marked or highlighted in the same colour.

The interview responses were generally consistent with the answers in the questionnaire, with some differences. It appears that pupils in Cases C and E had the highest motivation for and interest in learning Chinese, as the largest number of answers which appeared in both the pupil questionnaire and interviews were related to “fun”. The pupils in Case B had the lowest motivation and interest of all the cases, as some pupils suggested that they learnt Chinese because it was compulsory, and over half suggested they did not like learning Chinese. Some pupils in Case B suggested in the interviews that they did not like learning Chinese because the teacher made them learn/practise words they already knew, and that learning Chinese was fun with the language teacher of Chinese (Teacher A), but not with the temporary class teacher who was teaching them Chinese (Teacher B). The pupils’ motivations and interests in Cases A and D were in the middle of the five cases. However, one pupil in Case A suggested in the interview that he/she did not like learning Chinese. In Case D, the most common answer appearing in the interviews was related to “fun”, but many pupils suggested in their questionnaires that they wanted to get better at learning Chinese.

| Case A | | Case B | | Case C | | Case D | | Case E | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I |
| D/M Lan 37.5% (12/32) | Travel 25% (4/16) | Travel 33.3% (11/33) | Fun 16.7% (2/12) | Fun 43.3% (13/30) | Fun 41.7% (5/12) | Better 26.7% (8/30) | Fun 75% (9/12) | Fun 31.5% (6/19) | Fun 41.7% (5/12) |
| Travel 34.3% (11/32) | Chinese 25% (4/16) | D/M L 24.2% (8/33) | D/M L 16.7% (2/12) | Travel 23% (7/30) | Culture 25% (3/12) | Fun 16.7% (5/30) | Teach f/o 16.7% (2/12) | Interact 31.5% (6/19) | Chinese 16.7% (2/12) |
| Chinese 21.8% (7/32) | Challenge 12.5% (2/16) | Fun – 15.2% (5/33) | Dislike 66.7% (8/12) | D/M Lan 20% (6/30) | Travel 16.7% (2/12) | Travel 13.3% (4/30) | Interact 8.3% (1/12) | D/M Lan 21.1% (4/19) | Culture 16.7% (2/12) |
| Teach f/o 12.5% (4/32) | Interact 6.3% (1/16) | Chinese 12.1% (4/33) | | China 20% (6/30) | D/M L 16.7% (2/12) | Confident 13.3% (4/30) | | Chinese 21.1% (4/19) | D/M Lan 8.3% (1/12) |
| | Culture 6.3% (1/16) | Compul 12.1% (4/33) | | Culture 16.7% (5/30) | Teacher 8.3% (1/12) | China 10% (3/30) | | Travel 15.8% (3/19) | Teach f/o 8.3% (1/12) |
| | Wide 6.3% (1/16) | | | Interact 10% (3/30) | | | | Culture 15.8% (3/19) | New 8.3% (1/12) |
| | New 6.3% (1/16) | | | | | | | | |
| | Dislike 6.3% (1/16) | | | | | | | | |

Table 7: Pupils' motivations for learning Chinese – across cases

Q = questionnaire, I = group interview

D/M Lan: interest in learning a different language or more languages.

Travel: willingness to travelling to China and communicate with local people or read signs etc. in Chinese.

Chinese: interest in learning Chinese or feel learning Chinese is fun.

Teach f/o: willingness to teach family members or other people Chinese.

Fun: learning Chinese (or languages) or Chinese lessons are fun/interesting.

China: interested in learning about China as a country.

Culture: interest in learning about Chinese culture or feel learning about Chinese culture is fun.

Interact: willingness to interact with others in Chinese.

Confident: feel confident/good at learning Chinese.

Compul: compulsory to learn

Better: willingness to get better at learning Chinese.

Dislike: do not like learning Chinese.

New: feel learning Chinese is a new experience.
Wide: feel Chinese is spoken widely all over the world.
Teacher: like learning Chinese because of the teacher.

There were some common features and differences across the five cases, especially in the pupils' answers to the questionnaire. Firstly, the answers in Cases A and B were similar to each other, with "Travel" (travel to China and using Chinese in China) and "D/M lan" (interest in learning a different/another language) as the two most common answers: this might be because these two cases were conducted in the same school. Secondly, the categories in Cases C and E were almost the same, with "Fun" (learning Chinese/Chinese lessons are fun) as the most common. Meanwhile, for Case D, the dominant answer "Better" (willingness to get better at learning Chinese) was significantly different from the other four cases.

The pupils' preference for Chinese or other languages was also explored in the group interviews. When pupils were asked if they would still choose to learn Chinese if other languages were offered in the school, in Case A fourteen pupils suggested that they would choose Chinese and only two of the sixteen pupils said they would choose to learn another language instead of Chinese. In Case B, five pupils would like to learn both Chinese and another language at the same time, and two mentioned Spanish. Three pupils in the more able group said that they would like to try another language first and see if that suited them better; if not, they would return to learning Chinese. Three pupils would like to learn another language – Spanish or Italian – and only one pupil said he/she would still choose to learn Chinese. In Case C, nine pupils said they would still like to learn Chinese, and four of them gave the reason that they had already learnt a lot about Chinese and would

like to learn more. Two pupils said they would like to learn Chinese as well as another language, and two said they might still choose to learn Chinese but they were not sure. One pupil said he/she would like to learn Spanish instead, because he/she felt Chinese could be a bit boring sometimes. In Case D, seven pupils said that they would still choose to learn Chinese, and four said they would like to learn another language at the same time. One said that he/she would like to learn Spanish rather than Chinese. In Case E, seven pupils said they would still choose to learn Chinese; two suggested they might learn Spanish/German as well as Chinese; and three (from the less able group) mentioned that they would like to learn French instead because they knew French a bit better, or they had relatives in France.

It can be seen that the majority of pupils in Cases A and C preferred Chinese to other languages, and some pupils in Case C gave the reason that they had learnt a lot about Chinese already, so they would like to continue. Just over half of the pupils in Cases D and E wanted to carry on learning Chinese, while the others wanted to learn another language as well as Chinese, or to change to another language. Half of the pupils in Case B wanted to change, and most of the others wanted to learn another language at the same time.

4.3. Who is Teaching Chinese in Primary Schools?

Information on the teachers' backgrounds was sought in their initial interviews. The teachers' knowledge of Chinese and English primary pedagogy was explored through both the initial interviews and the lesson observations. The teachers' beliefs about teaching Chinese were discussed in the final interviews.

4.3.1. Teachers' backgrounds

The five teachers of Chinese in this study were from different countries. They spoke different languages, performed different roles in the school, and had different experiences of teaching Chinese and training. A summary of their backgrounds is given in Table 8.

| Background | Teacher A | Teacher B | Teacher C | Teacher D | Teacher E |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Origin | Singaporean Chinese | English | English | Chinese | English |
| Native language(s) | Haka & Mandarin Chinese | English | English | Mandarin Chinese & Shanghai dialect | English |
| Training | English primary teacher with QTS primary | English secondary teacher with QTS secondary | English primary teacher with QTS | None – does not have QTS | English primary teacher with QTS |
| Roles in the school | Language teacher (Class teacher before) | Temporary Class teacher & LA MFL advisory teacher | Class teacher | Chinese language teacher (parent of school) | Class teacher |
| Length of teaching Chinese | 3 years | 3 years | 2 years | 2 years | Less than 6 months |

Table 8: Teachers' backgrounds

It can be seen that teachers A and D both had a Chinese heritage background, and were both language teachers in the schools, but teacher A had had previous experience of being an English primary class teacher, whereas teacher D was a parent of the school. Teachers C and E had very similar backgrounds, as they were both English primary class teachers, but teacher C had had longer experience of teaching Chinese than teacher E. Teacher B was very different from the other

teachers, as she was a temporary class teacher in School 1, and a language expert who simultaneously played the role of LA MFL advisory teacher.

4.3.2. Teachers' knowledge of Chinese

In the interviews the teachers were asked to rate their Chinese language skills as well as their knowledge of Chinese pinyin and culture. See Table 9 for a summary of responses.

| Knowledge of Chinese | Teacher A | Teacher B | Teacher C | Teacher D | Teacher E |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Experience of learning Chinese | Learnt since childhood; did Mandarin Chinese course at Open University in 2010 | Independently for 6 years; did Mandarin Chinese course at Open University in 2010 | Independently for 3 years; learnt from local Language Centre in Birmingham | Learnt since late childhood, but started speaking Mandarin daily at 18 | Started learning in evening classes at local university a year ago |
| Qualifications in Chinese | GCSE & AS | None | Asset Level One Chinese | BA in Chinese | None |
| Speaking | Fluent | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |
| Listening | Good | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |
| Reading | OK in general | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |
| Writing | Fair | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |
| Pinyin | Weaker than other aspects | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |
| Chinese culture | Good | About AS level | Beginner level | Native | Beginner level |

Table 9: Teachers' knowledge of Chinese

Table 9 shows that, apart from the native speaking Chinese teacher (D), all the other teachers had done or were doing some kind of course to learn Chinese during the case studies, either at the Open University or in local language classes. The Chinese

heritage Singaporean teacher (A) did not learn Chinese pinyin and simplified Chinese characters in her childhood, as she learnt traditional Chinese characters and pinyin was not used at that time. Therefore, teacher A felt her pinyin was weaker than other aspects. Although teacher A had done the Chinese beginners course at the Open University, she suggested that she did it mainly to learn how to teach Chinese. Teacher B, who had learnt Chinese for six years independently and had also taken a Mandarin course at the Open University, rated her level of Chinese as about AS level. The two English class teachers (C and E) rated their Chinese as beginner level, but teacher C had learnt Chinese for much longer than teacher E.

The teachers' knowledge of Chinese was also observed during the lesson observations. Apart from teacher D, who was a native speaker of Chinese, the Chinese heritage teacher (Teacher A) clearly had a better knowledge of Chinese than the other English-background teachers, although she occasionally pronounced the tones and spelt the pinyin/characters wrong. The English background teachers (B, C and E) all made frequent mistakes in pronouncing the tones during the lessons, but they were all prepared for the content of the lessons and seemed confident about what they were teaching. Compared with the two English primary class teachers (C and E), teacher B seemed more capable of writing Chinese characters in the lessons.

4.3.3. Teachers' knowledge of English primary pedagogy

The teachers' training background was investigated through their initial interviews. Their roles in the schools were also compared as a background to their primary pedagogy. See Table 10 for further details.

| Training background | Teacher A | Teacher B | Teacher C | Teacher D | Teacher E |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| Teacher training | English primary teacher with QTS primary | English secondary teacher with QTS secondary | English primary teacher with QTS specialised in MFL (not Chinese) | None – does not have QTS | English primary teacher with QTS specialising in MFL (not Chinese) |
| Chinese teacher training | None | None | None | None | None |
| Roles in the school | Language teacher (previously class teacher) | Temporary class teacher & LA MFL advisory teacher | Class teacher | Chinese language teacher (parent of school) | Class teacher |

Table 10: Teachers' training backgrounds

It may be seen that none of the teachers in this study had been trained specifically to teach Chinese to English primary pupils, and they suggested that no such option was available to them. Although there are similarities between some teachers, as shown in Table 10, the primary pedagogy observed in their lessons was very different. In the observed lessons, teachers C and E, who were primary class teachers and had training backgrounds as primary class teachers, seemed to have the best classroom management and behaviour. Teacher A, and especially teacher B, seemed to struggle with classroom management, and some pupils in their lessons did not behave and sometimes argued with the teachers. Teacher D's lessons were always supported with the class teacher at the side, and in the lessons with Years 3 and 5 pupils where Teacher D taught independently, it seemed that teacher D also had some problems with classroom management.

It may be seen that, although some teachers shared some aspects of common background, each was unique.

4.3.4. Teachers' beliefs about teaching Chinese

The teachers' beliefs about teaching Chinese were explored with teachers in both their initial and final interviews, including their perceptions about pupils' motivation, important and unimportant aspects of successful teaching of Chinese, the introduction of Chinese pinyin and characters, their opinions about giving pupils homework, and their expectations of pupils. Their responses are shown in Tables 11 to 15 for summary and comparison, and similar answers are highlighted in the same colour.

| Teacher | Factors that motivate pupils |
|---------|--|
| A | Differences between Chinese and English. |
| | Fascinating Chinese culture. |
| | Staff who have been to China for school visits can talk about China with the children. |
| B | The language is new to the pupils. |
| | The awareness that they are making progress. |
| C | The pupils' confidence that "I can do it". |
| | Chinese and its culture were something new to the pupils. |
| D | From the pupils' parents. |
| E | The Chinese culture is new to the pupils. |
| | The Chinese characters. |
| | The interest of China to the pupils. |

Table 11: Teachers' perceptions of pupils' motivations for learning Chinese

Table 11 shows that the teachers' opinions about what might motivate pupils to learn Chinese varied slightly. However, the two most common factors perceived by the teachers as motivations for pupils to learn Chinese were Chinese culture (Teachers A, C and E) and the differences between Chinese and English (Teachers A, B and E). Teacher A also mentioned the fact that school staff might talk to the pupils about their visits to China, and teacher B suggested that if the pupils were

aware of their progress in learning Chinese, they might be motivated; while for teacher C the pupils' confidence could be a motivation. The native speaking teacher, teacher D, held very different opinions from the other teachers and believed that the pupils learnt Chinese mainly because their parents made them do so.

Table 12 shows that the teachers held different opinions about what was important and unimportant in teaching Chinese. The two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) believed that it was crucial to inspire pupils' interest in learning Chinese first.

| Teacher | Key things that might make teaching Chinese successful | Least important things in teaching Chinese |
|---------|--|---|
| A | Get the children's interest by making the teaching fun and interesting. | Correct the pupils' mistakes. |
| B | Support the pupils' learning sufficiently and emotionally. | N/A |
| | Well planned lessons. | |
| | Make progress with small steps. | |
| | Let the pupils practise a lot. | |
| | Engage the pupils. | |
| | Assessment of learning. | |
| | Peer/self-assessment. | |
| | Make the pupils realise they are making progress. | |
| C | Fun and then catering to each pupil's learning style. | Formal assessment. |
| D | Motivate the pupils' interest in learning Chinese. | Teach English children Chinese in the Chinese way. |
| E | Embed culture in the language. | Teach the characters, because it is hard, and difficult for the pupils to accomplish. |
| | Make pupils do lots of practice and repetition. | |
| | Be creative. | |

Table 12: Most and least important things in teaching Chinese perceived by teachers

The language specialist teacher (Teacher B) had very detailed ideas about successful teaching, from planning to assessment. Teacher C considered fun to be

the most important thing, followed by catering to pupils' individual learning needs.

Teacher E emphasised the Chinese culture, being creative and practising.

| Teacher | Introduction | Pinyin | Characters |
|---------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| A | Together and reduce pinyin when ready. | Help to pronounce. | Underneath the pinyin. |
| B | Together at the beginning, and reduce pinyin later. | Easier for the pupils to learn. | More fun for the pupils to learn. |
| C | Together. | More important and easier for beginners. | Fun for the pupils. |
| D | Pinyin comes first, no pinyin for characters for KS1. | Might make the pupils confused with their first language learning. | Might cause confidence issue. |
| E | Pinyin comes first. | Help with fluency and communication. | For adult level. |

Table 13: Introduction of pinyin and characters

Table 13 shows the teachers' opinions about introducing pinyin and characters in teaching Chinese. Teachers A and B thought both should be introduced together to the pupils, and pinyin could be reduced later on, and teacher B also suggested that characters could be fun for the pupils to learn. Teachers C and E believed that pinyin was easier for the pupils to learn, but teacher C would like to introduce both together while teacher E suggested that characters should not be introduced to pupils at primary level. Teacher D felt that neither pinyin nor characters should be introduced to pupils in KS1. In the observed lessons, teacher A introduced new content mostly in pinyin, but she did ask the pupils to write some characters near the end of every lesson. Teacher B always introduced pinyin and characters together, and frequently asked the pupils to write both in the lessons. Teachers C and E introduced the content mainly in pinyin, and also asked the pupils to write a few characters, but much less than teacher A and especially teacher B. Teacher D did not introduce any pinyin or characters specifically to the pupils, but he occasionally wrote down the

pinyin for some phrases on the whiteboard for the pupils to see. Teachers A, B, C and E, who introduced pinyin and characters to the pupils, all believed that pinyin was easier and/or more important for pupils as beginners in Chinese. Teachers B and C also felt that characters were more fun for the pupils to learn than pinyin. However, teacher E considered that characters should be taught to adults, but not to primary pupils.

| Teacher | Homework |
|---------|--|
| A | Never gives the pupils homework – not the English culture. |
| B | Homework is helpful. Something to explore. |
| C | Necessary to do it sometimes, but it has to be fun for the pupils. |
| D | Not part of the school policy. |
| E | Not part of the school policy. |
| | Keep the work in class. |
| | Dangerous to have homework without linguistic support. |
| | Any work has to be fun , so that the pupils do not realise they are doing work. |

Table 14: Teachers' opinions about giving pupils homework

In terms of giving the pupils homework in Chinese, the teachers held reserved views, as shown in Table 14. Teachers A, D and E suggested that homework is not part of the English primary school culture or policy, and teacher E felt that it was dangerous for the pupils to do homework without any linguistic support at home. Moreover, teachers C and E insisted that any work they gave to pupils to do at home had to be fun for them. Teacher B thought homework was helpful but it needed to be something for the pupils to explore. In the observed lessons, only teacher C gave the pupils homework, including asking the pupils to explore China and/or Beijing using various types of presentation such as videos, PPTs, posters and performance. The other teachers all kept the work in the classroom.

Table 15 shows that teachers with similar backgrounds shared some similar expectations of pupils in their learning of Chinese. Teachers A and D, the two Chinese background teachers, expected the pupils to gain some basic communication skills in Chinese. Teachers C and E, the two English primary class teachers, expected the pupils to have some language learning skills, and to be interested in learning languages in future. Teachers D and E also expected the pupils to gain some cultural awareness. Teacher B, who was the temporary class teacher and also a language specialist, was the only teacher in this study who expected the pupils to be able to do some assessment.

| Teacher | Expectations of pupils |
|---------|--|
| A | To be able to do some basic communication in Chinese. |
| | To become more confident in learning languages. |
| B | To be able to access The Language Ladder breakthrough level by Y6. |
| C | To gain language learning skills. |
| | To have a love of languages. |
| | To be excited and enthusiastic about learning languages. |
| D | To understand Chinese culture better. |
| | To have learnt some communicative language. |
| | To want to continue learning it in future. |
| E | To have some language learning skills. |
| | To have a cultural awareness. |
| | To have an interest in learning and travelling. |
| | To be willing to continue learning Chinese later in life. |

Table 15: Teachers' expectations of pupils

4.4. How is Chinese Taught?

This issue was explored through interviews with teachers and head teachers, as well as lesson observations. This section presents aspects of the provision of Chinese in the case schools, the teachers' planning, the teaching content, the teaching of the

language, the teaching of Chinese culture, teaching and learning activities in the lessons, assessment, the teachers' use of target language, teachers' behaviour, lesson routines, and school/classroom displays relating to Chinese.

4.4.1. Provision of Chinese

The provision of Chinese was explored mainly in interviews with head teachers and through lesson observations. All five cases taught Chinese within the curriculum time, but different schools offered Chinese in slightly different ways. Details of each case are shown in Table 16.

| Provision | School 1 | | School 2 | School 3 | School 4 |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Case A | Case B | Case C | Case D | Case E |
| Decision | Head teacher | Head teacher | Previous Head | Previous Head | Head teacher |
| Frequency | Once a week | Once a week | Once a week | Twice a week | Once a week |
| Length | 1 hour or more | 1 hour or more | 1 hour or more | 20 minutes | 1 hour or more |
| Scale | Whole school | One class | One class | Reception to Y2 | One class |
| Focus | Language and culture | Language and culture | Language and culture | Culture | Language and culture |
| Future plan | Persuade linked schools | | Provide Chinese across whole school | Stay the same | Provide Chinese across whole school |

Table 16: Provision of Chinese

4.4.2. Teachers' planning

The teachers' planning was investigated through initial teacher interviews. These covered the teachers' use of government guidelines, their planning and teaching resources, as well as their planning of content and priorities.

Firstly, the teachers were asked in the interviews whether they used any government published guidelines for teaching primary languages in teaching Chinese, such as the KS2 Framework for Languages (DCSF, 2005). However, the teachers had reserved views about this, as shown in Table 17.

The two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) pointed out that this Framework was designed for European languages, not for Chinese. Teacher B believed that the topic-based design of the framework did not help pupils to reuse phrases. Teacher A thought it went too quickly to be used in teaching Chinese, and teacher D suggested that the framework lacked assessment standards. None of the five teachers in this study used it in their planning, except that teachers A and E suggested that they occasionally checked the topics.

| Teacher | Opinions about the KS2 Framework for Languages |
|---------|--|
| A | It goes too quickly to be used in teaching Mandarin. |
| B | It does not help to understand the language from a linguistic point of view. |
| | The topic-based design does not help the children to reuse phrases. |
| C | It is generally about French and is difficult to use for Chinese. |
| D | No standard to assess pupils' learning of Chinese. |
| E | It is designed for European languages. |

Table 17: Teachers' opinions about the KS2 Framework for Languages

The teachers used different resources and materials for their planning, as shown in Table 18. Teacher C was the only teacher in this study who had tried to use the newly published Scheme of Work for Chinese (TDA, 2010) in her planning. However, she suggested in her interview that she felt this guideline was more suitable for Chinese native speaking teachers who could speak Chinese already.

Some outside resources were available for teaching Chinese. For example, the British Museum lent a Chinese artefacts box to Case C for free and sent a staff member from the British Museum to the school to help the pupils explore these artefacts. Teacher E also went to an event about the Panda Competition, run by the governments of both countries, and brought back a set of DVDs about Chinese culture to show the pupils.

| Teacher | Planning resource |
|---------|---|
| A | Chinese Paradise Software; Chinese Made Easy for Kids (book); Fun Chinese for Kids (book); Easy steps to Chinese (book). |
| B | Teacher B's self-designed Scheme of Work; Internet; Dictionary. |
| C | Internet; Primary School Chinese (text book); Treasure Chest; Songs; Chinese Staff Room; the newly published Scheme of Work for Chinese (a little). |
| D | The class teacher's teaching content; internet. |
| E | PPT games; DVD videos. |

Table 18: Teachers' planning resources

Four teachers, excluding teacher D, all planned their lessons based on what they had learnt. As a British heritage teacher, teacher C suggested that she had to spend a lot of time searching for suitable materials on the internet because of her lack of knowledge of the Chinese language. Teacher D, the native speaker, planned the lessons according to the class teacher's teaching content. For example, if the class was doing buildings, teacher D did the Chinese vocabulary for buildings. There was little uniformity in the teachers' planning for teaching Chinese.

The teachers' planning priorities for pupils who were beginner learners of Chinese are shown in Table 19. Some similarities can be seen. Chinese culture was shared by the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) and the native Chinese speaking teacher (Teacher D), although their reasons might be slightly

different. Speaking was shared by the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D). Teacher B's priority was different from the other teachers: she focused on the writing of Chinese. Only teachers B and D wrote down their plans, but teacher B's plan was more detailed as she had designed a scheme of work for teaching Chinese to primary pupils on her own, while teacher D's plan was briefly about the teaching content. The other three teachers said they planned the lessons in their heads and did not have a written plan for the researcher to examine.

| Teacher | Priorities in planning |
|---------|---|
| A | Speaking |
| B | Writing |
| C | Chinese culture – children would be more confident about writing in the future. |
| D | Chinese culture |
| | Speaking |
| E | The new language: listening – match with writing and reading – writing. |
| | Chinese culture. |

Table 19: Teachers' planning priorities

The teachers in this study all planned and taught Chinese with little support from other staff in the school or experts from the LA. Head teacher A used to encourage teacher B to help teacher A plan lessons because teacher B was the MFL advisory teacher of the LA, but teacher A seemed not to use this resource.

4.4.3. Teaching content

What the teachers taught was observed in the lessons. Details are provided in Table 20. Similar content across different cases is marked or highlighted in the same colour.

| Teacher | Teaching content |
|---------|---|
| A | <p>Greetings; Numbers (song about them), ages, dates and months; The Great Wall; He/she/it; Lion dance; Some pinyin; Chinese calligraphy and related words in pinyin and characters; Body parts and a song about them; Chinese New Year and a related song and art work – lanterns, zodiac, paper cutting; Contents introduced with pinyin, characters and tones; Learn to say a couple of colours while playing balloon games of tones; Introduced pinyin: i, ia, ie, in, ing.</p> |
| B | <p>Greetings and every single character of them; Introduce the characters of 口 mouth, 月 moon, 水 water, 山 mountain, 火 fire, 木 tree, 人 person, 林 forest, 明 bright, 炎 hot, 火山 volcano, 人口 population, 口水 mouth water, 山水 scenery, 好 good; The progression of Chinese characters and how Chinese characters are combined; Making phrases using characters; Introduced he/she 他 to the pupils; Writing most of the characters; Introducing 您 you (respect), 你(you), 再见(goodbye), 见(see), 早(morning), 早安(good morning), 你好(hello), 老师(teacher), 中国(China), 英国 (England) in pinyin and characters; Demonstrating to the pupils how to write 再, 见, 你, 好; Introduced how to say “who are you? I’m...” in Chinese.</p> |
| C | <p>Greetings; Numbers; Family members and related phrases (this is... I love my family... etc); The Great Wall of China and the story of Mulan; Body parts and two songs about body parts; Chinese calligraphy; Explore Beijing; Introduced “terrific” in Chinese to the pupils and use it to praise them; A frog rhyme; Dragon boat festival; Introduced how to write the characters 妈(mum), 家(home), 爸(dad), 我(me), and 爱(love); Introduced the phrase “I love...” and the sentence “I love China” in characters; Introduced the initials of pinyin and 3 finals, including “b p m f z c s ong ia”, using internet; Introduced the measure words in Chinese to the pupils, particularly 两 (another way of saying two in Chinese, usually together with measure words); Introduced how Chinese radicals relate to characters, for example 水, anything to do with water would have it. 火车 – fire and car = train. Explained anything to do with mouth has 口 radical. Writing the characters 口 and 手.</p> |
| D | <p>Greetings; Numbers (song about them); China and its location on a globe; Introduced Beijing Shanghai and Hong Kong; A traditional Chinese story of “Kong rong rang li” 孔融让梨;</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>Introduced the sentences “somewhere has something” and “what does somewhere have” and “I/you/he/she has something” “what do you have and what do I have” in Chinese;</p> <p>Introduced the words that the pupils learnt in their literature lesson, including the pinyin for bridge, mansion, advertisement, river, fountain, boat, beautiful, castle and park;</p> <p>Body parts;</p> <p>Paper cutting;</p> <p>Recapped 7 characters of the numbers “4,9,8,6,10,5” and the character for “day”;</p> <p>Recapped the 12 signs of the Zodiac with flash cards.</p> |
| E | <p>Greetings;</p> <p>Number and age;</p> <p>Chinese calligraphy to write the characters 你好;</p> <p>The history of Chinese characters.</p> <p>Story of the Chinese zodiac;</p> <p>Symbolism of Chinese lanterns and lantern festival celebration;</p> <p>Panda competition;</p> <p>Chinese New Year: making lanterns; painting and decorate zodiacs on soft clay made with flour and water; decorating biscuits; paper cutting a dragon, and putting it on the window.</p> |

Table 20: Teaching content

Greetings were the most common topic shared by the five cases, followed by numbers and body parts. In terms of content related to Chinese culture specifically, it appears that the Chinese New Year and Chinese calligraphy were the most common.

Only teachers A and C introduced Chinese pinyin in a relatively systematic way to the pupils, while the three English teachers focused more on the progression/forms of Chinese characters than the two Chinese background teachers. Moreover, in the observed lessons, the teaching content of Cases A and B tended to be repetitive: a lot of teacher A’s lessons were related to numbers, and teacher B’s lessons were mainly about basic greetings.

4.4.4. Teaching of the language

The teachers' activities regarding the four language skills and understanding the language were observed in the lessons, and some of their opinions about why they did particular activities were explored in the interviews. See Appendix 23 for details in the observation note summary tables for each case.

Teacher A's lessons focused on speaking and listening more than reading and writing. In the observed lessons, teacher A frequently corrected the pupils' pronunciation and tones, and emphasised the accuracy of the pupils' production of the language. However, the pupils did not have many opportunities to practise conversations. Teacher A also read content the pupils had previously learnt aloud, and asked the pupils to listen to and answer the meanings in the lessons. With regard to writing, teacher A usually let the pupils spend some time copying and writing the characters at the end of lessons, and most of the time the characters were of numbers. The teacher usually introduced Chinese pinyin and characters together to the pupils, and asked the pupils to copy/write some of the pinyin and characters. Teacher A explained in the interview that she allowed the pupils to do this because writing was equally important to speaking, listening and reading. She believed that if the characters were introduced slowly to the pupils, the pupils would slowly become ready to recognise the characters without pinyin. There was, however, little activity related to practising the reading of Chinese. Teacher A also did little to enhance the pupils' understanding of Chinese from the linguistic point of view, except for once encouraging pupils to figure out the pattern of months in Chinese.

Teacher B set a lot of work in the lessons, balanced between speaking, listening, reading, writing and understanding of the language, and often led the pupils in practising conversations of greetings with actions. Teacher B always introduced both pinyin and characters together to the pupils. There were a lot of activities for the pupils to recognise and copy/write the characters during the lessons, and teacher B encouraged the pupils to write the characters by memory. The pupils were asked to read and write characters in every observed lesson, but the characters might be the same as they had learnt in the previous lessons, because the lessons focused on Chinese greetings during the period of the case study. Teacher B suggested that she felt that writing tended to be neglected in language teaching, and this was why she wanted to focus on the writing. Teacher B introduced the structures of the characters, frequently comparing the grammar and structures of Chinese and English during the lessons. For example, teacher B asked the pupils to think about the structures of the sentences and the question words in sentences, and taught the pupils to reuse single characters to make different/new phrases; she also taught the pupils that putting two trees together makes 林 (forest), and putting two fires together makes 炎 (hot). Teacher B also introduced how Chinese phrases are made. For instance, putting fire and mountain together means volcano (火山).

Teacher C's lessons seemed to place more emphasis on speaking and listening than on reading and writing. She used various resources to help overcome her weakness in speaking Chinese. For example, she played a video of a Chinese teacher introducing family members to the pupils, and repeated after the video together with the pupils. She also used a website to teach the pronunciation of pinyin and tones,

and learnt together with the pupils. There were a lot of activities, such as singing songs and pair/group/class work to practise the conversations. Reading and writing were also practised on occasion, and pinyin was used more often than characters during the lessons. Only about ten characters were presented to and written/copied by the pupils during the period of the case study. Teacher C also spent some time introducing how Chinese radicals were related to the characters, and how Chinese phrases were made. For example, she explained to the pupils that characters that have something to do with water would have the character of water (水) in them. She also explained to the pupils that putting the characters for fire (火) and car (车) together meant train (火车). Moreover, teacher C asked the pupils to think of some language learning skills that they could apply in learning Chinese.

Teacher D's lessons were almost always only about speaking and listening. Teacher D demonstrated how to say sentences/conversations/phrases to the pupils, and led the pupils in practice. Teacher D also sometimes corrected the pupils' pronunciation of the pinyin and tones. Teacher D did not introduce either pinyin or characters to the pupils specifically, but occasionally wrote down the pinyin or characters for the pupils to see on the whiteboard. There was no activity involving writing Chinese, and Teacher D occasionally asked pupils to read flash cards of numbers and zodiac signs during the period of the case study.

Teacher E's lessons also focused on speaking and listening. During the lessons, teacher E asked the pupils to practise conversation a lot, but reading and writing were less focused on in the lessons, and when they were practised this was usually through pinyin, not characters. Teacher E also spent some time helping the pupils

understand linguistic aspects of the language and compared Chinese with English. For example, she asked the pupils to discuss how the numbers from 11 to 20 were formed, and led the pupils to figure out the meanings of “how are you, I’m good, I’m OK, I’m not good” based on “hello”, as almost all of them include *nǐ* (you) and *hǎo* (good). As with teacher C, teacher E also asked the pupils to think of some language learning skills that they could apply in learning Chinese.

Speaking and listening were wholly or partly the focus of all five teachers in this study. In speaking, the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) tended to correct the pupils’ pronunciation more than the other teachers. Teacher A, and especially teacher B, placed considerably more emphasis on writing than the other teachers, while the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) introduced fewer characters to the pupils, and used pinyin more often in the lessons. It was also noticed that the three English teachers (Teachers B, C and E) spent more time introducing the language from a linguistic aspect than the two Chinese background teachers (A and D).

4.4.5. Teaching of Chinese culture

The teachers’ activities in teaching Chinese culture are summarised in Table 21.

It may be seen that some teachers did similar things in teaching Chinese culture, including Chinese calligraphy (Teachers A, C and E), Chinese New Year (Teachers A and E) and the Great Wall of China (Teachers A and C). Teachers B and D

covered very little about Chinese culture. Teachers C and E covered more about Chinese culture than the other teachers, followed by teachers A, D and B.

| Teacher | Teaching of Chinese culture |
|---------|--|
| A | The cultural background of the Great Wall of China Lion Dance Chinese calligraphy Chinese New Year (outside the lessons) |
| B | The progression of Chinese characters |
| C | The story of Mulan The Great Wall of China Chinese calligraphy The Dragon Boat Festival Some Chinese music when the pupils were doing a reading activity |
| D | A traditional story of “Kong Rong Rang Li” China, Beijing and Shanghai |
| E | The history of Chinese characters The story of the 12 Chinese Zodiac signs Chinese calligraphy The symbolism of lanterns Chinese New Year and its music |

Table 21: Teaching of Chinese culture

4.4.6. Teaching and learning activities

The activities arranged by the teachers were also observed in the lessons. For details, see Appendix 22. In Case A, teacher A used software games to let the pupils practise tones/pinyin and numbers; led the pupils in singing songs about numbers, Chinese New Year and body parts; played videos about the language and culture to the pupils; and let the pupils do some maths. Most of the pupils were very responsive in the lessons.

In Case B, there were many matching activities for the pupils to match mini flash cards of Chinese characters to their ancient forms; to match phrases in characters with pictures implying their meanings; and to choose the correct mini cards of

characters when they heard what the teacher read. Teacher B sometimes asked the pupils to play games, and to take turns in practising greetings. Much worksheet practice was designed by teacher B, including colouring the character 是's strokes using different colours for different strokes, and colouring the greetings in pinyin. Teacher B often asked pupils to do activities in pairs or as tables.

In Case C, teacher C led diverse activities in the lessons, involving a lot of physical movement by the pupils. For example, teacher C asked the pupils to point to the body parts when she read them, selected volunteer pupils in several lessons to "label" them with body part tags in Chinese pinyin, and got the pupils to move around the classroom and be a live dictionary for the other pupils to check when they labelled their body parts on the worksheets. Teacher C often led the pupils in singing different songs, not only about the lesson but also some pop songs. Teacher C sang together with the pupils, and played the guitar for the pupils when they sang the pop songs. Teacher C also asked the pupils to compete as boys and girls, and the pupils were very engaged and always asked the teacher to do it again. When introducing family members, teacher C led the pupils in reading family members and body parts by imitating an old lady, a baby and a man, to get the pupils to repeat the new words in different ways several times. There were also many games for the pupils to learn Chinese, including lamb darts and treasure hunts. Moreover, teacher C frequently filmed and photographed the pupils doing activities, such as singing a pop song and presenting their homework, the "Beijing Project". She then uploaded them to her blog, which is all about learning Chinese and visits to their Chinese partner school, for the pupils and other people to see and leave comments. Teacher C usually asked

the pupils to do activities in pairs or groups. The pupils were generally very excited in the lessons. Moreover, teacher C sometimes related Chinese to other subjects in the curriculum. For example, she asked the pupils to read an ancient Chinese story “Mulan” for their literacy reading.

In Case D, the teacher often led the pupils in singing songs in Chinese, including songs about numbers, body parts, and two tigers. Teacher D sometimes also asked the pupils to practise in pairs or groups.

In Case E, the teacher led some games, including matching names and ages, a boys and girls competition and bingo to practise numbers. Teacher E used the Kagan mat (a resource used in primary schools) to ask the pupils to spin and take turns to say conversations, and designed a set of cards for the pupils to “pick the fan” and practise the topic on the card they picked. There was also an activity to cut and match conversations from worksheets. Teacher E also designed a set of PPT activities for the pupils to practise all the content they had previously learnt. Teacher E usually asked the pupils to do activities as pairs, tables or the whole class. It was noticed that teacher E always asked the pupils to reflect and feed back on their learning, regarding what the pupils felt confident about and what they did not. She always asked the pupils to give compliments to their partners after every pair/group/class practice, and to think of what they needed to improve in the class. There were also activities about making Chinese lanterns, door hangers and decorating biscuits for the topics of Chinese New Year and the zodiac. Teacher E also linked the lesson with other subjects. For example, she linked the Chinese

lanterns to some physics knowledge. The pupils seemed to enjoy their learning of Chinese very much.

It appears that the activities undertaken by the two primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) were considerably more varied and diverse than those of the other three teachers.

4.4.7. Assessment of pupils' learning

Assessment of the teaching and learning of Chinese was explored through the teacher interviews and lesson observations.

In the interviews, the teachers suggested that there was no formal assessment or record in any of the cases when this study was conducted. However, all the teachers said that they did informal assessment. Teacher A suggested that she was looking at different ways of assessing the pupils' learning of Chinese at that time. Teacher B hoped that the pupils would be able to achieve the Language Ladder breakthrough level by Year 6, and possibly reach Level 3, with some starting Level 4 at least in speaking and listening. Teacher B also suggested that assessing speaking and listening was achievable, but not reading and writing in Chinese, so the Language Ladder was good for assessment because it split the language skills. This was the only case where the teacher had specific performance goals over a longer period than half a term. Teacher C suggested that she tried to assess learning (informal assessment) all the time as much as she could, including videoing and photographing the pupils doing work, so that they could see their learning and do

some self-assessment. Teacher C also got the pupils to record and film each other's learning of Chinese for self and peer assessment. Teacher C hoped to use a voice recorder to make a broadcast next year and put it on iPods for the pupils to share, as well as for her own assessment of the pupils' abilities. Teacher D suggested that he was not allowed to do assessment in the school, and Teacher E suggested that they were not yet ready for formal assessment.

In the observed lessons, there was no obvious formal assessment and/or records, but the teachers very often questioned individual pupils, which may be a form of informal assessment suggested by the teachers in the interview. The teachers also walked around the classrooms to see the pupils' progress when they were doing worksheet/group work. Sometimes teachers C and E also asked the pupils to show them their writing of Chinese.

4.4.8. Teachers' use of the target language (Chinese) in class

Target language items used by the teachers were observed in the lessons, and are summarised in Table 22.

Some teachers used similar TL items. Teachers A, C, and D all greeted the pupils in Chinese and praised the pupils for being “very good” (很好) in Chinese. Teachers B, C, D and E all counted numbers to get the pupils ready. Teachers B and C both demonstrated the stroke orders in Chinese. However, it may be seen that teacher C used more varied TL items than the other teachers. In the observed lessons (Appendix 22), the three English teachers (Teachers B, C and E) used TL utterances

more often than the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D), and the Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) often translated the TL into English immediately afterwards.

| Teachers | Use of target language |
|----------|---|
| A | <p>Greeting the pupils in Chinese</p> <p>Register the children with their Chinese numbers.</p> <p>Praise with “很好” (very good) occasionally.</p> |
| B | <p>Counts 5 to 0 in Chinese to finish the activity.</p> <p>Demonstrates the stroke orders in Chinese.</p> <p>Give classroom command in Chinese with actions, including please listen, please quiet down, don’t talk.</p> |
| C | <p>Greeting the pupils in Chinese</p> <p>“Learn Chinese” sentences at the start.</p> <p>Praised the pupils 很好(very good), 棒极了(terrific) in Chinese.</p> <p>Demonstrates the stroke orders in Chinese.</p> <p>Registered the pupils by asking them 你好吗 (how are you)</p> <p>Counted 10-0 in Chinese to get the pupils ready and sit on the carpet.</p> <p>Ask the pupils to sit down in Chinese.</p> |
| D | <p>Greeting the pupils in Chinese</p> <p>Say goodbye in Chinese when lesson finish.</p> <p>Praised the pupils 很好(very good) in Chinese.</p> <p>Count numbers from 1-30 to get the pupils ready and sit on the carpet.</p> |
| E | <p>Counted 5-1 in Chinese to get the pupils ready for the next activity.</p> <p>Say goodbye in Chinese to another member of staff who came into the classroom in the middle.</p> <p>Say correct and incorrect in Chinese to respond to the pupils’ answers.</p> |

Table 22: The teachers’ use of the target languages

4.4.9. Teachers’ management of pupils’ behaviour

Teachers’ behaviour was observed in lessons. For more detail, see Appendix 22. In Case A, the teacher seemed to struggle slightly with classroom management, and much of the time in lessons was spent asking the pupils to quieten down. Teacher

A often corrected the pupils' pronunciation, and emphasised the tones and the accuracy of the pupils' writing. If the pupils got the answers wrong, teacher A usually gave them plenty of time to think, and then gave the pupils the right answers herself, or selected other pupils to help. Teacher A usually praised the pupils who did well by giving them table points. A couple of issues were inconsistent with what the teacher suggested in the interview. On the one hand, teacher A suggested that the least important thing in teaching Chinese was undue emphasis on correction, but she did frequently correct the pupils' pronunciation and tones during the observed lessons. On the other hand, teacher A believed that the most important thing in teaching Chinese was to inspire the pupils' interest. However, teacher A let the pupils spend 20 minutes on writing a single stroke and told off pupils who tried to write the whole character. This approach did not appear to be very positive in terms of inspiring the pupils' interest.

In Case B, the teacher also seemed to struggle with classroom management. Teacher B normally spent a lot of time in managing pupils' behaviour in lessons, and sometimes gave the pupils warnings. Some pupils seemed unhappy in the lessons. When the pupils made mistakes, teacher B usually asked them to think again, or gave the pupils the right answer, and then asked the pupils to repeat it. Teacher B also used table points to praise pupils who did well.

In Case C, the teacher seemed to have few problems with managing the classroom in the observed lessons. If pupils made mistakes, Teacher C usually asked other pupils to help. Teacher C occasionally corrected the pupils' writing of stroke order and tones, but still praised the pupils with stickers and points. Star stickers were

handed out to every pupil to praise them. Teacher C also showed some pupils' work or things they had found related to Chinese or China outside the lessons to the whole classroom. The pupils generally seemed very enthusiastic and engaged during the lessons.

In Case D, the teaching of Chinese was always supported by the school's class teacher. Therefore, the management of the classroom naturally became the class teacher's rather than teacher D's responsibility. The class teacher often encouraged the pupils to engage in the lessons, praised them and managed their behaviour. Besides observing the case class, the researcher also spent some time observing the teacher's lessons for Years 3 to 5 pupils who chose to learn Chinese as an option. For their lessons, teacher D taught on his own, and it was found that he also had some problems with managing pupils' behaviour, as the pupils sometimes just talked and laughed in the lesson. In the observed lessons in Case D, if the pupils made mistakes, teacher D usually reminded the pupils or asked other pupils to help. Teacher D also sometimes corrected the pupils' tones. At the end of each lesson, teacher D gave out five stickers, and let one pupil take home the Chinese mascot for the 2008 China Olympics (the pupils took turns in doing so).

In Case E, the teacher had no problem in managing the classroom in the observed lessons. If the pupils could not answer the questions, teacher E usually got the pupils to think again, or selected others instead. Teacher E occasionally corrected the pupils' pronunciation, and also praised the pupils often, asking the pupils to compliment each other. She also displayed the pupils' work in the classroom, and gave house points to pupils who did well.

4.4.10. Lesson routines

Lesson routines were also observed in the lessons. For see more details, see Appendix 22. There were strong and different patterns to the observed lessons in each case. In Case A, teacher A usually started the lesson by greeting the pupils in Chinese and registering the pupils with their numbers in Chinese (every pupil had a number to answer when his/her name was called out by the teacher). Then, the date and month of that day would usually be introduced to the pupils in Chinese. During the lessons, teacher A usually asked the pupils some questions about content they had previously learnt, mostly relating to numbers, besides introducing new content if there was any. In the last ten to twenty minutes or so, teacher A normally asked the pupils to copy some characters into their writing book, or/and let the pupils play a software game about tones and numbers on the interactive whiteboard. During the period of the case study, several features of the lessons were noticed: the majority of lessons focused on numbers; teacher A spent a lot of time emphasising tones and getting the pupils to practise writing; she often used a Chinese learning software package (Chinese Paradise) to revise the learning of numbers and tones; she usually introduced Chinese pinyin and characters together to the pupils, but she asked the pupils to write the characters of numbers more than other characters.

In Case B, the lessons usually started by exposing the pupils to characters, such as through doing matching activities, showing the characters/pictures with the interactive whiteboard, and worksheet exercises for the characters. During the lessons, teacher B always led the pupils in doing many activities to practise

greetings and the writing of characters. The pupils were frequently asked to read and write/copy the characters during the lessons.

In Case C, the lessons always started with a greeting in Chinese, and then all pupils read “现在我们说中文，现在我们听中文，现在我们写中文，现在我们读中文。跳一跳！（Now we’re going to speak Chinese, now we’re going to listen to Chinese, now we’re going to write Chinese, now we’re going to read Chinese. Jump and Jump）!” aloud in Chinese with teacher C, together with actions. During the lessons, teacher C used various materials and resources to introduce new content or/and recap on previous content.

In Case D, the lessons always started with greetings in Chinese, and then counting the numbers in Chinese until all the pupils were ready for the lesson. It seemed that what the teacher could do was limited by the length of the lessons, which were only 20 minutes. Teacher D often led the pupils in singing songs during the lesson, and occasionally asked the pupils to practise in groups. At the end of the lesson, he usually gave out stickers and a China Olympics mascot to pupils at the end of the lessons.

In Case E, the lessons always started by recapping the content of previous lessons. Teacher E used various activities in teaching Chinese, as discussed earlier.

4.4.11. Classroom/school displays of Chinese

Classroom and school settings relating to Chinese were observed during school visits and lesson observations (see Appendix 22), because each case had a different representation of Chinese and China in the environment, and this might convey messages about the importance and status of Chinese learning for pupils and staff.

Cases A and B were both conducted in School 1. There was little display of Chinese in the classrooms, but there were several displays in the shared areas of the school. Some Chinese paintings were hanging on the wall just opposite the reception; some Chinese New Year decorations were put on a board at the entrance of the school; in the corridor, there was a board of cards and posters about Chinese, including the story of middle Autumn festival and the Great Wall; and some Chinese masks made by the pupils were displayed on the wall of the stairs. The learning of Chinese was something on which the attention of pupils and visitors was focused and which the school seemed to value.

In School 2, China and Chinese were also very visible to pupils and teachers, although not in areas parents might visit. Some pictures taken when staff visited their Chinese partner school were displayed on the wall, as well as letters from pupils in their partner school, suggesting the school's pride in the link. In the classroom in Case C, there were many things relating to Chinese: a board displayed the pupils' and teacher's work relating to Chinese; there was a set of Chinese face masks, a big dragon made by the pupils, a large picture of Chinese strokes, a world map with "languages of the world", and a big sheet of paper saying "imagine the

world is in peace” in many languages including Chinese at the back of the classroom; a table displayed some Chinese artefacts and some work relating to China done by a girl in the class; and a map of China, the character 我 with its pinyin, and the characters 爱 and 学, the teacher’s name in Chinese, were also displayed on the wall.

In School 3 (Case D), nothing was displayed in the school or the classroom relating to Chinese. The subject seemed invisible to children and staff of classes from Years 3 to 6 who did not do Chinese, and no messages about value were given by the displays.

In School 4, there were many Chinese decorations in the classroom in Case E, including a card of 你好(hello) in both pinyin and characters; the characters for numbers from 1 to 10; a card of 我叫 (my name is), 你叫什么 (what’s your name?) in both pinyin and characters on the wall; the pupils’ lanterns, dragons/other zodiacs drawn by the pupils, and painted zodiacs on soft clay during the Chinese New Year period; some pictures of the lion and dragon dance of the Chinese New Year celebration, taken by pupils who had been to see it in Chinatown; a silk bag which the teacher had brought from China, a Chinese knot and a Chinese calendar. The class teacher demonstrated that China and Chinese were valued in the class, but this did not show in the rest of the school. However, this was impressive, as the teaching of Chinese had only been going for one month.

Cases C (School 2) and E (School 4) had more diverse displays in the classrooms or schools than the other three cases, which reflected the personal enthusiasm of

these teachers. Displays in the wider school tended to reflect support and enthusiasm by the head teacher, so Cases A and B (School 1) and Case C (School, 2) had the most displays in shared school areas.

4.5. Participants' Experience of Undertaking Chinese

The head teachers', teachers' and pupils' experiences of undertaking Chinese were explored mainly through interviews with them, as well as lesson observations and school visits.

4.5.1. Head teachers' experience of providing Chinese in schools

The head teachers' experience of providing Chinese was explored through interviews with them, including aspects of their perceptions about parental support in offering Chinese and the pupils' enjoyment, activities/events with their partner schools in China, if any, successful things they had achieved and barriers they had met in offering Chinese, their opinions about introducing Chinese pinyin and characters, their expectations of pupils in learning Chinese, their thoughts about the progress of teaching Chinese in their schools, the support they could receive and offer in teaching Chinese, and their opinions about undertaking Chinese compared with other languages. The findings are presented in Tables 23 to 32 in order to make it easier to identify the features of each case and to compare the five cases.

All the head teachers held a positive view about parental support (see Table 23). Head teachers C and D suggested that parents had started to see the benefit of

teaching Chinese to their children in future. Head teacher D also stressed that parents' support depended on their children's enjoyment, and the children's enjoyment was largely dependent on the Chinese culture they learnt.

| Head teacher | Head teachers' opinions of parents' support |
|--------------|---|
| A | Positive |
| C | Positive – parents start to see the importance of Chinese |
| D | Language based – children enjoyed less – parents were not happy |
| | Culture based – children enjoyed more – parents were supportive |
| | Some parents see the importance and benefit of teaching Chinese |
| E | Positive |

Table 23: Head teachers' opinions about parents' support

All the head teachers suggested that the pupils were enjoying their learning of Chinese. The novelty and differences of Chinese, Chinese culture and stories, and practical activities were perceived to be interesting for the pupils in their Chinese learning (see Table 24).

| Head teacher | Head teachers' opinions of pupils' enjoyment |
|-----------------|---|
| A (Cases A & B) | The pupils definitely enjoyed learning Chinese; younger ones enjoyed it more because of the novelty. |
| C | The pupils enjoyed it very much because of the differences, especially Chinese culture. |
| D | The pupils enjoyed learning Chinese more and more, especially when there was story aspect and they could do something more practical. |
| E | The pupils enjoyed learning Chinese. |

Table 24: Head teachers' opinions about pupils' enjoyment

Three schools (Schools 1, 2 and 3) had partner schools in China when the study was conducted. The activities carried out by head teachers with their partner schools are shown in Table 25. It may be seen that head teachers A and C in Schools 1 and 2 did similar things with their partner schools, including regular visits, lesson

observations, and pupils' exchange emails/letters. Head teacher A also used a DVD of the pupils in the partner school doing morning exercises for pupils in School 1 to do in their PE lessons. School 3 also had a partner school in China, but there was not much interaction between these two schools, except that some pupils and teachers of the partner school visited School 3 once and were involved in some performances with pupils in School 3. School 4 did not yet have a partner school, but head teacher E hoped to have one in the future.

| School | Activities with partner schools in China |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 (Cases A & B) | Regular visit; observe the lessons; pupils' email/letters; resources exchange (PE exercise DVD). |
| 2 (Case C) | Regular visit; observe the lessons; pupils' letters (mainly in English). |
| 3 (Case D) | Not many interactions; one visit from their partner school. |
| 4 (Case E) | No partner school yet, but would like to have one in the future. |

Table 25: Activities with partner schools

The head teachers suggested several different things they had achieved in teaching Chinese (see Table 26). There was one item in common between head teachers C and E: they both suggested that being able to make the pupils enjoy learning Chinese was a successful achievement. All the head teachers suggested that they would like to develop Mandarin teaching in their schools in the future, except head teacher D, who suggested that he was happy with the current way and vision of offering Chinese in the school and did not want to take it much beyond that level.

| Head teacher | Successful achievements |
|-----------------|---|
| A (Cases A & B) | Being able to get native speaker visitors for the pupils to meet |
| | Interactions with partner school |
| | Interactions with Confucius classroom |
| | Persuaded the link school to offer Chinese (did not happen though because no available teacher. Teacher A did not want to teach it because of the pressure of GCSE exams) |
| C | Children's engagement |
| | Children's enjoyment |
| | Offering Chinese in the curriculum |
| D | Children's confidence from learning it |
| | Children's basic Chinese |
| | Children's excitement at being global citizens |
| E | Children's enjoyment |
| | Teacher's enjoyment |

Table 26: Successes achieved in teaching Chinese

The barriers suggested by the head teachers were different, as shown in Table 27. However, all the head teachers were concerned about staffing if the current teacher left.

| Head teacher | Barriers to offering Chinese |
|-----------------|--|
| A (Cases A & B) | None. |
| C | Difficulty of the Chinese language. |
| | English people are "lazy" in learning other languages. |
| D | No qualified Chinese language teacher. |
| E | Lack of experience. |

Table 27: Barriers to offering Chinese

Table 28 shows the head teachers' opinions about introducing Chinese pinyin and characters. The head teachers did not necessarily learn Chinese or know Chinese themselves, so they did not have a very clear opinion about when pinyin and characters should be introduced to pupils. However, they all expressed their thoughts based on their limited knowledge of Chinese and their experience of

introducing Chinese in their schools. Two head teachers (Head teachers A and D) held similar opinions and suggested that pinyin was important to help the pupils to speak Chinese, and characters were interesting to the pupils. Head teacher D also said:

I think if they're learning about Chinese culture, then characters could be introduced, I think they would just be fascinated by them. They would begin to recognise some of them. So I think from the cultural point of view, I think that it's important to introduce characters. As they're getting older, in order for them to properly pronounce things more correctly and then you will need to enforce them to see pinyin as well (Head teacher interview, Case D).

| Head teacher | Pinyin | Characters |
|--------------|--|--|
| A | Important in order to speak Chinese | Fascinating to pupils |
| C | Comes first | Comes second – fun, but not sure how much time to spend on it |
| D | Important to learn in order to speak Chinese | As part of Chinese culture to interest pupils at the beginning |
| E | Don't know | Don't know |

Table 28: Head teachers' opinions about teaching pinyin and characters

The head teachers' expectations of pupils were similarly concerned with the pupils' awareness of and interest in Chinese and other world cultures (see Table 29).

| Head teacher | Expectations of pupils |
|--------------|--|
| A | To be able to speak some Chinese and feel confident in basic phrases. |
| | To have an interest in Chinese culture and history. |
| | To have a desire to visit China and to understand more about China. |
| | To understand more about the place of China in the world and in world history. |
| C | To be encouraged to think as global people. |
| | To be able to gain greater understanding as well as tolerance of other countries and cultures. |
| | To be more confident in learning other languages. |
| D | To be excited about learning other cultures and other languages. |
| E | To be aware of Chinese and have an interest in Chinese culture after they have learnt it. |

Table 29: Head teachers' expectations of pupils

All the head teachers were happy with the progress of Chinese in their schools. For details, see Table 30.

| Head teacher | Progress of Chinese |
|--------------|---|
| A | Felt it was progressing very well. |
| C | Difficult to judge as it was still new to the school |
| | Felt progress was not rapid, but steady |
| D | Happy with the way Chinese was taught – children have been excited and would be curious to take it as a language option later on. |
| E | Felt it had progressed well. |

Table 30: Head teachers' opinions on progress

Head teachers' suggestions about the support schools might gain in offering Chinese are shown in Table 31. The main source of support appeared to be the head teachers themselves in all five cases. Apart from this, the Confucius Institute, the Local Authority and their partner schools also offered some help (Head teachers A and C).

| Head teacher | Support that can be obtained |
|--------------|--|
| A | Partner school (visit, teaching, pupil contact, resources); |
| | LA (advisory teacher, funds for China visits) |
| | Confucius institute (Chinese New Year event) |
| | Head teacher (gives teacher extra time to plan, funds for conference, took the pupils to Chinese learning camp during vacations) |
| C | Partner school (visit, observing, pupil contact) |
| | Confucius institute (day events, Confucius classroom) |
| | Head teacher (investment, support) |
| D | Head teacher (class teacher to support, funded SSAT conference) |
| E | Head teacher (supports and funds the language teacher) |

Table 31: Support obtained by schools in undertaking Chinese

The head teachers were also asked to compare offering Chinese with other, mainly European, languages (see Table 32). Head teachers C and D felt that Chinese was harder to undertake because of the writing and pronunciation, but head teacher D suggested that it was easier to motivate pupils to learn Chinese. Head teachers A and E felt it was easier or no more difficult to offer Chinese, but head teacher E suggested that there was a lack of experience in terms of teaching Chinese, and head teacher A suggested that gaining more access to local Chinese native speakers from local universities would be helpful for teaching. With regard to pupils, head teachers A, C and E believed that Chinese was not difficult for pupils to learn because they did not have inhibitions. Only head teacher D felt that Chinese was harder for pupils to learn because it was new to them.

| Head teacher | For school | For pupils |
|--------------|--|--|
| A | Easier to offer, but more access to local Chinese native speakers from local universities would help support the teaching. | Chinese is not difficult for pupils to learn. |
| C | Harder, because of the writing and pronunciation of Chinese. | Easy, because they don't have inhibitions. |
| D | Harder to undertake, but easier to motivate the pupils. | Harder, because it is brand new to the pupils. |
| E | Not more difficult, except the lack of experience. | Not more difficult for pupils to learn. |

Table 32: Head teacher's opinions in comparing Chinese and European language provision

Another aspect noticed in interviews and informal chats with the head teachers was their concern about the two Chinese heritage teachers. Head teacher A seemed a little worried about teacher A's teaching, and suggested that teacher A's lessons might be a bit dry for the pupils. Head teacher A also praised teacher B's ability to design activities for the pupils to learn the language. Head teacher D indicated that it was important for the primary class teacher to work with teacher D together in teaching Chinese because the primary class teacher's experience was valuable. In contrast, with regard to the English primary class teachers, although their knowledge of Chinese was limited, their head teachers were happy with their teaching. Head teacher E even suggested that she was happy that the teacher should learn Chinese together with the pupils.

4.5.2. Teachers' experience of teaching Chinese in schools

The teachers' experience was explored through interviews with them, regarding their opinions about teaching Chinese compared with other languages and the choice of Chinese for primary schools, as well as their enjoyment and confidence

in teaching Chinese. The findings are summarised in Tables 33 to 36 across the cases for comparison.

The teachers' opinions about teaching Chinese compared with European languages are shown in Table 33. Teachers C and D thought that teaching Chinese was more difficult than teaching European languages in terms of progress and differences. Teachers A and B believed that it was not more difficult, and teacher A suggested that any language could be difficult to teach because the pupils did not have enough support from their parents. Teachers B and E thought that teaching Chinese had both easier aspects (tense, grammar, sentence structure, numbers) and harder aspects (measure words, nouns, pinyin, Chinese characters). Regarding whether the teachers thought Chinese was harder for the pupils to learn compared with European languages, apart from Teacher D who thought that Chinese was much harder for pupils to learn because of the differences, the other four teachers all believed that Chinese was not more difficult because the pupils were able to learn everything they were taught, and did not tend to find things hard unless they were told so, and they liked imitating without feeling embarrassed like secondary pupils. Teacher A also suggested that the pupils had the advantage of speaking Chinese with her in school, which might not be the case with other European languages.

| Case | For teacher to teach | For pupils to learn |
|-----------|---|---|
| Teacher A | Chinese is NOT more difficult to teach, and any language is difficult to teach, because there is not enough support from parents. | Chinese is not more difficult for pupils to learn, as long as there are experts in teaching Chinese. |
| Teacher B | Chinese is NOT more difficult to teach, but simpler in tense and grammar (consequently speaking and listening). Measure words make the nouns, reading and writing a bit more difficult. | Chinese may not be more difficult for pupils to learn, as they do not tend to find things hard unless they are told so. |
| Teacher C | Chinese is much harder to teach, because it is harder to progress due to the two language systems together (pinyin and characters). | Chinese is not more difficult for pupils to learn, as they learn whatever they have been taught. |
| Teacher D | Depends on the content; culture would not be difficult, but Chinese language might be more difficult. | Chinese is more difficult for pupils to learn, because Chinese is completely different from English. |
| Teacher E | Sentence structure and numbers are easier; pinyin and Chinese writing is harder; teacher is not confident, which causes difficulty. | Chinese is much easier for the pupils because they like to imitate and do not feel embarrassed like secondary pupils. |

Table 33: Teacher's opinions about teaching Chinese compared with other languages

Two teachers had also noticed some interesting points in terms of teaching Chinese compared with other European languages. Teacher B felt that there was a strong relationship between the pupils' ability in learning maths and Chinese – pupils who are better in maths are usually better in Chinese. Teacher C felt that in terms of differences from teaching European languages, usually girls who are good at literacy will be better at learning European languages, but in Chinese boys who are not good at English literacy seem better at Chinese. This is very interesting.

The teachers held slightly different views about the choice of Chinese in English primary schools (see Table 34). The global impact of China was mentioned by four teachers (Teachers A, B, D and E) as a good reason for choosing to teach Chinese. Teacher C suggested that the interesting factors brought by Chinese and its differences from English made Chinese a good choice, commenting that “Chinese itself made the teaching interesting, because of its culture and visual factors”

(Teacher final interview, Case C). However, the difference and novelty of Chinese, as well as the fact that China is so far away from the UK, may cause challenges for schools offering Chinese, including lack of support from home, resourcing and perceptions, the teachers' limited Chinese language, the characters and pronunciation, as well as getting other staff to learn/know Chinese.

| Case | Good choice | Difficult choice |
|------|---|--|
| A | Global economy | Lack of back-up from home |
| B | Global economy | Resourcing and perceptions were the challenges |
| C | Interesting elements (characters); good for the pupils' concentration, logical thinking and discipline. | China is far away Teacher's limited knowledge of Chinese language |
| D | China's influence | Chinese characters and pronunciation |
| E | China's influence; Chinese is different | Getting other staff to learn Chinese |

Table 34: Teachers' opinions about choosing Chinese for primary pupils

The teachers enjoyed different things about teaching Chinese, though teachers A and B both suggested that they enjoyed seeing the pupils progress, as shown in Table 35.

| Teacher | What the teachers enjoy about teaching Chinese |
|---------|--|
| A | Seeing the pupils' positive responses |
| | Seeing the pupils getting interested in learning Chinese |
| | Seeing the pupils making progress |
| B | Helping the pupils solve problems in learning Chinese |
| | Seeing the pupils realising their achievement |
| C | The fun teaching approach |
| D | Playing with the pupils |
| | Having flexibility in the teaching |
| E | Learning with the pupils together, helps the pupils to understand how people are lifelong learners |
| | Learning Chinese culture |

Table 35: Teachers' enjoyment in teaching Chinese

The teachers felt confident or unconfident about different aspects of the teaching (see Table 36). The three British heritage teachers (Teachers B, C and E) all suggested that speaking/tones was what they felt least confident about in teaching Chinese. Interestingly, Teacher C mentioned that in other languages she normally felt that listening and speaking were her most confident elements, but it was different in Chinese. As a native speaking teacher without an English primary training background, teacher D felt more confident about his communication skills than the other native speaking teachers because he had been working closely with schools for his own children over the past ten years, and had also attended several training courses offered by the primary school. Therefore, teacher D felt that he had a better understanding of the differences between teaching Chinese in China and in the UK, but he was worried that he lacked knowledge of the English curriculum because he was not trained as a primary teacher in the UK. Teacher E was not confident about her writing of Chinese characters and the tones of pinyin, but she suggested that “it’s nice I can model it for the children that I’m not confident in my tones and I’m gonna double check. And then for them to see if you’re doing it and then they can do it themselves” (Teacher interview, Case E).

| Teacher | Most confident | Least confident |
|---------|---|--|
| A | Teaching skills. | Chinese pinyin. |
| B | Teaching the writing of Chinese. | Teaching the speaking of Chinese. |
| C | Chinese culture. | Listening and speaking Chinese. |
| D | Communication skills with English children. | Knowledge of English curriculum. |
| E | Being able to build activities for the pupils to use the language, and to find out new things for the pupils. | Writing Chinese characters. Tones of pinyin (speaking). |

Table 36: Areas in which teachers are more or less confident

4.5.3. Pupils' experiences of learning Chinese

The pupils' experiences of learning Chinese were explored mainly through Likert-scale statements in the pupil questionnaire and group interviews, with some supporting evidence from lesson observations. The pupils' enjoyment, preference between Chinese culture and language, opinions about the teachers' support, their learning, Chinese compared with other languages, their interest in learning Chinese, and what they perceived as successes, rewards and difficulties were all investigated.

As discussed in Section 3.7.2, the pupils' answers to the Likert-scale statements were analysed using SPSS, to calculate the frequency of pupils' agreement and disagreement case by case, and the percentage responses for each statement were tabulated (see example at Appendix 19). In this section, responses to statements relating to the pupils' learning experiences are presented in Tables 37 to 56 for comparison across the five cases, together with the pupils' answers to related interview questions. As discussed in Chapter 3, because of differences in age and teaching between Case D (KS1) and the other four cases (KS2), some issues were not examined in Case D. The percentage figures in the tables in this section refer to the percentage of pupils who suggested relevant answers in each case. The fractions in brackets refer to the actual number of pupils who suggested related answers out of the total number of pupils.

Firstly, what the pupils enjoyed and did not enjoy about learning Chinese generally was explored through the pupil questionnaire. The pupils' answers were coded and categorised within each case. Again, as with the pupils' answers regarding their

motivations for learning Chinese (see Section 4.2.3), the codes and categories were not pre-set but arose from the pupils' answers; they are not exactly the same across cases, although there are some common ones. Hence, the data for each case are again presented separately below in five tables (Tables 37 to 41) to provide a picture of the pupils' answers for each case, while at the same time showing differences as well as similarities between the cases. The numbers refer to the number of times an answer appeared under the relevant category.

| Enjoy | Number | Don't enjoy | Number |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Writing the characters | 11 | Tones/speaking | 16 |
| Culture | 8 | Nothing | 6 |
| Speaking/tones | 8 | Don't want to learn | 3 |
| Numbers | 5 | Hard words/sounds | 4 |
| Game | 1 | Repeatedly learning numbers | 1 |
| Listening to teacher's Chinese | 1 | Everything | 1 |
| Impressing parents | 1 | | |
| Nothing | 1 | | |

Table 37: Pupils' enjoyment – Questionnaire Case A

| Enjoy | Number | Don't enjoy | Number |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Nothing | 10 | Everything | 12 |
| Games | 7 | Too much work writing characters | 6 |
| Writing the characters | 6 | The work they get in lessons | 3 |
| Working with partners | 2 | Speaking/tones | 3 |
| Writing pinyin | 2 | Hard words/sounds | 2 |
| Speaking | 1 | Nothing | 2 |
| Culture | 1 | Teacher | 1 |
| Chinese names | 1 | Repeated learning | 1 |
| Interactive activity | 1 | | |

Table 38: Pupils' enjoyment – Questionnaire Case B

| Enjoy | Number | Don't enjoy | Number |
|---|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Writing the characters | 13 | Nothing | 16 |
| Fun activities | 8 | Hard words/sounds | 2 |
| Calligraphy lesson | 5 | Repeated learning | 2 |
| The teacher | 4 | Tones | 2 |
| Everything | 4 | Writing characters | 1 |
| Tones/pinyin | 4 | | |
| Speaking | 2 | | |
| Culture | 2 | | |
| Homework on exploring China | 2 | | |
| Using the iPod to listen to Chinese music | 2 | | |
| Teaching other year groups | 1 | | |
| Songs | 1 | | |

Table 39: Pupils' enjoyment – Questionnaire Case C

| Enjoy | Number | Don't enjoy | Number |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| All of it. | 11 | Nothing | 24 |
| Songs. | 5 | Everything | 2 |
| Speaking | 4 | Speaking Chinese | 1 |
| Culture | 3 | | |
| Listening to teacher's Chinese | 2 | | |
| Nothing | 2 | | |
| Learning about characters | 1 | | |
| Numbers | 1 | | |
| Story | 1 | | |
| Games | 1 | | |
| Learning what happened | 1 | | |
| Watching the videos | 1 | | |
| Sticker from the teacher | 1 | | |

Table 40: Pupils' enjoyment – Questionnaire Case D

| Enjoy | Number | Don't enjoy | Number |
|--|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Chinese music/music lesson | 6 | Nothing | 13 |
| Chinese art and craft (making dragon/zodiac/lantern) | 6 | The fan and pick game | 2 |
| Writing the characters | 6 | Speaking Chinese | 1 |
| Learning Chinese numbers | 5 | Spending whole lesson on one thing | 1 |
| Everything | 5 | | |
| Games | 5 | | |
| Chinese culture and zodiac | 5 | | |
| Speaking Chinese | 4 | | |
| Chinese lesson (inspire me to do more) | 2 | | |
| Chinese calligraphy | 2 | | |
| Watching videos | 1 | | |
| Singing Chinese song | 1 | | |
| Fan and pick activity | 1 | | |
| Learning about pandas | 1 | | |

Table 41: Pupils' enjoyment – Questionnaire Case E

It may be seen that the pupils' answers varied across the cases. Although some categories appear in more than one case, the numbers of pupils who suggested relevant answers were different. Again, this may be related to unique features of each case. Therefore, the dominant categories appearing in the questionnaire responses as enjoyable and not enjoyable for each case are tabulated (Tables 42 and 43) for comparison (under columns Q), in order to show more clearly variations between cases, as well as key factors that were enjoyed and not enjoyed by pupils learning Chinese. The answers suggested by the pupils in their group interviews were coded and categorised in the same way, since the interview questions were the same as those in the questionnaire (see Tables 42 and 43 under columns I). Because the pupils interviewed had already been sampled, and the number was manageable, their answers are all included in the tables. The meanings of the category codes are explained beneath the tables. The percentage figures next to the codes refer to the

percentage of pupils in each case who suggested answers relating to the categories in the questionnaires and interviews. The fractions in brackets after the percentages refer to the actual number of pupils who suggested related answers out of the total number of the pupils who submitted questionnaires or were selected for interviews. Note that a single pupil might suggest more than one category in the answer. Similar categories across the five cases are marked or highlighted in the same colour.

In all five cases the writing of Chinese characters was suggested by many pupils as enjoyable. The pupils in Case D were not writing Chinese characters while the case study was conducted, but three pupils in the interviews suggested that they had done it a little before with their previous Chinese teacher, and had enjoyed it. These three pupils also said that they wished they could learn some characters with teacher D as well. Some pupils in Case A suggested that they enjoyed writing Chinese characters because it was interesting, different and challenging. One pupil said, “you can see how the word ... the shape can represent the actual word”, and another pupil commented that “English letters and words are quite boring, and then the Chinese is quite complicated and interesting” (Pupil interviews, Case A). The learning of Chinese numbers and Chinese culture were also perceived as enjoyable by some pupils in cases where the teachers had introduced these to them.

| Case A | | Case B | | Case C | | Case D | | Case E | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I |
| WR 34% (11/32) | GAM 56% (9/16) | NOT 30% (10/33) | Dislike 50% (6/12) | WR 43% (13/30) | Calli 33.3% (4/12) | EVE 37% (11/30) | SONG 41.7% (5/12) | Music 32% (6/19) | CNY 25% (3/12) |
| CUL 25% (8/32) | WR 31% (5/16) | Gam 21% (7/33) | Card 16.7% (2/12) | Activi 26% (8/30) | Activi 25% (3/12) | Song 17% (5/30) | WR 25% (3/12) | WR 32% (6/19) | NUM 25% (3/12) |
| SP 25% (8/32) | NUM 12.5% (2/16) | WR 18% (6/33) | Part 16.7% (2/12) | Calli 17% (5/30) | WR 25% (3/12) | SP 13% (4/30) | NUM 8.3% (1/12) | Crafts 32% (6/19) | EVE 16.7% (2/12) |
| NUM 16% (5/32) | SP 6.3% (1/16) | | Action 16.7% (2/12) | Tea 13% (4/30) | NUM 25% (3/12) | CUL 10% (3/30) | EVE 8.3% (1/12) | NUM 26% (5/19) | WR 16.7% (2/12) |
| | | | | EVE 13% (4/30) | CNY 16.7% (2/12) | | | EVE 26% (5/19) | Music 16.7% (2/12) |
| | | | | SP 13% (4/30) | EVE 8.3% (1/12) | | | Gam 26% (5/19) | CUL 16.7% (2/12) |
| | | | | | CUL 16.7% (1/12) | | | CUL 26% (5/19) | Part 8.3% (1/12) |

Table 42: What the pupils enjoy in lessons (questionnaires and interviews, cross-case)

WR: writing Chinese characters

CUL: Chinese culture

NUM: numbers in Chinese

SP: speaking Chinese and its tones Music: Chinese music lesson

EVE: everything of the lessons

Cards: the activity of choosing the right mini character cards when heard

Part: working with their partners

Dislike: don't like their Chinese lessons

CNY: Chinese New Year decorations and hand craft activities of making zodiac door hangers, lanterns etc.

Calli: Chinese calligraphy

Tea: the teacher

Song: singing the Chinese songs

Craft: Chinese art and crafts activities

Action: speaking the characters with actions

Activi: the activities in the lessons

GAM: games

NOT: nothing

It was notable that pupils in Cases C and E suggested various things they enjoyed in the lessons, many of which related to Chinese culture, such as learning about the Chinese New Year and Chinese calligraphy. Three pupils in Case C, in particular, suggested in their questionnaire that they liked the teacher. In striking contrast, many pupils in Case B suggested in their questionnaires and interviews that they did not like learning Chinese.

What the pupils did not enjoy in their Chinese lessons was similarly compared. As much fewer categories appeared in answers relating to this question compared with the previous question, they are all tabulated for comparison (Table 43).

| Case A | | Case B | | Case C | | Case D | | Case E | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I | Q | I |
| Tone 50% (16/32) | SP class 12.5% (2/16) | EVE 36% (12/33) | Tea 50% (6/12) | NOT 53% (16/30) | NOT 100% (12/12) | NOT 80% (24/30) | NOT 58.3% (7/12) | NOT 68% (13/19) | NOT 100% (12/12) |
| NOT 19% (6/32) | Tea 6% (1/16) | Work of WR (6/33) | Work of WR 25% (3/12) | Hard 7% (2/30) | | EVE 7% (2/30) | SONG 8.3% (1/12) | GAM 11% (2/19) | |
| Hard 12.5% (4/32) | | Work 9% (3/33) | Lesson 16.7% (2/12) | Repeat 7% (2/30) | | Tone 3% (1/30) | EVE 8.3% (1/12) | Tone 5% (1/19) | |
| Repeat 3% (1/32) | | SP 9% (3/33) | | Tone 6% (2/30) | | | | Repeat 5% (1/19) | |
| EVE 3% (1/32) | | Hard 6% (2/33) | | WR 3% (1/30) | | | | | |
| | | NOT 6% (2/33) | | | | | | | |
| | | Tea 3% (1/33) | | | | | | | |
| | | Repeat 3% (1/33) | | | | | | | |

Table 43: What pupils enjoy least in lessons (questionnaires and interviews, cross-case)

Tone: tones or speaking

Hard: the hard words and/or sounds of Chinese

Work: the work the pupils did in the lessons

Work of WR: the writing work the pupils did in the lessons

Hard: the hardness of Chinese
enjoy

SP class: speaking Chinese in front of the whole class

Repeat: repeatedly learning the same thing

EVE: the pupils do not enjoy everything in the lesson

Tea: the teacher

SONG: sing the songs

GAM: the game in lessons

NOT: nothing the pupils do not

It may be seen that pupils in different cases suggested different things that they did not enjoy about learning Chinese. Many pupils in Case A did not enjoy learning Chinese tones and speaking Chinese. It was noticed that one pupil in the interview suggested that he did not like the teacher, especially when the teacher shouted at them. Pupils in Case B did not much enjoy their learning of Chinese and suggested more things they did not like about the lessons than their peers in other cases. In the interviews, some pupils in Case B gave reasons why they did not enjoy the three things they mentioned: the teacher talked too much, took their mistakes too seriously, and often put their names on amber (public reprimands in the school hierarchy of sanctions); the writing of Chinese characters was hard and they wrote the characters all the time; the lessons were boring and not fun. In the interviews, none of the pupils in Cases C and E mentioned anything they did not enjoy, nor did the majority mention anything they did not enjoy in the questionnaires. In both the questionnaires and the interviews, the majority of pupils in Case D also suggested that there was nothing they did not enjoy. However, two common factors were suggested by pupils in some cases: repeated learning was mentioned by some pupils in Cases A, B, C and E, and the hard words and sounds of Chinese were suggested by some pupils in Cases A, B and C.

The pupils' preferences for speaking, listening, reading or writing Chinese were explored in the interviews. Their answers are summarised and compared in Table 44. Some pupils gave reasons why they liked or disliked the items they suggested, and these are shown in brackets.

| Case | Most favourite | Least favourite |
|------|--|--|
| A | Writing | Tones and speaking (hard to get) |
| B | Writing (like art; different from English) | Reading (difficult to understand) |
| | Speaking (want to be able to speak Chinese; easier) | |
| C | Writing (interesting) | Listening (dislike sitting and listening) |
| | Listening (can tell the tones) | Reading (difficult) |
| | Speaking (tones; the teacher speaks Chinese) | Speaking (hard to pronounce; embarrassed if speaks wrong) |
| D | N/A | |
| E | Writing (like art; feel proud to achieve something that they thought they could not) | Listening (has to listen very carefully to be able to imitate the sound) |
| | | Writing (difficult) |

Table 44: Pupils' views about speaking, listening, reading and writing Chinese

It may be seen that writing was the pupils' favourite in all cases where they learnt to write Chinese characters, and speaking was also suggested by some pupils in Cases B and C. The pupils suggested different aspects they did not like very much in different cases. The pupils in Case A did not like speaking, the pupils in Case B did not like reading, the pupils in Case C did not like listening, reading and speaking, and the pupils in Case E did not like writing and listening. Moreover, all the pupils in Case E suggested in their interview that pinyin was easier to learn than Chinese characters, but most still felt that they enjoyed characters more.

The pupils' opinions about their learning of pinyin and characters were explored through Likert-scale statements in the questionnaire (see Table 45).

| Statement | Case A | | Case B | | Case C | | Case E | |
|--|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| | DA | A | DA | A | DA | A | DA | A |
| I like learning to speak Chinese. | 50 | 43.7 | 57.6 | 39.4 | 10 | 86.7 | 10.5 | 89.5 |
| Speaking Chinese is easy. | 90.6 | 3.1 | 72.7 | 24.3 | 56.7 | 40.0 | 68.5 | 21.0 |
| I like learning Chinese pinyin. | 40.6 | 53.2 | 54.5 | 42.4 | 6.7 | 90.0 | 21.0 | 73.7 |
| Chinese pinyin is difficult to learn. | 21.9 | 71.9 | 57.6 | 36.4 | 70.0 | 26.7 | 47.4 | 52.6 |
| I like learning the tones of Chinese pinyin. | 62.5 | 31.2 | 63.6 | 33.3 | 16.7 | 80.0 | 10.5 | 79.0 |
| The tones of Chinese pinyin are easy to learn. | 84.4 | 9.4 | 57.6 | 36.3 | 16.7 | 76.6 | 26.3 | 68.4 |
| I like writing Chinese. | 43.8 | 50.1 | 51.5 | 42.5 | 10.0 | 86.7 | 10.5 | 89.5 |
| It's easy to write Chinese characters. | 78.1 | 15.6 | 66.6 | 30.3 | 13.3 | 83.3 | 10.5 | 89.5 |

Table 45: Pupils' opinions about pinyin and characters

DA: disagree and strongly disagree

A: agree and strongly agree

The figures refer to the percentage of pupils. In order to make the comparison clear, positive figures are highlighted in green and negative figures are highlighted in yellow. As the Chinese lessons in Case D focused on culture rather than language, the questionnaire for pupils in Case D did not include these statements.

Pupils in Cases C and E were more optimistic about all aspects of their learning of Chinese than their peers in Cases A and B. In particular, most pupils in Case A found speaking Chinese and the tones of Chinese pinyin difficult. This is consistent with their answers about what they did not enjoy, as discussed above.

The pupils' preferences for Chinese language and culture were examined in both questionnaires and interviews. The percentage of pupils who suggested in the questionnaire that they preferred learning Chinese culture to learning Chinese language are shown in Table 46 for comparison.

| Case | Questionnaire | Interview | Note |
|------|---------------|--------------|--|
| A | 75.0% | 56% (9/16) | N/A |
| B | 81.8% | 100% (12/12) | Didn't learn culture |
| C | 50.0% | 50% (6/12) | Some pupils felt the culture could be learnt by themselves at home |
| D | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| E | 31.6% | 33.3% (4/12) | Many pupils liked both |

Table 46: Pupils who preferred Chinese culture to Chinese language

Many pupils in this study preferred learning Chinese culture to learning Chinese language, but the percentage is slightly different across the cases. It is interesting that where pupils did not have the opportunity to learn much about Chinese culture (Case B), more of them preferred learning Chinese culture to language, while pupils who had many opportunities to learn about Chinese culture (Cases C and E) seemed have a more balanced view towards the two.

Similarly, pupils' perceptions about their teachers' support were explored through both questionnaires and interviews. The percentages of pupils who suggested that their teachers were supportive are summarised in Table 47, with some explanations and reasons.

| Case | Questionnaire | Interview |
|------|---------------|--|
| A | 46.9% | 37.5% (6/16) – because she knows Chinese |
| B | 45.5% | 50% (6/12) – the other half felt not because they thought the lessons were not fun |
| C | 96.7% | 83% (10/12) – the others felt the teacher was sometimes strict |
| D | 80.0% | 100% (12/12) |
| E | 94.7% | 100% (12/12) |

Table 47: Pupils who thought their teachers were supportive

Most pupils in Cases C, D and E felt their teachers were helpful, while many pupils in Cases A and B disagreed. Moreover, 62.5 per cent of pupils in the group

interviews for Case A suggested that they preferred to learn Chinese from their class teacher because they could get more help if the teacher was learning with them together, and it was difficult to understand teacher A as she was not a native English speaker. One pupil said, “It doesn’t matter if she [class teacher] knows Chinese as good as the language teacher” (pupil interview, Case A). Although most pupils in Case D felt their teacher was helpful, one pupil expressed a similar opinion about teacher D’s English.

The pupils were also asked to evaluate their learning of Chinese, in both questionnaires and interviews. In the questionnaires, most pupils in all five cases agreed that they were good at learning Chinese. However, the answers were slightly different in the interviews. Therefore, only the interview answers are compared here (see Table 48). It seems that the pupils in Case C felt most confident about learning Chinese.

| Case | Good at it | Not sure | In the middle | Sometimes | Not good at it |
|------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| A | 0 | 19% (3/16) | 6% (1/16) | 50% (8/16) | 0 |
| B | 25% (3/12) | 50% (6/12) | 0 | 17% (2/12) | 8% (1/12) |
| C | 67% (8/12) | 0 | 25% (3/12) | 0 | 8% (1/12) |
| D | N/A | | | | |
| E | 33% (4/12) | 33% (4/12) | 17% (2/12) | 0 | 17% (2/12) |

Table 48: Pupils’ opinions about their learning of Chinese

The pupils’ were asked to compare Chinese and European languages in the interviews, and the dominant answers for each case are presented in Table 49.

| Case | Comparison with European language |
|------|---|
| A | All pupils (16/16) felt Chinese is more difficult |
| B | 67% (8/12) of the pupils felt Chinese is harder than French (difficult to pronounce without pinyin) |
| C | 50% (6/12) of the pupils felt Chinese is harder than French and other European languages (similar to English) |
| D | N/A |
| E | 58% (7/12) of the pupils felt Chinese is harder than European languages |

Table 49: Pupils' comparisons of Chinese and European languages

It may be seen that the majority of pupils in all five cases felt that Chinese was more difficult than European languages. Some pupils gave the reason that European languages are similar to English and can easily be worked out, while Chinese is very different from European languages. In particular, some pupils in Case C suggested that it was difficult to tell how to pronounce characters without pinyin, and the characters had to be written in a specific way, which made learning Chinese more difficult than European languages.

The pupils' interest in learning Chinese and their potential decisions to carry on learning Chinese at secondary school were explored through both questionnaires and interviews. The findings are presented in Tables 50 and 51. Positive figures are marked in green, and negative in red.

| Cases | Pupils' interest in learning Chinese | |
|-------|---|--------------------------|
| | Interview | Questionnaire |
| A | 44% (7/16) were more interested | 66% were more interested |
| | 12.5% (2/16) were less interested (one said because of the teacher) | 28% were less interested |
| B | 50% (6/12) were more interested | 39% were more interested |
| | 42% (5/12) were less interested (because of the teacher) | 57% were less interested |
| C | 100% (12/12) more interested | 90% were more interested |
| D | 58% (7/12) were more interested | 76% were more interested |
| | 42% (5/12) were less interested (boring) | 16% were less interested |
| E | 83% (10/12) were more interested | 94% were more interested |

Table 50: Pupils' interest in learning Chinese

It can be seen that pupils in Cases C and E had the highest interest in learning Chinese. Pupils in Case B had the lowest interest, and five pupils in their interview suggested that they no longer liked learning Chinese because of the teacher. Many pupils in Case D also felt less interested, and some gave the reason that it was boring just to sit down and listen without different activities or learning about writing Chinese characters.

| Cases | Pupils' intentions to carry on learning Chinese at secondary school | |
|-------|---|-----------------|
| | Interview | Questionnaire |
| A | 69% (11/16) wanted to carry on | 28.2% wanted to |
| B | 0% (0/12) of the pupils wanted to carry on | 12.1% wanted to |
| C | 100% (12/12) wanted to carry on | 83.3% wanted to |
| D | 17% (2/12) wanted to carry on | 20.1% wanted to |
| E | 100% (12/12) wanted to carry on | 84.2% wanted to |

Table 51: Intentions to learn Chinese at secondary school

Again, the majority of pupils in Cases C and E suggested, in both questionnaires and interviews, that they would like to continue learning Chinese at secondary school. The reasons given by three pupils in the high ability interview group in Case C included that they had learnt a lot of Chinese already and if they did not carry on

it was pointless to learn Chinese now, and that they wanted to go to China in the future. In Case A, although few pupils suggested in their questionnaires that they would like to carry on learning Chinese at secondary school, the majority suggested in the interviews that they would like to do so and gave the reasons that Chinese was fascinating and intriguing, and learning Chinese could help them travel around the world and visit China, as well as that Chinese was a hard language which needed to be learnt continuously. Very few pupils in Case D, and especially Case B, wanted to continue learning Chinese at secondary school, and the reasons they gave in their interviews were that they would like to learn something new, or they felt bored learning only one language.

This is different from the findings of another PhD student (Richardson, 2013), who studied language transition in English schools. Her findings were that most Year 6 pupils indicated that they would have preferred to study a different language in Year 7 from the one they were studying in Year 6. It seems that, in Chinese, the pupils' interest in continuing the learning may be dependent on something other than just the language itself, because there are huge differences between the cases in this study. This will be discussed and related to possible influential factors in the next chapter.

Whether the pupils did anything to learn Chinese outside their classrooms was also explored through both questionnaires and interviews (see Table 52). Positive figures are marked in green.

| Case | Interview | Questionnaire |
|------|---|--------------------|
| A | 50% (8/16): Chinese restaurant | 37.5% suggested so |
| B | 33% (4/12): Chinese restaurant, internet search for names | 33.3% suggested so |
| C | 75% (9/12): Chinese restaurant, internet research on China, copying characters, homework, taught families, handicraft | 53.3% suggested so |
| D | N/A | |
| E | 42% (5/12): internet search for China, Chinese restaurant, Chinese friend's house | 68.5% suggested so |

Table 52: Pupils' learning of Chinese outside classroom

It appears that pupils in Case C did more Chinese learning outside the classroom than their peers in other cases, followed by pupils in Cases A and E. Only a few pupils in Case B suggested that they did some Chinese learning outside the lessons. The pupils mentioned speaking Chinese in Chinese restaurants, internet searching for China, and lesson- and homework-related activities.

The pupils were asked in the interviews what might make them feel successful in learning Chinese. Their answers varied slightly but there were several similarities (see Table 53).

| Case | Things that made the pupils feel successful |
|------|--|
| A | Being able to write Chinese characters |
| | Being praised by the teacher (less able) |
| | Getting the answers right (more able) |
| | Being able to follow the teacher |
| | Being able to understand Chinese |
| B | Getting something right in the lessons |
| C | Working hard to learn Chinese |
| | Work being shown to the class |
| | Writing Chinese in the calligraphy lesson |
| | Teaching families or someone else Chinese |
| D | Being able to get the stickers |
| | Being able to sing the songs |
| | Being able to count in Chinese |
| E | Being able to accomplish a language that they thought they could not |
| | Teaching families |
| | Being able to speak Chinese to Chinese people |
| | Being confident because of learning Chinese |

Table 53: Things that made pupils feel successful in learning Chinese

Being able to get the answers right and being praised by the teacher were factors suggested by pupils in all cases except Case E. Apart from this, teaching families/others and being able to write Chinese characters were mentioned more than once.

The pupils' reactions in the lessons and what they thought about making mistakes were observed in the lessons and explored in the pupil interviews. The findings are summarised in Table 54.

| Case | Responding to teacher and making mistakes | Responding in lessons |
|------|---|--|
| A | 12/16 willing to respond | Active |
| | Pupils of the low ability group afraid of making mistakes | |
| | High ability group not afraid of making mistakes | |
| B | High ability group willing to respond and not afraid of making mistakes | Most of the pupils were active, more at the beginning than at the end. |
| | Pupils of low and medium ability groups were opposite | |
| C | All willing to respond | Very active. Boys seemed more active in general. |
| | None afraid of making mistakes | |
| D | 7/12 willing to respond | Active |
| | 5/12 willing to respond sometimes (4 from low ability group) | |
| | Half were not afraid of making mistakes, the other half were afraid. | |
| E | All willing to respond | Active |
| | None afraid of making mistakes. | |

Table 54: Pupils' reaction in lessons and their opinions about making mistakes

In general, the pupils seemed to be active in lessons. However, they held slightly different opinions about answering the teachers and making mistakes in class. With the two English primary teachers (Teachers C and E), all the pupils suggested that they were willing to respond to the teacher and were not afraid of making mistakes, while with the other three teachers (Teachers A, B and D) there were obvious differences between the high-ability and low-ability pupil groups identified by the class teachers. Pupils in more able groups tended to suggest that they were not afraid of making mistakes, but pupils in less able groups tended to say that they were afraid of making mistakes.

What the pupils perceived as difficulties was explored through their group interviews (see Table 55). Reading, tones and characters were perceived by some pupils as difficulties in learning Chinese.

| Case | Difficulties in learning Chinese |
|------|---|
| A | The tones of Chinese pinyin. |
| B | Some pupils thought reading Chinese was difficult. |
| | Some pupils thought it was difficult to pronounce Chinese without pinyin. |
| C | Some pupils thought reading Chinese is a bit difficult. |
| D | N/A |
| E | Some pupils thought Chinese characters were more difficult than pinyin. |

Table 55: Difficulties in learning Chinese perceived by pupils

What the pupils would like to have as rewards for learning Chinese was also explored in their interviews (see Table 56). Pupils in different cases suggested several common things, including being able to go to China one day, being able to learn Chinese in the future and being able to speak Chinese in the future. These were suggested by pupils who said they liked learning Chinese.

| Case | Rewards pupils would like to have |
|------|---|
| A | The opportunity of learning Chinese |
| | Being able to go to China one day |
| | Being able to teach parents |
| | Chinese DVDs/medal etc. |
| B | Being able to speak Chinese |
| | Being able to go to China |
| | Having some Chinese chopsticks |
| C | Being able to go to China |
| | Being able to learn Chinese in an advanced class when go to college |
| | Being able to surprise the families |
| | Prize from the teacher |
| | Being able to speak Chinese |
| D | Being able to get the stickers |
| E | Being praised by mum |
| | Being able to learn Chinese |
| | Being able to go to China |
| | Being able to win the Panda Pals competition |

Table 56: Rewards pupils would like to have for learning Chinese

4.6. How these Issues May Relate to Each Other

Some relationships between the issues presented above were noticed in this study. Firstly, the teachers' subject knowledge seemed to be heavily influenced by their language, cultural and training background, as shown in Section 4.3. Moreover, aspects of the teachers' teaching, such as planning, teaching methods, beliefs and use of the target language, were also related to their background and subject knowledge. In teaching Chinese in particular, teachers with different backgrounds and subject knowledge seemed to have different priorities between pinyin and characters, and varying preferences for emphasising speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as the choice of Chinese culture.

Secondly, there seems to be a strong link between teachers' teaching and pupils' learning experiences and motivation. As may be seen from the findings, pupils who were more interested in learning Chinese (Cases C and E) generally enjoyed their lessons more than their peers. In contrast, pupils who were less interested in learning Chinese (Case B) seemed not to enjoy their lessons much. The teaching varied considerably between the teachers.

Moreover, head teachers' perceptions seemed to have some impact on the provision of Chinese. Where head teachers were passionate about developing the teaching of Chinese (A, C and E), Chinese was or would be offered across the whole school; where the head teacher held a reserved view about the undertaking of Chinese, few moves were being made to develop it.

Last, but not least, pupils' expectations also seemed crucial to their experiences. It may be seen from the findings of this study that where pupils felt their learning was fun, they had more positive views of and interest in learning Chinese, whereas pupils held the most negative views and interest if they felt the lessons were boring.

4.7. Summary

This chapter has summarised features of the five cases in this study and related the findings to the research questions. The five case studies were conducted in four English primary schools. Cases A and B were both conducted in School 1 but with two different teachers (a language teacher of Chinese who was also of Chinese heritage with English primary QTS, and a temporary class teacher who was also a language specialist) and two different classes of Year 5 pupils. School 1 was the only school that offered Chinese across the whole school at that time. Case C was carried out in School 2, with a British primary class teacher and a class of Year 4 pupils. It was the only class that was learning Chinese regularly in School 2 at that time, but soon after the completion of this study Chinese started to be offered across the whole school within curriculum time. Case D was conducted in School 3, with a native Chinese speaking teacher without English QTS but whose lessons were always supported by the class teacher in the school, and a class of Year 2 pupils – the only case that involved KS1 pupils. School 3 only offered Chinese from Reception to Year 2 at that time, and this was stopped not long after the completion of the case study because the teacher was no longer available and a search for a new teacher was unsuccessful. Case E was carried out in School 4, with another British primary class teacher, and a class of mixed Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. This was the

only class that was learning Chinese regularly in School 4 at that time, as the school had just started offering Chinese a month before the start of the case study, but the head teacher aimed to achieve what School 2 had achieved in the future. Hence, the provision of Chinese in each case was at a different stage and position when the case studies were conducted, and the teaching of Chinese was carried out by teachers from very different cultural, language and/or training backgrounds. Therefore, the teaching and learning of Chinese in each case was, indeed, unique and individual.

Following a summary of the five cases, the head teachers', teachers' and pupils' motivations for undertaking Chinese have been presented. The results show that, although head teachers' motivations were slightly different from each other, three common reasons were shared by some of them: the opinion that Chinese culture could be interesting to pupils (Head teachers C and D); having a teacher of Chinese available (Head teachers A and D); and the growing importance of China (Head teachers C and E). For the teachers, head teachers' decisions to offer Chinese were the main reasons for them to teach Chinese (Cases A, B, C and E). An interesting pattern emerging among the three British heritage teachers (Teachers B, C and E) was that they all had strong personal interests in learning Chinese or Chinese culture. This suggests that the novelty of Chinese may be interesting to British learners, including British teachers. Moreover, Teachers A and B, who taught Chinese in the same school (School 1), both suggested that they enjoyed seeing the pupils make progress in learning Chinese. This may be linked to the teachers' expertise in language teaching, especially the language specialist teacher (Teacher B), as well as the fact that School 1 had begun to offer Chinese across the whole school at least

a year earlier than other schools. As for the pupils, their motivation varied across the five cases. The findings of this study show that the pupils in Cases C and E had the highest motivation and interest in learning Chinese, and many pupils suggested, in both questionnaires and interviews, that they liked to learn Chinese because it was “fun”. In contrast, pupils in Case B held the lowest motivation and interest of all the cases, and many pupils suggested in questionnaires and interviews that they did not like learning Chinese because it was boring and not fun, and their teacher was strict. The pupils’ motivation and interest in Cases A and D were in the middle of the five cases, but one pupil in Case A suggested in the interview that he/she did not like learning Chinese. Despite all the differences, some common aspects regarding the pupils’ motivation were found between some cases: the dominant answers given by pupils in Cases A and B (both in School 1) were about travelling to and using Chinese in China, and learning a different/more languages; the dominant answers given by pupils in Cases C and E related to their opinion that learning Chinese/Chinese lessons were fun. In addition, the pupils’ preferences for Chinese or other languages were also compared. The majority of pupils in Cases A and C preferred Chinese to other languages. Just over half of the pupils in Cases D and E wanted to carry on learning Chinese, while the others wanted to learn another language as well as Chinese at the same time, or to change to another language. Half of the pupils in Case B wanted to change, and most of the others wanted to learn another language at the same time.

Next, the teachers’ background and subject knowledge were presented. As discussed earlier, the five teachers were all different from each other, despite the fact that some of them might have aspects in common. Teachers A and D both had

a Chinese heritage background, and were both language teachers in the school, but teacher A had English primary QTS and had previously been an English primary class teacher, whereas teacher D had not received any training in teaching English pupils. Teachers C and E were both English primary class teachers, but teacher C had had longer experience of teaching and learning Chinese than teacher E. Teacher B was very different from any of the other teachers, as she was a language specialist and an advisory teacher for MFL in the local authority; she only played the role of temporary class teacher in School 1 for the case class (Case B) for a term. Therefore, the teachers' knowledge of Chinese and English primary pedagogy was not surprisingly different. The two Chinese heritage teachers had better functional knowledge of Chinese than the three British background teachers, but teacher A (Singaporean Chinese) was learning Chinese pinyin and simplified characters, as she had not learnt these in childhood. Among the three British heritage teachers, teacher B (language specialist) had learnt Chinese for a lot longer than the other two English primary class teachers, and her level of Chinese was about AS level. The two English class teachers (Teachers C and E) both rated their Chinese as beginner level, but teacher C had learnt Chinese over two years longer than teacher E. Regarding their knowledge of primary pedagogy, the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) had the best classroom management and communication with their pupils; teacher A (Singaporean Chinese), and especially teacher B (language specialist), struggled with classroom management; teacher D's lessons were always supported by the class teacher, and in lessons with Years 3 to 5 pupils where Teacher D taught independently there were some problems with classroom management. These teachers also had different perceptions about their

pupils' motivations for learning Chinese and the important aspects of teaching Chinese, as well as the introduction of pinyin and characters.

Having presented the teachers' background and subject knowledge, how Chinese was taught in the five cases was presented next. All cases provided Chinese within the curriculum time. The four cases of KS2 classes taught Chinese at least one hour a week, while the only case of a KS1 class offered Chinese twice a week, but for only twenty minutes per lesson. The teachers all planned their lessons differently and used different resources, as currently available government guidance for teaching languages generally (KS2 Framework for Languages, DfES, 2005) was perceived to be unsuitable for Chinese, and the only teacher who tried to use the new Scheme of Work for Chinese (TDA, 2010) believed that it was not useful for teachers who were beginner Chinese themselves. The two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) set Chinese culture as their planning priority, the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) prioritised speaking in their planning, and the language specialist teacher (Teacher B) believed that writing should be the priority in teaching Chinese. Regarding the content introduced by the teachers, greetings were the most common topic, followed by numbers and body parts. In terms of content relating specifically to Chinese culture, Chinese New Year and Chinese calligraphy were the most common, but Teacher B taught little about Chinese culture, while Teachers A, C and E, especially the latter two, taught much more about Chinese culture than the other two teachers. Speaking and listening were the whole or partial focus of all five teachers. The two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) tended to correct the pupils' pronunciation more than the other teachers. Teacher A, and especially Teacher B, placed considerably more

emphasis on writing than the other teachers, while the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) introduced fewer characters to the pupils and used pinyin more often in the lessons. It was also observed that the three English teachers (Teachers B, C and E) spent more time introducing the language from a linguistic aspect than the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D). Most of teacher A's lessons were related to numbers, and teacher B's lessons were mainly about basic greetings. In the observed lessons, the three British heritage teachers (Teachers B, C and E) used target language utterances more often than the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D), and the Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) often translated the TL into English immediately afterwards. None of the cases used any formal assessment or recording of the pupils' learning of Chinese, but the teachers did some informal assessment during the lessons. Teacher B was the only teacher that had specific performance goals for the pupils over a longer period.

The head teachers', teachers', and pupils' experiences of undertaking Chinese were then presented. All the head teachers held positive views about parents' support and pupil's enjoyment. Three schools had partner schools in China, and two (Schools 1 and 2 for Cases A, B and C) carried out regular exchange visits, and the pupils wrote to each other, while one school (School 3 for Case D) did not do much with the partner school. The head teachers suggested different reasons for their success in and barriers to offering Chinese, but their expectations of the pupils were similarly concerned with the pupils' awareness of and interest in Chinese or other world cultures, and they were happy with the progress of teaching Chinese in their schools. Regarding the support available to schools for teaching Chinese, the head teachers

were the main source, although some schools might also get some support from the Confucius Institute and their partner schools. The head teachers' opinions in comparing the offering of Chinese and European languages varied slightly: two thought it was easier to offer and for pupils to learn (Head teachers A and E); two believed it was harder to offer, one of whom suggested it was easier for the pupils (Head teacher C) while the other did not think so (Head teacher D). As for the teachers' experience, two (Teachers C and D) thought that teaching Chinese was more difficult than teaching European languages in terms of progress and differences; two (Teachers A and B) believed that it was not more difficult; and two (Teachers B and E) thought that teaching Chinese had easier aspects (tense, grammar, sentence structure, numbers) and harder aspects (measure words, nouns, pinyin, Chinese characters). However, apart from teacher D, who thought that Chinese was much harder for pupils to learn, the other four teachers believed that Chinese was not more difficult. The teachers held different views about the choice of Chinese in English primary schools, but the global impact of China was mentioned by four teachers (A, B, D and E) as a good reason for choosing to teach Chinese. The teachers also experienced different levels of enjoyment in teaching Chinese and felt confident about different aspects of teaching Chinese. The pupils enjoyed writing Chinese characters in all five cases, followed by learning Chinese numbers and Chinese culture, but the pupils in different cases suggested different aspects that they did not enjoy about learning Chinese. It was notable that the pupils in Cases C and E suggested various things they enjoyed in the lessons, many of which were related to Chinese culture, while many pupils in Case B said that they did not like learning Chinese. In general, pupils in Cases C and E with the two

English primary class teachers had the highest interest and enjoyment in learning Chinese, while pupils in Case B with the language specialist teacher who was originally trained to be a secondary teacher had the lowest interest and enjoyment, and pupils' interest and enjoyment in Cases A and D with the two Chinese heritage teachers were in the middle.

Finally, possible relationships between the issues within the first four research questions have been discussed. The findings of this study suggest that there is a strong relationship between the teachers' backgrounds and their subject knowledge, both of which may have an effect on their teaching of Chinese. This may then influence the pupils' motivations for and experiences of learning Chinese. Moreover, head teachers' perceptions seem to have some impact on the provision of Chinese, and pupils' expectations may also influence their own learning experiences. Potential reasons behind these links will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

5.1. Introduction

This research explored five cases of teaching and learning Chinese in four English primary schools. As this kind of research is unusual in England, each of these cases is valuable and unusual. The cases are also distinctive and different from each other in some interesting ways. This study investigated why head teachers, teachers and pupils wanted to undertake Chinese, who is teaching Chinese, how Chinese is taught in these cases, and the experience of the participants. The findings presented in the previous chapter show that each case is individual and unique, but that there are also some common patterns across the five cases. Teachers from different backgrounds teach Chinese differently, and the motivations and experiences of pupils learning Chinese are shaped by the teachers' teaching and their own expectations of learning. In addition, the pupils expectations and the role played by head teachers, have an impact on classroom teaching.

Therefore, this chapter discusses the provision of Chinese in the four English primary schools in this study; how teachers' backgrounds may influence their subject knowledge, teaching methods and teaching of Chinese in particular; how pupils' expectations may impact on their learning and the teachers' teaching of Chinese; and how head teachers' perceptions may influence the provision of Chinese. The discussion will relate the findings to the literature in the field. In addition, several distinctive features of teaching Chinese (compared with European

languages) and their implications for teachers and policy makers found in this study will be discussed in this chapter.

5.2. Teaching of Chinese in English Primary Schools

In this section, the choice of Chinese, the provision of Chinese, and guidelines and resources for teaching Chinese identified in the cases will be considered in relation to issues highlighted in the literature (Sections 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6 and 2.4.9).

5.2.1. Decision to teach Chinese

In the cases, the availability of a suitable teacher was a key factor in decisions to teach Chinese. In none of these cases was a teacher specifically sought out, except in Case E, in which the teacher was asked at her recruitment interview whether she would be prepared to learn Chinese. However, Teacher C (Case C) suggested that, two years before this study started, she had also been asked at her recruitment interview to learn Chinese. This finding emphasises the importance of teacher supply, as discussed in Section 5.2.2 below. The research in this area, reviewed in Chapter 2 Section 2.6.2, has recognised this issue in a secondary school context in a number of countries, and it is interesting to see that the same issue pertains to primary level. In this study, offering Chinese in the case schools was decided upon by either the current or previous head teacher. Having an available teacher, or one willing to learn, was a key factor in the head teachers' decisions. Cable *et al.* (2010) note that the expertise of staff members or the head teacher him/herself is one of the main reasons for head teachers' decisions on what language to offer in the

primary context. Moreover, the fact that two teachers in this study were asked at their recruitment interviews by the head teachers to learn and teach Chinese, and the head teachers' beliefs that China will become important and that Chinese culture is interesting to pupils, suggest that Chinese and Chinese culture themselves may add extra value in terms of motivating head teachers to offer Chinese to pupils.

Consequently, the main reason for teachers to begin teaching Chinese is as a result of a request from their head teachers. However, the teachers' personal interest in Chinese and Chinese culture once they had started to learn and teach Chinese was highly relevant to the teaching of three teachers who were native English speakers. It is notable that all the British heritage teachers in this study said they found Chinese or Chinese culture very interesting, and this interest became their motivation for teaching Chinese once they had started to learn Chinese themselves. The other two teachers (Teachers A and D), who had a Chinese/Chinese speaking background and were able to teach on this basis, were less passionate in their discussion of motivations for Chinese and Chinese culture, as well as for teaching Chinese. This suggests that the novelty of Chinese and the richness of Chinese culture may easily become a motivation for learners from different language and cultural backgrounds, including teachers who learn to teach Chinese.

5.2.2. Provision of Chinese

CILT (2010) suggests that between 81 and 100 per cent of primary schools teach languages in class time, based on a survey of 100 local authorities in England. All the cases in this study offered Chinese within the curriculum time. The Chinese

lessons of the four KS2 classes (Cases A, B, C and E) were taught on a weekly basis, and the pupils spent at least an hour per week learning Chinese, meeting the recommended language lesson length suggested by the KS2 Framework (DfES, 2005). The only KS1 class (Case D) provided Chinese twice a week, but the lessons were much shorter than in the KS2 cases, as the lessons only lasted for twenty minutes.

Driscoll *et al.* (2004a) and Wade *et al.* (2009) suggest that the aim of language education in most primary schools is to raise pupils' awareness of language and enthusiasm for language learning, but not to target linguistic competence. Muijs *et al.* (2005) refer to this teaching as a light-hearted and fun experience. This is also reflected in this study. As shown in Section 4.6.1 and Table 29, all the head teachers in this study suggested that they hoped the pupils would have an interest in Chinese culture and/or language, and would broaden their views of being global citizens. Head teacher A indicated that the provision of languages was a matter of increasing pupils' language awareness and intercultural understanding, rather than language skills, although she also mentioned that she hoped the pupils would be able to speak some Chinese when they left the school. Two head teachers (Head teachers A and C) also perceived pupils' enjoyment to be their achievement in offering Chinese (Section 4.6.1, Table 26). Meanwhile, as shown in Section 4.4.4, Table 15, apart from Teacher B all the teachers in this study suggested that they expected pupils to be interested/confident in learning languages in general and/or to have an awareness of other cultures. Although the two English primary teachers (Teachers C and E) also stressed that they hoped the pupils would gain some general language learning skills, and the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and C) expected the pupils

to be capable of basic communication in Chinese, none mentioned anything about the pupils' competence in Chinese language. Only teacher B, who was a language specialist, suggested specific language goals in teaching Chinese and expected pupils to be able to access the Language Ladder Breakthrough Level by Year 6. The teaching of Chinese in most cases in this study did not focus on developing the pupils' language competence/skills in Chinese, but on the pupils' interest in learning about other languages and culture in general.

This was also reflected in the lack of assessment in this study. Assessment is perceived to be crucial in helping pupils achieve progression (Muijs *et al.*, 2005), but the assessment of pupils' Chinese learning seemed slightly neglected in the cases of this study. Cable *et al.* (2010) suggest that assessment is important because it may be used to inform national policy developments, to feed back to parents and the public, and to develop realistic expectations (Cable *et al.*, 2010). In language education particularly, Jones and Coffey (2006) note that assessment may not only inform teachers' teaching plans in a seamless way, but also give feedback to pupils. As discussed in Section 2.4.5, assessment and recording in language education in English primary schools is not adequate for all languages and is mainly informal (Ofsted, 2011). This may be because of a worry that assessment may put too much pressure on both staff and pupils before the provision of languages has been built up (Muijs *et al.*, 2005), and teachers are usually concerned that formal assessment may undermine pupils' confidence (Ofsted, 2011). More importantly, staff may not be confident enough to evaluate language lessons, especially if they have no prior experience of teaching them (Ofsted, 2011). This was exactly the case in this study and was reflected by the teachers. Formal assessment was perceived by one of the

English primary teachers, teacher C, to be the least important aspect of teaching Chinese (Section 4.4.4, Table 12). None of the teachers in this study used formal assessment or recording, although all suggested that they used informal means of assessment, as discussed in Section 4.5.7.

However, the new National Curriculum 2014 (DFE, 2013a) identifies the aim of language education as being to ensure that all pupils gain some serious language skills, rather than emphasising intercultural understanding. Therefore, this may be a challenge for schools in the future, as well as for teachers who are currently perceived to be most suitable for teaching languages (such as teachers C and E in this study), because memory strategies and repetitive practice of writing characters are perceived as effective ways for Western learners to learn Chinese (Chen, 2009; Wang, 1998; Yin, 2003), as discussed in Section 2.5.4, but the pupils in this study did not like repeated practice of the language in the lessons. Instead, the pupils in this study enjoyed a variety of fun activities which did not focus on enhancing their language skills.

5.2.3. Resources for teaching Chinese

Resourcing for teaching Chinese emerged as an issue in this study. On the one hand, resources were limited. As discussed in Sections 4.5.2 and 4.5.7, there are no suitable guidelines perceived by the teachers, no agreed supporting texts or designated resource books, and no standard evaluation of progress in Chinese (or any other language) at KS2. These may all be factors which may inhibit the teaching of Chinese. For example, teacher C mentioned in her interview that she had to spend

a lot of time searching for materials for teaching Chinese because of her lack of knowledge of the Chinese language. Moreover, all the teachers in this study designed their own teaching materials, based on what they had learnt or on the class teachers' teaching content. This is quite different from the planning of other subjects in primary schools, as there is usually a subject leader and teachers may plan their lessons as a team. However, the findings of this study suggest that this is not yet happening in Chinese teaching.

On the other hand, both the UK and Chinese governments seem to support the offering of Chinese to English pupils, more than for other languages. During the case study period, the British Museum lent a Chinese artefacts box to School 2 for free and a staff member from the British Museum visited the school to help the pupils explore these artefacts; this offer was available to all English primary schools at that time. Moreover, the Chinese government funded various events, including a Panda Competition for both primary and secondary schools. Cases C and E were both enrolled in the competition when the case study was conducted with Case E.

Resources are definitely available to motivate pupils' interest in learning Chinese, but not enough for teaching and learning the Chinese language specifically; or at least, they were not easily available to or perceived as appropriate by the teachers in this study. This suggests two possible problems in teaching Chinese in English primary schools at present: existing schemes of work are not appropriate for Chinese; and there is a lack of Chinese language expertise, leadership and teamwork in the planning of Chinese teaching. The only two available government guidelines and schemes that might be used for teaching Chinese, the Scheme of Work for

Chinese (TDA, 2010) and the KS2 Framework for Languages (DfES, 2005), were not used by any of the teachers in this study, except occasionally for checking points or topics. Therefore, there is an urgent demand for appropriate guidance for teachers of Chinese. Moreover, the National Language Strategy (DfES, 2002) and Bolster *et al.* (2004) suggest that there is a lack of collaboration between schools and with other networks to share best practice in teaching languages. This seems particularly true in this study, as all the teachers in this study suggested that they spent huge amounts of time preparing teaching resources and materials in isolation. This does not appear to be an efficient situation. As few primary schools currently offer Chinese, and teachers of Chinese are in the progress of trying things out, this study suggests a demand for teachers of Chinese and/or relevant experts to share their experience of teaching Chinese and to work together to develop the teaching of Chinese.

5.3. Teachers' Backgrounds and Subject Knowledge

The teachers' backgrounds seem to affect how they teach Chinese in their lessons and their pupils' experience of learning Chinese, both in this study and in the wider research on teaching (Pajares, 1992). One issue identified in the findings of these cases is the knowledge base of teachers' teaching, which was different for each teacher. This difference is, of course, related to the teachers' cultural background, experience, training and own learning of Chinese, but it is useful to consider research into the nature of subject knowledge and how it informs these results.

As discussed in Section 2.3.1, the teachers' subject knowledge is very important in teaching, and may have a crucial impact on pupils. English primary language teachers' subject knowledge should include a knowledge of the language, which also covers specific teaching methods for languages, as well as a knowledge of primary pedagogy consisting of age-specific teaching methods, primary curriculum and pupils' learning needs (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b). In this study, the teachers' subject knowledge seemed to be strongly related to their backgrounds. For the English primary teachers, their knowledge of the Chinese language might be their main challenge, while for native Chinese speakers or non-primary trained teachers, a lack of pedagogical knowledge might be the major barrier. This will be argued in the next section through a discussion of the teachers' subject knowledge, the way they teach Chinese, and how these are affected by their background.

5.3.1. Teachers' knowledge of Chinese

With regard to the teachers in this study, their knowledge of Chinese depended on their language background and their learning of Chinese. As shown in the findings (Section 4.4), the five teachers in this study consisted of a native Chinese speaker, a Chinese heritage Singaporean, and three English teachers who had been learning Chinese for different lengths of time (six years, three years and less than six months). However, their knowledge of Chinese did not only include their knowledge of the language but, crucially, linguistic aspects of Chinese and an ability to discuss these and make comparisons with English. This is associated with their metacognition, and the metalanguage they used in the lessons. There are significant differences

between English and Chinese; therefore, the teachers' ability to analyse and discuss Chinese compared with English is very important, and cannot be assumed.

The three British teachers' in the cases clearly had less fluent functional knowledge of Chinese – that is, the ability to use reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, discussed in Section 2.3.1 (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004b) – than the native speaking teacher and Chinese heritage background teacher. They had a narrower vocabulary, less character knowledge and lower level of tone pronunciation than the Chinese heritage teachers in the lessons observed. These skills are referred to as content knowledge by Shulman (1986). However, they seemed better able to compare Chinese with English, and to pick out features of Chinese characters and explain them to the pupils. For example, teacher B asked the pupils to identify different word orders in the sentence “who are you?” in English and “你是谁” in Chinese; teacher C explained to the pupils that anything related to water has the radical “水” (water) in the character; and teacher E led the pupils to figure out the meanings of sentences by adding the meanings of each character (Section 4.5.4). It may be speculated that these teachers may also have found it easier to identify novel, different, interesting or salient issues for English background pupils with whom they shared a first language. Furthermore, the two English primary teachers (Teachers C and E) also allowed the pupils to think about the language learning skills they used for learning other languages, and asked them to adapt some of these to learning Chinese. These two English primary teachers were able to share their experiences of learning Chinese with the pupils as beginner learners themselves, but their understanding of linguistic structures and grammar was constrained by

their own learning level. The two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) were more able to use Chinese, but they delivered the lessons with little linguistic reflection. However, it is not possible to say that this was because they were unable to do so. Their choice not to reflect on language structures may relate either to their ability to reflect or to their understanding of whether it was important to reflect on language structures.

This issue is associated with teachers' metacognitive ability and their use of metalanguage in class. The language used by the teachers to describe Chinese can be defined as metalanguage (Chalker and Wiener, 1994; Johnson and Johnson, 1998). Berry (2005) describes metalanguage as the use of "one language to make metalinguistic statements about another" (p.6). Gombert (1993) suggests that L2 metacognitive ability (in this case, ability to reflect on Chinese) is based on their L1 learning experience. In this study, the teachers' metacognitive ability in teaching Chinese seemed to be based on both their first language learning experience, and on their second/new language learning experience. For British teachers, as non-native Chinese speakers, their understanding of Chinese as a second or new language might be explicit (Schmidt, 1993), while it might be implicit for the Chinese heritage teachers. Therefore, the language introduced by different teachers in the classroom might be different. Some researchers (Medgyes, 2001; Medwell *et al.*, 2012) have discussed the differences between native language teachers and non-native language teachers in delivering a new language, although mainly in the context of teaching English. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.3.3), native language teachers are more confident in speaking and using the language, but non-native speaking teachers are more cautious and empathetic and their

teaching approach is more guided (Benke and Medgyes, 2005; Medgye, 2001). This is reflected in the current study, as the Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) emphasised fluency and accuracy, while the non-native speaking teachers (Teachers B, C and E) preferred to emphasise the form and structural rules of Chinese compared with English. For example, the two Chinese heritage teachers corrected the pupils' pronunciation more frequently than the British teachers, while the English teachers spent more time comparing sentence structures between English and Chinese (Section 4.4.4).

This is only one reason why it is important not to assume that simply being a native speaker addresses all aspects of language knowledge. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.3.3), this is a general point relating to native speaking teachers of all languages, not only Chinese (Richards, 2008), but there are particular issues in the ability to present Chinese to foreigners from an alphabetic background which cannot be assumed on the basis of Chinese heritage. For example, teacher A spoke good Mandarin Chinese, but she was challenged by Chinese pinyin and simplified Chinese characters, which were not part of her early background. This issue, where teachers of Chinese heritage are not entirely confident in their subject knowledge of Mandarin, has been discussed in relation to secondary teachers in England (Wang, 2011). The current research suggests that this is also the case for primary teachers of Chinese.

5.3.2. Teachers' knowledge of English primary pedagogy

The teachers' knowledge of English primary pedagogy in this study was determined largely by their training, cultural and language backgrounds. In the observed lessons, the two trained English primary teachers (Teachers C and E) were able to communicate very clearly with their pupils (Section 4.5.9), and they seemed to understand the difficulties the pupils were experiencing (Section 4.5.4). Moreover, they were both very good at linking Chinese to other areas of the curriculum (Section 4.5.6). For example, teacher C asked pupils to read a Chinese cultural story for their literacy lesson; and teacher E related the Chinese lantern festival to physical sciences. The head teachers were very optimistic about the ability of these English primary class teachers to teach Chinese, despite their limited language knowledge, and head teacher E even said that it was positive for the teacher to learn with the pupils (Head teacher interview, Case E). It may seem surprising that a head teacher should support teachers with such limited knowledge of the subject they are teaching, but this may reflect the head teachers' assumptions of the importance of pedagogical knowledge based on the teachers' roles as primary class teachers.

The teaching skills of the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) seemed to draw more attention from the head teachers. Although teacher A was trained as an English primary teacher, head teacher A suggested that teacher A's teaching might be somewhat dry for the pupils. Meanwhile, in the case of teacher D, who had received no training for teaching English primary pupils at all, head teacher D indicated that it was important for the primary class teacher to work with teacher D together in teaching Chinese, because the primary class teacher's

experience was valuable. The head teachers were concerned that the teaching quality in these classes should be maintained. Also, two pupils of the two Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) mentioned in their group interviews that sometimes they could not understand their teachers because of the language they used in the lessons as non-English speakers (Section 4.6.3). This has been discussed in the literature (Section 2.3.3). Benke and Medgyes (2005) suggest that there may be a communication gap between native speaking teachers and their students because of their different cultural and language backgrounds. This suggests that both the teachers' training background and their cultural and language backgrounds may impact on their knowledge of English primary pedagogy, as the Chinese heritage teacher who was trained to be an English primary class teacher still drew some attention from head teachers and pupils. The Chinese background teachers were weak in areas where the practices of teachers C and E had particular strengths as British heritage primary class teachers.

Teacher B was untypical among teachers in this study. Although she had a great deal of teaching experience as a language teacher and local authority MFL advisory teacher, as well as much longer experience of learning Chinese compared with the other two English primary class teachers, she had initially been trained as a secondary teacher. Her abilities in designing language learning activity were praised by the head teacher (Section 4.6.1). However, her classroom management was not appreciated by the pupils (Section 4.6.3 and Table 37). For example, the pupils in her class suggested that they did not enjoy their lessons because of the teacher, and they said that teacher B was very strict, as she often put the pupils' names on amber or red.

Chinese language skills, and the ability to manage both the Chinese content of lessons and to achieve positive behaviour management in a way which fits the expectations of primary pupils, are challenges for teachers. The teachers in this study did not combine all these aspects equally, and each case showed a different combination and balance of teaching advantages. Whilst this may seem unexpected, the split between good subject knowledge and appropriate pedagogical knowledge which appears in this study is documented in general language teaching in primary schools, as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.4.4), and in secondary Chinese teaching (CILT, 2007; Medwell *et al.*, 2012). It has been identified as a key issue threatening teacher supply for Chinese language teaching in many English speaking countries, including the USA (Dretzke and Jordan, 2010) and Australia (Orton, 2010), as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.6.2). Dretzke and Jordan (2010) state that “some school districts have recruited their own teachers directly from China but have found that these teachers often need intensive professional development on how to teach in American classrooms” (p.69). This is also related to an issue discussed later in Section 5.5, regarding how pupils’ expectations may constrain teachers’ teaching. Anderson (2011) suggests that “the fact that students in the UK do not always show automatic respect for teachers compared with other countries can create a further challenge” (p.136). This points to very different cultural expectations in term of the roles of teachers and pupils in Confucian heritage cultures and in England. CILT’s (2007) report on Chinese teaching in English classes notes that “teachers from China are described as ‘lovely’ but their lack of familiarity with the English system of discipline, target setting etc. is a problem. They also tend to have a different, perhaps unrealistic, expectation of

pupils.” (p.12). This is a comment on overseas teachers and is not directly relevant to the Chinese heritage British teachers in this study, but it raises a relevant point. Classroom control and pedagogical skills remain challenges for these native Chinese speaking teachers. This study suggests that the issue is even more marked in the primary setting than in the secondary setting: the teacher with the best Chinese had the least background and teaching skills at primary level (Teacher D) and, indeed, was not a trained teacher, as is the case for more than half the teachers currently teaching Chinese in UK classes (CILT, 2007). However, the teachers with the greatest background and skills in primary teaching (Teachers C and E) had the least Chinese (CILT, 2007).

At present, many minority language teachers, including Mandarin, have been educated overseas in different cultures and education systems (Anderson, 2011; CILT, 2007), and their teaching is usually based on their own experience as learners, which is more teacher-centred (Anderson, 2008). Indeed, Pajares (1992) doubts the ability of teachers to change their behaviour, and notes that teachers’ experience is the greatest influence on their teaching beliefs and decides their classroom behaviour.

Whilst no attempt was made in this research to judge or assess the teachers’ general pedagogical abilities, the findings regarding pupils’ motivation provide some insights into how pupils react to teachers’ teaching.

5.3.3. Reflections by pupils

One implication of the findings is that pupils seem more comfortable learning Chinese from their class teachers, no matter how limited their teachers' knowledge of Chinese, as in the case of teachers C and E. It seems that the pedagogy and knowledge of Chinese of both these teachers had some influence on the pupils' motivation and experience. For example, one pupil in Case A, whose teacher was the Chinese heritage teacher originally from Singapore (Teacher A), said that he would prefer their class teacher (an English primary teacher who was not involved in this study) to teach them Chinese, so that the teacher could learn with them together and understand their difficulties better (Pupil interview, Case A, see Section 4.6.3). Also, many pupils in Cases C and E who were learning Chinese from their class teachers mentioned that they liked learning Chinese because of their teacher (Section 4.6.3), and these two teachers sometimes also learnt together with the pupils during the lessons (Sections 4.5.10 and 4.6.2). This may suggest that the pupils prefer a teacher who can appreciate the difficulties of learning the language, and a non-native speaking teacher is usually better able to do so (Neil, 1997). The teachers who learnt alongside the pupils sometimes also enjoyed it. As teacher E stated, "it's nice I can model it for the children that I'm not confident in my tones and I'm gonna double check. And then for them to see if you're doing it and then they can do it themselves" (Teacher interview, Case E).

Another important issue raised by the findings of this study is that teachers' subject knowledge exerts a great impact on pupils' motivation for and interest in learning Chinese. As shown in Sections 4.3.3 and 4.6.3, the pupils of the two English

primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) had the highest motivation and interest in learning Chinese and most wished to continue learning Chinese at secondary school, despite these two teachers having the least knowledge of the Chinese language. The pupils of the teacher initially trained at secondary level (Teacher B) had the lowest motivation and interest and most wanted to try something new, despite the fact that this teacher was a real language expert and had a great deal of knowledge of how a language should be learnt. The motivation and interest of the other two classes of pupils with Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D) were in the middle of the five cases. This study suggests that in learning Chinese, pupils' interest may not only depend on the language itself, but also on teachers' backgrounds and teaching, as there are huge differences between the cases in this study. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.4.5), Dörnyei (2001) suggests several teaching practices that may motivate learners, which include "making learning stimulating and enjoyable", "presenting tasks in a motivating way", "protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence", and "promoting cooperation among the learners" (p.29). In this study, the teachers of the pupils who had the best motivation for learning Chinese (Cases C and E) applied these practices more often than the other teachers (Section 4.4). Moreover, these two trained English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) also used a communicative language teaching approach in the classrooms more often than the other teachers (Section 4.4.6). As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.3.4), CLT is the dominant approach in English schools. In this study, the pupils also seemed more comfortable with teachers who often used a CLT approach.

It is also worth noting that the lessons of native Chinese speaking teacher D were always supported by the class teacher, and the class teacher often helped to encourage and engage the pupils in the lessons. Therefore, it seems that, in teaching English primary Chinese, the teachers' knowledge of primary pedagogy is more important than their current knowledge of Chinese, at least in terms of motivating pupils and maintaining their interest when their progress cannot be evaluated. However, further research will be needed to investigate this issue, as the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013a) stresses the importance of teaching pupils serious language skills. The findings suggest that the two primary class teachers who were learning Chinese may indicate the future of Chinese teaching in primary schools, if issues of continuity and progression for the children in these classes can be addressed. The participation of the class teacher in shared teaching is also an area for future research, as suggested by Case D. However, again, as the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013b) emphasises pupils' language competence, the primary class teachers' limited knowledge of Chinese may cause some challenges in the future.

The consensus in studies of primary languages (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a; Muijs *et al.*, 2005) is that the optimum teaching situation for primary languages in England is for the class teacher, rather than secondary or specialist teachers, to do the teaching. This was the case in Scottish primary schools in 2005 (Crichton and Templeton, 2010; Hunt *et al.*, 2005). The majority of language teachers in English primary schools are also class teachers (Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a). As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.4.4), the advantages of primary trained class teachers have been acknowledged by both researchers and head teachers (Cable *et al.*, 2010), including

their understanding of the whole primary school culture, their ability to teach across other curriculum subjects, their familiarity with children's capabilities and idiosyncrasies, and their opportunities to use the language incidentally throughout the day with the pupils. The findings of this study suggest that this is likely to be true for Chinese teaching, as well as for European languages which were the subject of the studies mentioned above. However, all the case studies in this research were beginner classes, which is an important point at a time when there are concerns about progression in primary languages (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Driscoll *et al.*, 2004a; Powell *et al.*, 2000). It may also depend on the determination of class teachers to ensure that their learning of Chinese progresses to a level which allows them to reflect on language, thus developing subject knowledge in Chinese, as well as the issues of progression discussed below. One obvious implication of this study is that it is impossible, for complex reasons, to make general assumptions about the confidence or competence of Chinese heritage teachers or language specialists, or to assume that a Chinese heritage or a great deal of language teaching/learning experience is a sufficient basis for teaching Chinese to English primary pupils.

It is not possible to draw conclusions from this study about the effects of limited subject knowledge on pupils' progression in the language, and future research is needed in this area. However, this finding is important, because resources for training teachers may be directed either to training native speakers with excellent subject knowledge, or to teaching subject knowledge (Chinese) to primary teachers with pedagogical skills. The current research would tend to suggest that the latter approach might succeed, whereas CILT (2007) suggests that the former has not. This study considers the effects of a total lack of teachers trained to teach primary

Chinese, as there are very few trained primary MFL teachers who know Chinese well, and only one primary PGCE course which includes Chinese in the UK. To enable more primary Chinese language teachers to be trained, support from government and specialists seems vital.

5.4. Teachers' Backgrounds and Teaching Methods

As shown in the previous chapter, the five teachers with different backgrounds teach Chinese significantly differently from each other (Section 4.5), and this seems have a crucial impact on the pupils' learning experience (Section 4.6.3). Therefore, it is important to discuss how the teachers' backgrounds may potentially influence their teaching in terms of planning, beliefs, behaviour and use of the target language.

5.4.1. Teachers' planning

The teachers in this study had their own, often very different, planning priorities. As shown in Section 4.5.2, Chinese culture was the priority of the two British heritage primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) and the native Chinese speaking teacher (Teacher D), although for different reasons: the two primary teachers felt that Chinese culture was very interesting and this was their motivation for teaching Chinese, while Chinese culture was one of the tasks of teaching Chinese set by the head teacher in Case D. Teacher E described the importance of teaching culture thus:

It's definitely really important for them to learn the culture, because I taught so many disenchanted pupils at secondary school who are learning words and words and words and words, and didn't know anything about the country and didn't know anything about the culture. And they found it boring, they didn't see the reality of it. And I think it's really an important thing that they can link the language to what they're doing" (Teacher interview, Case E).

The two teachers with Chinese backgrounds (Teachers A and D) set speaking as their priority. The language specialist teacher (Teacher B), who was a temporary class teacher, saw writing as her priority. It appears that the teachers who were confident in their language knowledge considered speaking to be their priority, and the teachers who understood English primary teaching pedagogy but had less knowledge of Chinese language would set Chinese culture as their priority, while the teacher who was specialised in learning and teaching languages understood the importance of the role of writing in Chinese and made writing the priority.

The findings (Section 4.6.3) show that pupils who spent more time learning about Chinese culture tended to enjoy their lessons more (Cases C and E), while pupils who did not learn Chinese culture at all did not like their lessons much (Case B). The government documents for the KS2 Framework for Languages (DfES, 2005) also suggest that the emphasis of teaching primary language has shifted towards culture in the UK. Therefore, Chinese culture is arguably something that should be included in the teachers' planning to motivate and interest pupils. This also raises

the question of whether learning about culture (intercultural understanding) should be assessed. At present, it is not.

Another issue raised by this study regarding teachers' planning is that the teachers' teaching plans were neither clear nor well elaborated. Only teachers B and D wrote down their plans. This is very surprising, as primary teachers C and E and the previous primary teacher (Teacher A) planned their teaching of other subjects in writing and in detail. Moreover, all the teachers planned their lessons based on what they had learnt from their own Chinese lessons or by themselves, except the native speaking teacher (Case D) whose plan was based on the class teacher's content (Section 4.5.2). This pattern shows that there is no uniformity in the order of introduction of linguistic elements or topics. This is not a practical situation if pupils are to experience continuity and progression in their Chinese learning, because such continuity is based on having an underlying plan which works across year groups and teachers. The possible effect of this is that if pupils are taught by other teachers at a later time, these teachers will repeat content already covered, or miss some important material. The need for continuity and progression in language learning is one of the key arguments for written planning (Hunt, 2009). A national or wider scheme of work would enable primary teachers of Chinese to plan for continuity and progression. However, as shown in the previous chapter (Section 4.5.2) and discussed in Section 5.1.3, there was no suitable government language teaching guidance for the teachers in this study. The KS2 Framework for Languages (DfES, 2005) was not used much by any of the teachers, and it was perceived by the teachers to be inappropriate for teaching Chinese (Teachers A, C and E) or any languages (Teacher B). The newly published Scheme of Work for Chinese (TDA,

2010) was perceived to be usable by teachers who were Chinese and could speak Chinese already (Teacher interview, Case C). There is currently no suitable national guidance for teaching Chinese, and this sets Chinese apart from other languages for which guidance does exist. It may be argued that if there is a genuine will to increase Chinese teaching, the government must provide specialised curriculum guidance, to give Chinese equal status with other languages, and also to offer teachers planning support, so that they can plan on the basis of best practice in a less *ad hoc* way.

5.4.2. Teachers' beliefs

All the teachers held different opinions about the key elements that make teaching successful and the least important factors in teaching Chinese (Section 4.4.4). The language specialist teacher (Teacher B) explained several things she believed to be important, including well-planned lessons, appropriate assessment and awareness of progress; the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) considered inspiring the pupils' interest to be important; and the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) believed that making the learning fun, catering to individual pupils' needs, embedding Chinese culture, teaching creatively and giving plenty of practice were important. The teachers' beliefs about what was not important in teaching Chinese were also very different from each other, though they did not necessarily act in the light of these beliefs. For example, teacher A thought that the least important thing was to correct the pupils, but in the classroom she often corrected the pupils and was strict about pronunciation and stroke order. The fact that teachers' beliefs are not directly related to their practice is not entirely

surprising, as research in this area documents this as a general issue (Pajares, 1992), and particularly in relation to language teaching (Borg, 2003). These authors show how the relationship between expressed beliefs and actions is complex. However, such beliefs do, indeed, seem to affect pupils.

The teachers' beliefs about teaching were reflected by the pupils (Section 4.6.3). Many pupils in Case A suggested, in both questionnaires and interviews, that the tones/speaking of Chinese were very difficult, which might be the result of teacher A's frequent correction of their pronunciation, although it is also a common challenge for English speaking learners of Chinese, as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.4). Many pupils in Case B did not like the workload of the lessons, which may be a result of the intense practice which teacher B gave them. All of the pupils in Cases C and E were willing to respond to their teachers, and none were afraid of making mistakes in their lessons, which may be because the two teachers in these cases were more concerned with fun and creativity in the lessons. This was the opposite from what was found in interviews with some pupils in the other three cases, especially pupils from low ability groups (Section 4.6.3, Table 54). Moreover, many pupils in Case E felt that Chinese characters were more difficult than pinyin, which may be because teacher E believed that Chinese characters should not be focused on, as they are difficult for the pupils to learn (Section 4.4.4, Table 12).

This study shows that primary teachers of Chinese have very different beliefs and practices. If pupils are to experience any consistency between teachers in their

Chinese learning, then an organised and agreed scheme of work and priorities will be important, if not imperative. Training and staff development may also be useful.

5.4.3. Teachers' use of target language

As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.3.2), appropriate use of the TL in language classes is perceived to be important. Kim and Elder (2008) identify three key aspects of the TL in foreign language classrooms: the teaching act, goal orientation and the addressee. The teaching act refers to classroom functions such as modelling, correcting, accepting students' responses, displaying questions, evaluating students' responses, and nominating students to give linguistic or non-linguistic responses; goal orientation includes core goals, framework goals and social goals; the addressee refers to the students, which may be the whole class or a particular individual (Kim and Elder, 2008). In this study, the teachers mainly used the TL items of the teaching act. Kim and Elder (2005) also define two types of TL: core goals (teaching the TL) and framework goals (managing the classroom situation). It may be seen from Table 22 (Section 4.5.8) that all the teachers in this study used some TL for framework goals. Surprisingly, neither of the Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) used any TL for the core goals. In contrast, two English speaking teachers (Teachers B and C) used some TL for the core goals, such as demonstrating the strokes in Chinese. However, whether TL should be used exclusively is still open to debate (Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain, 2009) and it has been suggested that for beginners, like the children in this study, use of some L1 is desirable (Goh and Lim, Unknown; Littlewood and Yu, 2011).

An interesting implication of this study is that teachers' use of TL may be determined by their pedagogical beliefs, which in turn may be influenced by their backgrounds. Ofsted (2011) suggests that English primary class teachers' use of TL is too limited compared with that of language specialists, despite the fact that they have many strengths in teaching primary children. In this study, although all the teachers used some similar TL items (Section 4.5.8), including greeting the pupils and counting the numbers in Chinese, it was noticed in the observations that the three British heritage teachers (Teachers B, C and E) used TL items more often than the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D). In addition, one of the English primary class teachers (Teacher C) who had learnt Chinese for longer used more varied Chinese in terms of praising the pupils and giving classroom instructions, compared with the other English primary class teacher (E) who had just started learning Chinese. For the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D), except for routines such as teacher A registering the pupils in their Chinese numbers at the beginning of every lesson and teacher D counting in Chinese to get all the pupils ready for the lesson, when the lessons started they used TL items less frequently in terms of praising the pupils, giving classroom instructions or demonstrating the new language. In this study, despite the English primary class teachers' (Teachers C and E) and English language specialist teacher's (Teacher B) use of TL being limited, the Chinese background teachers (Teachers A and D), who in terms of language fluency were more able to use TL, used the TL even less frequently than the three English speaker teachers who had little Chinese.

It also seems that the teachers' language proficiency is not the determining factor enabling them to use the TL in the classroom. This has also been discussed in the

literature. Despite native speaking teachers having greater proficiency in the TL, they are similarly more reluctant to use the TL as the medium of instruction than non-native speaking teachers (Kim and Elder, 2008). Hobbs *et al.* (2010) and Medwell *et al.* (2013) also suggest that native speaking teachers use much less TL than non-native speaking teachers. The current study suggests that using the TL in class is perceived as being important by English teachers. This may be because of the teachers' different cultural backgrounds. Medwell *et al.* (2012) conducted research to compare a native Chinese speaking teacher (NST) and an English language expert teacher (LET) working together to train English primary teachers in Chinese. They found that the NST felt the use of the TL for behaviour management, praise and positive correction to be awkward, because she was not used to doing so when she taught English in China and she felt it might take up more precious lesson time for the trainees to understand the TL rather than learning the language. In contrast, the LET in their study was used to speaking the TL to manage class behaviour and was more concerned to teach a number of ways of doing this in Chinese (Medwell, *et al.*, 2012, p. 41). This seems also to apply to the current study.

Another issue noticed in this study is that the Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) often translated the TL into English immediately afterwards. For example, when teacher D praised the children with “hen hao” (very good) in Chinese, he often followed with the translation, “very good” in English. The British teachers seldom did so. This is also indicated by Medwell *et al.* (2012) and Kim and Elder (2008). Kim and Elder (2008), arising from their research into native speaking teachers' use of TL in New Zealand foreign language classrooms, suggest that this

is representative of many native speaking teachers. In Medwell *et al.*'s (2012) research, they indicate that the TL was translated in English classes in China, and the NST in their research believed that this would save time for learning the language; whereas the LET perceived the use of the TL as a key goal of teaching languages and suggested it might help increase students' functional listening vocabulary. Crichton (2009) has investigated how teachers' use of classroom TL might aid pupils' communication skills and suggests that, although the pupils may not use the language they hear in class without prompting, the teachers may involve them in listening through questioning proactively, so that the pupils have to be able to learn and understand it. Crichton and Templeton (2010) also state, in their review of primary language education in Scotland, that it is essential for primary language teachers to develop appropriate teaching methodologies and sufficient competencies in the TL, in order to provide an effective model for children at this stage in their language learning. This is also a direction for Chinese training in the future. Ofsted's (2008) survey evaluating the quality of initial teacher training to prepare trainees to implement the National Languages Strategy in primary schools indicates that primary language teachers need additional specialist feedback on how to increase their use of the TL in class.

5.4.4. Teachers' behaviour in classrooms

The aim of this study was to be very open and to explore the ways in which teachers teach Chinese in primary schools. The teaching in each case was different and this teaching seemed to affect pupils' motivation and enjoyment (Sections 4.3.3 and 4.6.3). These relationships were a strong feature of each case. Although the use of

particular teaching strategies, the chosen emphasis in Chinese teaching and behaviour management are not uniquely about Chinese teaching, these issues played a very important role in pupils' experiences.

On the one hand, where pupils made negative comments regarding their learning experiences, the teachers were perceived to be strict by at least some of the pupils (Cases A and B). For example, teacher A usually spent a lot of time telling the pupils off and managing their behaviour during the lessons, and a good deal of lesson time and teacher attention was spent on behaviour management. Teacher A was also very strict with the actual technique of writing and pronouncing Chinese, and she corrected the pupils frequently and made the pupils spend twenty minutes on only one stroke in a calligraphy lesson. Anderson (2011) suggests that it is vital that language lessons focus on pupils' overall communicative abilities rather than narrowly on accuracy, otherwise the pupils may be demotivated as well as discouraged. This also seems to be true for teaching Chinese. Another example is that teacher B seemed to struggle to manage the class. She tried to manage the pupils by putting their names on amber or red. Teacher B was a language specialist and had a detailed teaching plan, and she always covered the skills of language learning (speaking, listening, reading and writing) as well as understanding of the language in the lessons. However, the pupils in this case seemed to be switched off. They were least motivated to learn Chinese of all the five cases. The pupils in this case seemed not to enjoy the lesson much, and many of them said they felt less interested in learning Chinese. They did not like the teacher, and felt that teacher B took their mistakes too seriously.

On the other hand, where most pupils held very positive opinions about their learning of Chinese, the teachers were very popular with the pupils (Cases C and E). Teachers C and E were both English primary class teachers. They did not have a large amount of language knowledge, but they were very confident in managing the class and the pupils behaved very well in the lessons. Some of them also mentioned that they liked to learn Chinese because of their teacher. Teacher D, the native Chinese speaking teacher, was rather different from all the other teachers, as he was the only teacher in this study who had not been trained to teach English pupils. The pupils' views of teacher D were positive in general. However, his lesson was largely supported by the class teacher. In the observed lessons with other year groups without the support of another member of staff (not part of this study), teacher D also seemed to have some problems managing the pupils.

It seems from this study that teachers' behaviour may affect the pupils' level of interest. Moreover, the trained English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) seemed to elicit the most appropriate behaviour and management in the English primary school context (Section 4.5.9). This was also reflected in the pupils' opinions about responding to teachers' questions and making mistakes in the lessons (Section 4.6.3, Table 54), as well as the difficulties they perceived (Section 4.6.3, Table 55). Where the teachers corrected the pupils more often (Cases A and B), the pupils, especially in lower ability groups, tended to be afraid of making mistakes. In contrast, where the teachers only corrected the pupils occasionally (Cases C and E) and praised the pupils frequently, none of the pupils was afraid of making mistakes. Moreover, the majority of pupils in Case C were confident about learning Chinese compared with their peers in other cases (Section 4.6.3, Table 48).

However, it cannot be conclusively demonstrated that pupils' opinions are solely related to how frequently they are corrected by teachers, as this may also be related to teachers' subject knowledge and background, as discussed earlier.

5.5. Teachers' Backgrounds and Teaching of Chinese

As there are not yet any standard guidelines on how to teach Chinese to English pupils, the teachers in this study taught Chinese and introduced language elements in their own ways. Some general suggestions for teaching languages have been made which may be useful in teaching Chinese. For example, Anderson (2011) suggests that language learning must be given context and purpose, otherwise the students may easily lose interest and switch off. However, there are significant differences between Chinese and alphabetic languages, and teaching such a different ideographic language to pupils whose first language is alphabetic without suitable guidelines may be challenging. The teachers' teaching of Chinese in this study seemed to be influenced by their backgrounds. This section will discuss their focus on the four language learning skills; the choices they made to focus on the teaching of pinyin and characters, and how they balanced this; their choices between Chinese language and culture; and how these influenced the pupils' learning of Chinese.

5.5.1. The four language learning skills in teaching Chinese

In this study, speaking and listening were the main focus in most cases and the five teachers did very similar things in terms of teaching speaking and listening, but

their choices and focus in teaching reading and writing were different (Section 4.5.4). The findings show that the teachers' backgrounds and subject knowledge may again underpin these differences. Teacher A, and especially Teacher B, who taught Chinese in the same school, both frequently asked the pupils to copy or write characters, for slightly different reasons. Teacher A (Chinese heritage teacher originally from Singapore) felt that writing was as important as listening, speaking and writing and this was why she often asked the pupils to do so; meanwhile, Teacher B felt that writing tended to be neglected in language teaching, and this was why she asked the pupils to do a lot of writing in the lessons. Interestingly, both teacher A and teacher B, when asked about their enjoyment of teaching Chinese, mentioned that they enjoyed seeing the pupils progress (Section 4.3.2, Table 6). Moreover, teacher B also focused on reading characters in the lessons. This may also suggest that, as a language specialist, teacher B understood the importance of Chinese characters and the reading and writing of characters in teaching Chinese. Another Chinese heritage teacher (Teacher D, native speaker of Chinese) purposely did nothing to teach reading or writing as he believed it was inappropriate to teach KS1 pupils either pinyin or characters. Teacher D had not been trained to teach English primary pupils, and his experience of understanding English pupils and English primary pedagogy was based mainly on his experience of working with school staff. His teaching may have been heavily influenced by the head teacher of his school. The head teacher set Chinese culture as the goal of teaching Chinese in his school because he believed that Chinese culture would better motivate the pupils. However, the head teacher suggested that Chinese characters also needed to be introduced to the pupils if Chinese culture was to be introduced, since the characters

are an integral part of Chinese culture. This misunderstanding between the head teacher and teacher D may have been caused by their perceptions of Chinese culture, which will be discussed later. Teachers C and E both introduced some Chinese characters to the pupils, but the characters tended to be only a small part of what the pupils had learnt to speak. For example, they asked the pupils to write selected pinyin and/or characters from the conversation they had learnt, such as “你好” (hello) and “爸爸” (father). However, except for teacher B, none of the teachers asked the pupils to write the whole conversation. Moreover, two English heritage teachers (Teachers B and C) also asked the pupils to write some simple characters with fewer strokes that were easier for the pupils to write, separately from what they had learnt, such as the characters “火” and “手”. Therefore, the teaching of reading and writing in Chinese may not always be consistent with the teaching of speaking and listening. Moreover, the worksheets for the pupils to practise their writing were mainly about copying the characters, although the teachers sometimes asked the pupils to write some characters. This is consistent with the existing literature. As Ofsted (2011) and Cable *et al.* (2010) suggest, writing is limited to the pupils copying and filling in gaps on worksheets.

It seems that the reading and writing of Chinese, especially Chinese characters, was not given the same status as speaking and listening by some teachers in this study. Given the fundamental differences in the nature of English and Chinese languages, the pupils in these two countries start to learn their first languages in significantly different ways, as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.4). Unlike learning alphabetic languages, in which reading acquisition is strongly associated with

listening skills, in learning Chinese, reading acquisition is strongly related to writing (Tan *et al.*, 2005). Siok and Fletcher (2001) point out that phonemic awareness is important in learning alphabetic languages, but visual skills are crucial in learning Chinese characters, especially at an early stage. (Li and Wray, 2009)) agree that teachers in the UK expend enormous amounts of effort on developing pupils' awareness of the sound components of English, while teachers in China spend considerable time in building pupils' knowledge of character recognition, and the evidence is that Chinese writing is much more closely related to reading than in English. Tan *et al.* (2005) note, on the basis of an experimental study, that "the ability to read Chinese is strongly related to writing skills" (p.8781). That is to say, practice in writing Chinese characters is a prerequisite in processing Chinese language, with the purpose of forming "long-term motor memories" of Chinese orthography as well as fluent reading in Chinese (Tan, *et al.*, 2005, p.8784). This means that writing is crucial to reading in Chinese, in a way which is not true of English. This is potentially a very important issue in teaching Chinese.

Although reading and writing are less developed than speaking and listening in most English primary school language education (Ofsted, 2011), in this study there may have been some additional reasons for teachers' preference for speaking and listening rather than reading and writing in Chinese. One possible reason is that almost all teachers in this study believed that Chinese pinyin was more important for beginners in terms of fluency and communication (Section 4.4.4, Table 13) and, as discussed in the literature review, the speaking and listening of Chinese may be acquired from learning Chinese pinyin (Section 2.5.3). Therefore, teachers may focus more on speaking and listening because of their opinion that Chinese pinyin

may help with speaking and listening. This has been questioned in the context of teaching Japanese by Shimizu *et al.* (2002), who were also concerned that viewing kanji (similar to characters) as harder may cause teachers to emphasise verbal proficiency, which is independent of kanji, over reading and writing, which are dependent on kanji. Another possibility is that when teachers teach alphabetic languages, such as French and English, to pupils, the pupils' reading acquisition is closely associated with their listening skills, because the writing of alphabetic languages is based on phonology (Tan *et al.*, 2005). Since the teaching of Chinese is still at an early stage in English primary schools (CILT, 2007), although teachers may realise that the learning of ideographic languages is different from the learning of alphabetic languages, they do not have a national guideline on how to teach Chinese differently from European languages, and their teaching may be influenced by their own experience of learning and teaching languages. Therefore, the teachers in this study may have adopted the same approach as teaching European languages in teaching Chinese, and just added the characters. Finally, the English teachers, especially teacher E, had less experience of learning Chinese than the Chinese heritage teachers, and their own reading and writing of Chinese characters were perhaps not adequate for them to feel confident to teach them to the pupils. However, in cases where pupils learnt to write some Chinese, writing Chinese characters was suggested as one of their motivations for learning Chinese and was what they enjoyed most in the lessons (Section 4.6.3). Even some pupils in Case D, who did not learn Chinese characters during the period of the case study, suggested in their interview that they wished they could learn to write characters. This was also the case in Dretzke and Jordan's (2010) study of secondary American students'

learning of Chinese. Therefore, it may be argued that the writing of Chinese characters should not be neglected. This is related to another important issue raised in this study – the teachers’ choice of priorities between pinyin and characters in teaching the writing of Chinese to English primary pupils – which will be discussed in the next section.

Another issue raised here relates to the language input and output in the classroom. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.2.3.1), Krashen’s (1981) input hypothesis refers to enhancing learners’ language intake through meaningful and communicative activities supplied by the teacher in the language classroom, while Swain’s (1996) output hypothesis means that learners learn more language by processing and producing the language output, which enables them to control and internalise their linguistic knowledge. In this study, it was observed that both input and output hypotheses were used by all the teachers, as they all introduced the language through conversations and other contexts, and asked their pupils to practise speaking and writing/copying characters and/or pinyin during the lessons. Those teachers whose lessons tended to be repetitive (Teachers A and B) introduced new language on the basis of old content more frequently than other teachers. For example, teacher A introduced ages and dates after numbers, and teacher B integrated more personal pronouns into the greeting conversation (Section 4.5.3, Table 20). All the teachers asked their pupils to produce some output in the classroom through the practice of conversations and worksheet exercises for writing pinyin and/or characters, but it was noticed that there was normally a reference for the pupils, especially when they were practising conversations. For example, teacher E displayed the conversations on the whiteboard for the pupils when they

were practising greetings, and asked the pupils to try to speak without looking at the board but allowed them to do so if they needed to; and the teachers asked the pupils to copy rather than write characters most of the time. The two English primary class teachers specifically talked in their interview about pupils' confidence in learning Chinese (Teacher C, Section 4.5.2, Table 19; Teacher E, Section 4.5.6), and this may be one reason why the teachers did not ask pupils to produce much language output without references. However, it is not possible from this study to conclude which hypothesis is more effective in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils because there was no formal assessment to evaluate the pupils' progress. Future research might focus on this issue.

5.5.2. Teachers' choice of priorities in teaching writing

As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.3), Chinese may be represented by both pinyin and characters (Shen, 2004). In this study, the teachers' focus between pinyin and characters was slightly different. Where pupils were asked to do more writing and reading (Cases A and B in the same school), where one teacher was of Chinese heritage (Teacher A) and the other a language specialist teacher (Teacher B), they insisted that both pinyin and characters should be introduced to the pupils at the beginning, and pinyin could be reduced later when ready (Section 4.4.4, Table 13). Where the pupils learnt mainly through pinyin (Cases C and E) and the teachers were English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E), they felt pinyin was more important and easier for beginners and might help with communication. Where pupils did not write pinyin or characters at all (Case D), the teacher was a native Chinese speaker and held the opinion that neither pinyin nor

characters should be introduced to pupils at KS1. It seems that the teachers' background and knowledge of Chinese may have had some influence on this. Teacher A wanted to give the pupils confidence that Chinese characters were not difficult (Section 4.3.2) and, as a Chinese heritage teacher, she was able to introduce more characters and pinyin – these may be reasons why she introduced both and wanted to reduce pinyin later. Teacher B felt that writing tended to be neglected in language teaching and, as a language specialist who had already been learning Chinese for six years, she was fully aware of the importance of Chinese characters in teaching Chinese and was able to teach more about the characters besides pinyin – these may be her reasons for emphasising both pinyin and characters and asking the pupils to do a lot of reading and writing of Chinese characters. Teachers C and E were beginner learners of Chinese themselves and their knowledge of Chinese was limited – these may be their reasons for preferring to use pinyin in introducing Chinese. As for Teacher D, although he had the best knowledge of Chinese in this study and would have been able to introduce both pinyin and characters, his lack of primary pedagogy may have caused him to make a choice based on what he was told to do by the head teacher or staff in the school. Teacher D may have excluded pinyin and characters from his teaching because the head teacher had set the teaching of Chinese culture as the goal of teaching Chinese in the school for KS1 pupils.

Moreover, as discussed in the literature review (Sections 2.2.3.2 and 2.5.4), learners' experience of first language acquisition may influence their second/new language learning. This seemed to apply in this study both to pupils and to English teachers who were learning Chinese as a foreign language themselves. The two English

primary teachers (Teachers C and E) who were at beginner Chinese level seemed to prefer using pinyin to characters in their teaching. This may suggest that they looked at Chinese pinyin in a similar way to English, because Chinese pinyin looks like an alphabetic language with tones on top. They may have assumed that pinyin would be easier for pupils whose first language was an alphabetic language. For example, teacher E believed that pinyin was easier because in the first instance the pupils needed something that was familiar to them in a completely unfamiliar language, and she felt that pinyin offered this in Chinese. In this study, apart from teacher B, the teachers only asked the pupils to practise and memorise characters on certain occasions, which is very different from teaching Chinese as a first language in China. Although teacher A also asked the pupils to copy/write characters and pinyin, there was a lot less practice of reading and writing Chinese characters than in Case B. However, memory and rote-learning strategies are the main learning method for Chinese and Japanese students (Ballard and Clanchy, 1991; Shimizu *et al.*, 2006). These learning strategies are based on Confucian heritage cultures, and may also be related to the demands of the Chinese language, which involves memorising characters with little phonological link to pronunciation (Medwell *et al.*, 2009). This is, however, a contrast to the particular version of communicative language teaching represented in English classrooms (Block, 2001, 2005).

A further important finding of this study is that all five teachers chose to present pinyin to the pupils first, or together with characters. In this study, pinyin seemed to be perceived as essential in introducing Chinese. This is an issue that has been discussed by many researchers before. Bassetti (2007) suggests that the majority of

Western learners begin their learning of Chinese with pinyin, not characters. Bassetti (2007) also points out that pinyin is necessary for beginners as it is a useful tool for teaching Chinese phonology and for allowing beginner learners to read. However, pinyin may have a negative effect on learners' pronunciation, because Western learners are already literate in their own orthography, and therefore their reading of pinyin may be influenced by their L1 experience (Bassetti, 2007). Bassetti (2007) indicates that, when English speaking students are exposed to the written forms of pinyin "iu" and "un", they are not usually aware that these pinyin represent /iou/ and /uən/ in Chinese, not /iu/ and /un/ which are not even part of the phonological repertoire of Chinese. This was also exactly the case in the current study. Many pupils in the study also tended to pronounce Chinese "c" in the English way as /k/, which is a completely different sound in Chinese. In this study, some pupils also seemed to find the tones of pinyin difficult to manage. Much of the time, the pupils did not pronounce the tones correctly, and neither did the English speaking teachers. A possible explanation for English speaking learners finding Chinese tones difficult is suggested by Wang *et al.* (2006). They believe that the tones of Chinese pinyin are processed differently by native and non-native speakers. For native speakers, there is a neural substrate underlying the ability to identify tones lateralised in the left hemisphere, while this hemispheric specialisation to cope with tone is not characteristic of non-native speakers whose L1 is a non-tonal language such as English (Wang and Sereno, 2006), in whom the processing of Mandarin tone lies in the homologous right hemisphere frontal regions (Hsieh *et al.*, 2001; Klein *et al.*, 2001; Wang *et al.*, 2001). Tonal pattern is an integral part of each word they learn, but such functional association between segmental structure

and language is non-existent in non-tonal speakers' linguistic behaviour (Wang *et al.*, 2006).

The teachers' choices and beliefs about Chinese pinyin and characters seemed to have some impact on pupils' perceptions of learning Chinese in this study. For example, many of the pupils in Case B, who were asked to write/copy characters most frequently, did not enjoy writing the characters as much as their peers, despite the fact that writing characters was one of the dominant factors suggested by pupils across the five cases as enjoyable (Section 4.6.3, Table 42). Some pupils in Case B also suggested in their interview that they did not like the writing tasks they were set in their lessons because they felt they were writing all the time. Moreover, the majority of pupils in Cases A and B, where their teachers asked them to do more writing than in the other three cases, found writing Chinese characters very hard (Section 4.6.3, Table 45). In contrast, the majority of pupils in Cases C and E, who did not write Chinese characters as often as their peers in Cases A and B, found Chinese characters easy to write (Section 4.6.3, Table 45). Although the pupils' perceptions were, in part, the result of teachers' subject knowledge and behaviour in the lessons, as discussed earlier in this chapter, how frequently the teachers asked the pupils to write characters also seemed to have an impact on pupils' learning experiences. Shimizu *et al.* (2002) propose that students will be willing to learn kanji (similar to characters) and will find learning kanji fun if their teachers believe that kanji is not difficult to learn and if they want to interest students in kanji. However, this did not seem applicable to the current study. Despite the fact that teacher B believed that characters were more fun for the pupils to learn (Section 4.4.4, Table 13) and teacher A aimed to increase the pupils' confidence in learning

Chinese characters (Section 4.3.2), and that these two teachers got the pupils to write characters more frequently in the lessons than the other three teachers, the pupils in these two cases did not show a greater interest in writing Chinese characters; in particular, many pupils in Case B did not enjoy writing characters very much.

This study does not attempt to offer a definitive answer to the question of whether to begin with pinyin, characters or both in English primary schools. However, it offers accounts of these situations and some evidence that pupils were interested in the characters themselves, even though some felt the characters were difficult. Given this, it seems desirable to introduce some characters early in Chinese learning. This is a very important conclusion because previous research, such as Wang *et al.* (2003), has been highly theoretical and abstract, and has not considered the teaching situation or views of the learners. This study builds on this by offering evidence that primary pupils can, and want to learn characters, although not all teachers chose to follow this up. Teacher E taught very few characters and knew very few characters herself; teacher D taught neither pinyin nor characters to the pupils. Despite this, the findings of this study (Section 4.6.3, Table 42) suggest that character learning is not only theoretically desirable, but is also interesting to the pupils, even when they are not doing it. However, it seems important to find the right balance between the pupils' enjoyment and the work they have to do to learn Chinese. As discussed in the previous paragraph, the pupils may be demotivated when they are given a lot of work that they are not used to. This is also an issue related to the pupils' expectations, which will be discussed in Section 5.6.

Another important issue raised here is the appropriate way to start to teach pinyin and/or characters to English primary pupils. As a native Chinese speaker, the researcher started pinyin by learning the finals with tones on top and the initials separately, and combining these to make different sounds for different characters. For Chinese pupils, the sounds of pinyin are already familiar to them before they learn written pinyin, which is described by Nicholas and Lightbown (2008) as the protolanguage stage in language acquisition. However, this does not apply to the English pupils in this study, as their protolanguage stage of language acquisition is in English, which is very different from Chinese. In this study, apart from teachers A and C spending some time in introducing and practising pinyin in this way, the others teachers did nothing like this (Section 4.5.3). More often, the teachers (apart from teacher D, who did not teach pinyin at all) tended to introduce pinyin in context, and use it to help the pupils to pronounce the content they were teaching. As there was no assessment in any of the cases, it is difficult to say whether or not the pupils were able to remember the pinyin, since they always saw pinyin when they read.

In terms of characters, it is a tradition that pupils in China normally start from simple characters and basic radicals that are easy to write (Tse *et al.*, 2007). Tse *et al.* (2007) suggest that Chinese pupils' learning of characters progresses slowly using contrived and artificial materials, and the criterion for the choice of materials is based on characters that are highly frequent in adult media usage but do not feature in pupils' daily lives, especially if the written form is complicated to write. For example, Chinese pupils start to learn simple characters such as “心” (heart),

which can then be used as the radical for many characters related to heart, including 想(miss), 愿(willing), and 思(think). Another example is the simple character “火” (fire), which can then be used as the radical for many characters related to fire, such as 炒 (fry), 烤 (bake), and 烧 (burn). Chinese radicals to Chinese are like roots and affixes to English (Shu and Anderson, 1997). Therefore, radical awareness is important for reading development in Chinese, and many Chinese pupils have a functional awareness of relationships between the radicals in the characters and the meanings of words containing the characters (Shu and Anderson, 1997). However, almost the first characters confronted by pupils in the study were the characters for “hello” in Chinese 你好, because this was the first thing they learnt about Chinese, but these are not the simplest characters to write or for using as radicals in Chinese. Zhu (2002) suggests that many students learn Chinese characters incidentally when they learn how to speak Chinese. Therefore, their acquisition of Chinese characters is not built on the basis of the form and evolution of Chinese characters. This is actually understandable, as the simplest characters to write are difficult to use in communicative dialogues. Communicative language teaching is used widely in English primary schools, and the most characteristic feature of this is that “it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view” (Littlewood, 1981, p. 1). In this study, the teachers taught Chinese characters mainly in the context of greetings, body parts, family members, etc. Despite most teachers in this study explaining how Chinese characters were invented and changed over a thousand years, they did not focus on these characters. Teachers B and C spent some time in introducing some simple characters to the pupils, including 山(mountain), 水(water), 火(fire), 口

(mouth) and 手(hand); teachers A and E showed videos to the pupils about the invention and formation of Chinese characters. However, these were only a very small part of the observed lessons. That is to say, almost none of the pupils in the study started to learn Chinese characters, if they did so at all, from simple ones to compound ones. However, in Tse *et al.*'s (2007) research into teaching Hong Kong pupils Chinese, they argue that it is more effective to teach characters in context, where the characters make sense to the learners, rather than making the pupils learn them through laborious practice. The data in this study do not show whether or not this is more effective in English primary schools. Future research in this area is therefore needed.

5.5.3. Teachers' teaching of Chinese culture

The five teachers in this study spent different amounts of time on teaching Chinese culture to the pupils. The findings (Section 4.5.5) suggest that the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) introduced more diverse activities in teaching Chinese culture than the other teachers; teacher A (Chinese heritage) also introduced some, but less than the two English primary class teachers; teacher D introduced some limited aspects of Chinese culture, even though the aim of Case D's Chinese lessons was to teach the pupils Chinese culture; teacher B taught very little about Chinese culture compared with the other four teachers.

There are three possible reasons for teachers' differences in teaching Chinese culture. The first is the teachers' motivation for teaching Chinese. As presented in Section 4.3.2, the motivation of the two English primary class teachers (Teachers

C and E) was to teach Chinese culture and this may be one reason why they taught more about Chinese culture in the lessons, while the motivation of the language specialist teacher (Teacher B) was language, which may be one reason why she did not teach culture to the pupils at all, but focused on their language skills. This also suggests that the novelty of Chinese may be interesting to English learners, including teachers. The second possible reason is the teachers' beliefs, which led to different planning priorities (Section 4.5.2, Table 19). In Cases A, C and E, in which the teachers spent more time on Chinese culture, the teachers believed that Chinese culture could motivate pupils' interest in learning Chinese (Section 4.4.4, Table 11), and the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E) made Chinese culture the priority in their teaching plans. In Case B, where the teacher taught little about Chinese culture, she felt writing was neglected in teaching languages and, therefore, writing was the teacher's planning priority. The third reason is the teachers' cultural backgrounds, which may result in different levels of enthusiasm for Chinese culture. In this study, the two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) did not show as much enthusiasm for Chinese culture as the two English primary class teachers, despite the fact that they taught something about Chinese culture in the lessons. The teachers' cultural background may also impact differently on their perceptions of Chinese culture. As a native Chinese speaker herself, the researcher's first understanding of Chinese culture was about Chinese tradition and custom. However, in England, intercultural understanding refers to "appreciating the richness and diversity of other cultures" as well as "recognising that there are different ways of seeing the world, and developing an international outlook" (DFE, 2012, Modern Foreign Languages Key Concepts on website). The

learning of culture is not assessed in learning languages in Chinese schools (Medwell *et al.*, 2012), but is included in the National Curriculum of England (DFE, 2012) and is perceived as a very important part of teaching languages. This was also valued by the head teachers in this study. For example, head teacher C said that:

I hope it'll encourage them to think as global people, but not just as Birmingham people, but think globally that they could actually go to the countries and speak the languages. And to get greater understanding and tolerance as well, so they don't believe that England is the only good place to be in the world. So they think bigger really, and also by learning Chinese (Head teacher interview, Case C).

This was also reflected by the teachers in the study. Teacher D, as a native Chinese speaker and the only teacher without any training background in teaching English pupils, followed the head teacher's target to teach Chinese culture, and his teaching content followed the primary class teacher's teaching content. However, he did not include as many cultural aspects of Chinese as the English primary teachers (C and E). Moreover, the misunderstanding about teaching Chinese characters between head teacher D and teacher D mentioned above suggests the same problem. Head teacher D believed that Chinese characters were an important part of Chinese culture which should be included when teaching Chinese culture. However, teacher D did not introduce Chinese characters to the pupils because he believed that Chinese characters were part of the Chinese language. In recent research, Medwell

et al. (2012) compared a native speaker teacher and language expert teacher in training primary Chinese teachers. They found that the native Chinese speaking teacher believed that teaching Chinese culture was important because learners might need it if they were to visit China, while the language expert teacher perceived culture as a tool, not just to help learners understand China but also to understand their own habits, patterns and assumptions. This suggests a future direction for training Chinese teachers for English primary schools, especially in training native Chinese speaking teachers.

The teacher's teaching of Chinese culture was reflected by the pupils, in both questionnaires and interviews. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.6.4), pupils who have experience of learning Chinese are keen to learn both the language and something about the culture (CILT, 2007). This appears to be true in the current study, but with some interesting patterns. Many pupils in the cases of the two English primary teachers (Teachers C and E) seemed to like learning both Chinese culture and Chinese language, and the percentages of pupils who preferred to learn Chinese culture and language were almost the same in these two cases (Section 4.6.3, Table 46). Some pupils in Case C even mentioned that they could learn Chinese culture at home by themselves but that they had to learn the language from the teacher in school. In contrast, most pupils in Case B, where the teacher taught little about Chinese culture, expressed their eagerness to learn Chinese culture, and complained in their interview that they did not have the opportunity to learn about it. The majority of the pupils in Case A also preferred Chinese culture to Chinese language, but this may have been not only because of teacher A's teaching of Chinese, but also her teaching method in general, as discussed in the previous

section. It was the same for the pupils in the other cases. Nonetheless, Chinese culture did ultimately seem to be interesting to the pupils in this study. Some researchers have also suggested the importance of introducing the culture of the TL to the pupils. Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggest that the more the students admire the target culture, the more successful they tend to be in learning languages. Therefore, it may be argued that, in order to maintain pupils' interest in learning Chinese, Chinese culture must be included in Chinese teaching. However, as the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013a) addresses the importance of pupils' language competence but not their intercultural understanding, teachers of Chinese in the future may need to consider how much time they should spend on teaching Chinese culture, and how to use Chinese culture to help pupils learn the language skills of Chinese.

5.6. Pupils' Expectations and Learning of Chinese

The findings for what pupils enjoyed most and least (Section 4.6.3, Tables 42 and 43) suggest that the pupils preferred activities that were fun for them, such as sometimes writing characters, lessons in Chinese calligraphy and the Chinese New Year, singing songs, and doing handicrafts for Chinese New Year; but they did not like the hard work involved in copying characters over and over again and repeatedly learning. This is the same when learning other foreign languages (Cable *et al.*, 2010), and trends in language learning in English primary schools currently tend to be light-hearted, fun experiences which primary pupils enjoy immensely (Muijs, *et al.*, 2005). As discussed earlier, in this study, where the teacher made pupils engage in a large amount of writing and reading practice (Case B), the pupils

had the lowest interest in learning Chinese. Conversely, where teachers embedded the learning with games and physical activities (Cases C and E), the pupils had the highest motivation for learning Chinese. Therefore, one of the key issues suggested in this study is that teachers' teaching is constrained by pupils' expectations. It seems that no matter how skilled the teacher is, in terms of learning and introducing new languages (for example, Teacher B in this study), it cannot be assumed that he or she will be able to share those language learning skills with pupils, unless it is done in a fun way for the pupils.

However, as discussed previously, Chinese is a language that has to be learnt by heart, and much memorisation and repetition is demanded in learning it. Therefore, the balance between fun and hard work presents a challenge in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils. This may be related to differences in the cultural and educational backgrounds of the UK and China. Traditional teaching in Chinese schools is teacher-centred, although China is seeking to shift to a Western, student-centred approach (Lebans and Radigan, 2007). There are usually few fun activities in Chinese schools, but a lot of work, as well as homework. Chinese teachers expect their pupils to prepare and revise lesson materials automatically, or to memorise the characters and pinyin encountered (Medwell *et al.*, 2012), and the teaching is to the whole class (Li and Wray, 2009). Therefore, Chinese children learn through a lot of practice and, of course, in most cases this is their first language. On the other hand, learning through play is a key concept in English education (Roussou, 2004), and children in England may have high expectations in terms of the entertainment value of lessons, relative to the practice they may need to put in. English primary teachers are trained to do activities like festival rhymes and songs, acting out stories,

warm ups, games and so on in teaching languages (Medwell *et al.*, 2012), and there is rarely any homework for the pupils to practise the learning. Consequently, children in these two countries may have very different expectations of learning. As suggested by Medwell *et al.* (2012), “Chinese children do not expect fun things in class” (p.43). However, this study suggests that English pupils perceive fun as crucial to their learning, as do English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E). Teaching a language that is traditionally learnt through a lot of rote-learning and memorisation to pupils who are used to learning through fun activities may present further challenges. In fact, the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013a) addresses the importance of teaching serious language skills to pupils in language education. As discussed in Section 5.1.2, this may be a challenge for teachers whose teaching is preferred by pupils because their lessons are fun but lack practice, such as teachers C and E in this study. Medwell *et al.* (2012) question “whether it is possible for children to learn Chinese (and to a lesser extent other languages) without some sort of regular out-of-class learning of language elements” (p.43). They also believe that this is difficult in English schools culturally, where the main activity involving any regular out-of-school practice is reading with parents: it is unlikely that the pupils’ parents in this study knew Chinese. Cameron (2001) also argues that the limited time allocated to language teaching in schools is too short to be wasted on fun activities, and should be used to maximise pupils’ learning.

This study cannot provide any answers as to what kind of activities may be the optimal choice, both for practising languages and for the aspect of fun. Further research will be needed, and experts in both teaching Chinese and teaching English primary pupils may need to provide a future, collaborative solution. This

implication may apply to all language learning in UK primary schools, but is especially important in Chinese, where the memory load is so high and the “code breaking” element of alphabetic language lower.

Another issue raised here is that the lack of assessment of Chinese may encourage primary teachers to ask pupils to do less hard work, or may lower the status and importance of progression in Chinese within the curriculum and in the eyes of pupils and teachers. This is known as the “washback effect”, whereby assessment affects teaching (Cheng *et al.*, 2004) and, conversely, a lack of emphasis on assessment may reduce progression and achievement. Teachers may not necessarily be as confident about the progress they are making in teaching Chinese as they suggest. For example, head teacher A persuaded the linked secondary school to offer Chinese, as presented in the findings, and wanted teacher A to teach in the secondary school as well, but teacher A refused as she did not wish to face the pressure of GCSE Chinese exams (Section 4.6.1, Table 26). It seems that teacher A was not confident in teaching Chinese where formal assessment was required. This study indicates a concern for how the progress of teaching and learning Chinese in English primary schools can be ensured, given that fun seems to be prioritised over hard work, such as repetitive practice.

5.7. Head Teachers’ Impact on the Provision of Chinese

The head teacher’s pivotal role in the success of language provision has been stressed by many researchers (Cable *et al.*, 2010; Jones and McLachlan, 2009; Powell *et al.*, 2000) and included in government documents, such as the National

Language Strategy (DfES, 2002). Cable *et al.* (2010) suggest that the head teacher's commitment and vision are critical in establishing and sustaining subject provision, as is effective subject leadership in general. This, of course, is also the case in language provision, as agreed by many researchers: Jones and McLachlan (2009) suggest that "where the head teacher has a positive attitude towards primary languages, this is likely to enhance the profile of the subject in the school community" (p.15); Cable *et al.* (2010) state that "it is evident that successful implementation and on-going development of languages was driven by the vision and leadership of the head teacher" (p.135); and Powell *et al.* (2000) also emphasise that the role of the head teacher is vital in offering languages.

This also applies in this study, because the teaching of Chinese was a decision taken either by current head teachers or by previous head teachers, and their personal passion for providing Chinese seemed to have an influence on the teaching of Chinese, besides all the other influential issues discussed above. In this study, three head teachers (Head teachers A, C and E) were very optimistic and passionate about undertaking Chinese (Sections 4.3.1 and 4.6.1). Their plans for the future development of teaching Chinese were different because these three schools were at different stages in undertaking Chinese. However, they were all very interested in developing the teaching of Chinese in their schools. They also provided a lot of support in teaching Chinese, including paying the teacher extra for teaching Chinese, encouraging the teacher to take the lead, seeking opportunities to take teachers to visit Chinese schools, taking pupils to Chinese learning camp, and so on. The teachers in these three schools were well supported, and were interested in learning and teaching Chinese themselves. Moreover, the head teachers of the

schools where only some pupils were learning Chinese at that time (Head teachers C and E) both wished to offer Chinese across the whole school in the future. In fact, when the case studies began, School 1 (Head teacher A) was offering Chinese across the whole school; School 2 (Head teacher C) aimed to do so and had successfully started to provide Chinese across the whole school two months after the completion of the case study; School 4 (Head teacher E) had just started to offer Chinese; and head teacher E aimed to achieve what School 2 had done. One head teacher in this study, head teacher D, had different opinions and plans for offering Chinese. He kept the provision of Chinese the same as it was before he became head teacher of School 3 – compulsory only to pupils from reception to Year 2, but optional to pupils from Years 3 to 6 – as he believed that French was the language most parents wanted their children to learn and the language the local secondary school was able to take further. Therefore, head teacher D was satisfied with the provision of Chinese in his school and did not plan to develop it in the future. Chinese lessons at this school were cancelled several times because of other activities while the case study was being conducted there. It seemed that Chinese was given lower status than French. The Chinese teacher resigned after the case study had been completed, as he suggested that it was a part-time role but required a lot of time to plan lessons, and the payment was insufficient. Moreover, the Chinese lessons were sometimes cancelled at short notice. Although head teacher D tried to recruit a new Chinese teacher afterwards, Chinese was stopped because there was no suitable teacher.

This study suggests that, in order to assure the development of Chinese teaching, head teachers need to be more supportive.

5.8. Unique Features of Teaching Chinese Compared with European Languages

As discussed above, the learning and teaching of Chinese may be fundamentally different from the learning and teaching of English. Some unique features of teaching Chinese were identified by the teachers in this study (Section 4.6.2, Table 33).

Firstly, the teachers suggested both harder and more easy aspects of teaching Chinese compared with European languages. This may be linked to the nature of the Chinese language. On the one hand, Chinese tense, sentence structure and numbers were perceived as easier to teach. For example, there are no tenses in Chinese, and once learners know Chinese numbers from one to nine, it is possible, in essence, to count from one to ninety-nine. On the other hand, in line with what was discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.4), Chinese pinyin, characters and measure words were perceived to be more difficult to teach by teachers B and E. This is linked to the different natures of Chinese and English, as discussed above.

Secondly, teaching Chinese was perceived to be difficult to progress by teacher C, and she suggested that this was because Chinese had both pinyin and characters. It seems that this may also be because of the different demands of learning Chinese compared with learning European languages, owing to their different language systems. For example, English pupils learn English by learning the sounds and blending them together (Li and Wray, 2009), which does not require a lot of memorisation in learning. In contrast, pupils in China have to learn Chinese by heart

because the pinyin and characters do not suggest each other in Chinese, which results in a lot of memory work in order to remember them (Jiang and Cohen, 2011). In China, teachers require pupils to practise writing every character many times until its recall is automatic, and it is common to find Chinese pupils writing each character up to 100 times (Ministry of Education, 2001). Chinese teachers use dictation at least once a week to assess whether pupils are able to write without error the written equivalent of the speech they hear, and pupils are made to practise the characters again and again if they fail to remember, until they succeed (Tse, *et al.*, 2007). However, as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.4), this is very different from the learning of alphabetic languages. Pupils in English primary schools may need to spend more effort and time on learning Chinese in order to make marked progress. However, this type of learning is not something that English pupils are used to. None of the pupils in any of the cases in this study had any homework to practise their Chinese. The only work they did was during the lessons, sometimes involving worksheets.

Another interesting issue raised by this study is that almost all teachers and head teachers (except Case D) believed that Chinese was easier for pupils to learn than European languages, and some suggested that they felt primary pupils were less likely to feel embarrassed (Section 4.6.1, Table 32; Section 4.6.2, Table 33). However, the majority of pupils felt the opposite, with some pupils suggesting that European languages were easier because they were similar to English (Section 4.6.3, Table 49). It seemed that the teachers and head teachers underestimated the difficulties the pupils might encounter in learning Chinese.

Finally, the pupils' ability to learn Chinese was perceived by teachers B and C as different from their ability to learn literacy (Section 4.6.2). Teacher B suggested that Chinese was logical, and she found that pupils who were better in maths tended to be better in Chinese too. Teacher C also suggested that normally girls were better in literacy and languages, but in Chinese the boys with lower ability in literacy seemed better in Chinese. This is an interesting finding, as it is the teachers' reflection on the nature of Chinese compared with European languages. This may provide some practical evidence to support teachers of Chinese in their teaching in future. For example, when the teachers arrange pupils into different table groups to enhance the learning according to their abilities, they may consider this to be different in Chinese lessons.

These special features of teaching Chinese are worth researching further in future, and provide some suggestions for Chinese teachers in England.

5.9. Summary

This chapter has discussed the reasons behind possible relationships between the findings and their implications. Firstly, the choice to offer Chinese, the provision of Chinese, and the resources for teaching Chinese have been discussed. This study suggests that English teachers' personal interest in the Chinese language or culture may be their key motivation for teaching Chinese. Moreover, some head teachers also value the richness of Chinese culture and the growing importance of China. However, the provision of Chinese in the schools in this study tended to be light-hearted, similar to the provision of other languages in general (Muijs *et al.*, 2005),

and no formal assessment was observed in any of the cases. Moreover, resources are available to motivate pupils' interest in learning Chinese, but not enough for teaching and learning the Chinese language specifically, or at least they were not easily available to or perceived as appropriate by the teachers in this study. This study suggests that existing government schemes of work are not appropriate for Chinese and cannot easily be used by teachers who are beginners of Chinese; and that there is a lack of Chinese language expertise, leadership and teamwork in the planning of Chinese teaching.

This was followed by discussion of how and why teachers' cultural, language and training backgrounds may impact upon their subject knowledge and teaching methods, and the teaching of Chinese in particular. In this study, having good Chinese language skills, and the ability both to manage the Chinese content of lessons and to achieve positive behaviour management in a way which fits the expectations of primary pupils is a challenge for teachers, and the teachers in this study did not combine all these aspects equally. Each case showed a different combination and balance of teaching advantages. The teachers from different backgrounds also had different priorities in planning, and different beliefs, behaviour, use of target language, focus on the four language learning skills, choices between pinyin and characters, and emphasis between Chinese language and culture in teaching Chinese. This study suggests that there is no uniformity in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils, and there is currently no suitable national guidance for teaching Chinese. This is not a practicable situation, and it is argued that, if there is a genuine will to increase Chinese teaching, the government must provide specialised curriculum guidance, give Chinese equal status to other

languages, and also offer teachers planning support so that they can plan on the basis of best practice in a less *ad hoc* way. This study also suggests that teachers' backgrounds exert a great impact on pupils' motivation for and interest in learning Chinese, and that pupils are more comfortable learning Chinese from their class teachers, no matter how limited their teachers' knowledge of Chinese. Moreover, pupils perceive Chinese characters and Chinese culture to be interesting.

However, discussion of English pupils' expectations for fun learning versus the demand for huge amounts of practice in learning Chinese has raised the question of how to balance fun and hard work in teaching Chinese. This study suggests that Chinese characters are interesting to pupils, but they no longer enjoy it if they have to practise writing frequently. However, Chinese is a language that needs to be learnt by heart, and much memorisation and repetition is demanded in learning it. Therefore, the balance between fun and hard work presents a challenge in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils. This study also suggests that Chinese culture is interesting to pupils, but this raises the question of how to enhance pupils' language competence through learning Chinese culture. Indeed, the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013a) addresses the importance of teaching serious language skills to pupils in language education. However, pupils' expectations may constrain the teachers' teaching and may pose challenges for teachers of Chinese in the future.

The impact of head teachers has also been discussed. This study suggests that head teachers' different perceptions of the provision of Chinese and their enthusiasm for offering Chinese in school are crucial to the development of Chinese teaching in schools.

Finally, some unique features of teaching Chinese compared with European languages have been discussed, including teachers' perceptions of harder and easier aspects of teaching Chinese, the pupils' progress in learning Chinese, and the pupils' ability to learn Chinese. This study suggests that the nature of Chinese may bring both simple and difficult aspects for teachers, and demand that pupils in English primary schools spend more effort and time on learning Chinese in order to make marked progress. However, this type of learning is not something that English pupils are used to. Moreover, pupils' ability to learn Chinese was perceived by some teachers in this study as different from their ability to learn literacy. This may provide some practical evidence to support teachers of Chinese in their teaching in the future.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

This research has explored four issues concerning teaching Chinese in four English primary schools, on the basis of five different cases. This chapter will summarise the key research findings, consider the implications of this study, discuss its limitations, and make recommendations for future research.

6.2. Overview of Key Research Findings

The detailed findings were presented in Chapter 4. Each case is very different, which is an important finding in itself. The teaching of Chinese in English primary schools is embryonic, varied and experimental. In this study, the head teachers showed very different levels of passion about offering Chinese. They all recognised the importance of Chinese as a world language and some were particularly interested in China and believed their pupils would be also. These cases also show very clearly that current teachers of Chinese in primary schools are incredibly diverse. They have very different backgrounds in terms of culture, language and training, but also in terms of their subject knowledge for teaching Chinese. Consequently, there was a difference between teachers who were trained as primary teachers and the cases of a secondary trained languages teacher and an untrained teacher. There was also a difference between teachers with British backgrounds and teachers of Chinese heritage. In this study, the teachers' backgrounds seemed to

have an impact on their subject knowledge and also on their teaching skills, including planning, teaching methods, beliefs and use of the target language.

These findings might have been expected from the literature, but the literature did not predict that the children would react very differently to the different teachers or that their motivation for and enjoyment of Chinese lessons would be closely related to the teaching background of the teacher. One of the most important findings of this study is that there seems to be a particularly “English primary” way of teaching Chinese, which elicits a positive response from children. This seems to include knowing the children and their routines, and their expectations of exciting activities and classroom practices. It also seems to include a focus on learning about China and Chinese culture, although not always with contact in the form of links between schools or children. For example, the two English primary class teachers (Teachers C and E), who were beginner Chinese learners themselves, had different levels of knowledge and understanding of Chinese. Despite this, they were the most enthusiastic and motivated teachers of Chinese and, as *ab initio* learners, were putting considerable personal effort into learning Chinese in order to teach it. The pupils of these two teachers were also most positive about their learning of Chinese. These two teachers elicited such enthusiasm and positive responses from the primary Chinese learners that it was easy to forget how little Chinese they actually knew. It might be concluded that skilled teaching and knowledge of primary teaching and children might make up for limited Chinese capability. However, this must be treated with real caution, as the learning of Chinese is about more than positive experiences and motivations. This is discussed below.

The five teachers in these cases all agreed that the teaching of Chinese should include both written and oral forms. However, they held different beliefs about the teaching of written and spoken Chinese and, in particular, about the introduction of pinyin and characters (Section 4.3.4, Table 13). It was slightly surprising that the only Chinese native speaking teacher (Teacher D) was one of the teachers (Teachers D and E) who felt that teaching characters was not essential in primary schools. Two of the English background teachers (Teachers B and C) who had rather limited Chinese were, nevertheless, keen to teach characters and pinyin. The two Chinese heritage teachers (Teachers A and D) who had better Chinese were most enthusiastic about correct character learning – to the point where the children found it boring in one case (Case A). This study seems to suggest that teachers and children do want to learn characters as well as pinyin, but struggle to maintain a positive attitude to the practice that teachers think is necessary. Indeed, the idea of practice itself has emerged in a number of ways through the course of this study. In Case B children found practising characters boring, and in Case A the children found stroke practice and number practice boring. On the other hand, the teachers in Cases C and E repeatedly discussed how they made lessons interesting and avoided boring practice.

One aspect of practice could be homework, which was discussed by all the primary teachers. However, in the only class in which homework was set (Case C), it was specifically given to avoid routine, practice activities and children were given research tasks which were chosen to engage and enthuse them. The teachers specifically set homework in this way to avoid the potential boredom of routine practice activities. Teacher A, when asked about homework, openly said that

practice homework is “not in the culture” of primary schools. This must raise an issue for learning all languages in primary schools, but especially a memory-based language like Chinese, as all the teachers agreed that Chinese characters do require practice. All KS2 classes had an hour per week of Chinese and the KS1 class 40 minutes. It seems difficult to learn Chinese in such a short time without any homework for practice. This is such an obvious issue that it would be easy to overlook it.

Given the diversity of the five teachers and their backgrounds, it is unsurprising that their teaching of the language and use of the target language were different, and their pupils held slightly different views about their learning, particularly in terms of difficulties and successes. Pupils taught by the language specialist teacher (Teacher B), who was originally trained to be a secondary teacher and had a great deal of language teaching experience, did not enjoy learning Chinese, and their motivation and interest was lower than the children in other cases. Meanwhile, the pupils taught by a Chinese heritage teacher (Teacher A), who was the teacher of Chinese in the school and had received English primary class teacher training, held very different views about what they did not enjoy and many of them felt that tones were very difficult to hear and produce. In fact, all the children in all the cases agreed that tones were difficult. Only the class of KS1 pupils taught by another Chinese heritage teacher (Teacher D), who was in fact a native Chinese speaker but had not received any training on teaching English pupils, did not learn much about the language. This was a unique case because the teaching was supported by the class teacher all the time, and the head teacher clearly had some concern about

teachers without QTS. Again, this does seem to point to the importance of teaching skills.

Another important finding of this study is that currently available guidance on teaching primary languages is perceived to be unsuitable for teaching primary Chinese. The only government guidance specifically for teaching primary Chinese, the Scheme of Work for Chinese Mandarin (TDA, 2010), was used by only one teacher in this study (Teacher C), and was perceived to be unsuitable for teachers who were beginners of Chinese themselves. The teachers in this study also found the KS2 Framework for Languages (DCSF, 2005) unsuited to Chinese. This was a predictable finding, given the literature on and content of the schemes of work. However, the implications of this for teachers have not previously been explored. In the cases in this study, possibly because of lack of guidance, the teachers all planned schemes of work and lessons for Chinese themselves, and some of them seemed to plan in rather less detail than for other subjects. The individual nature of the planning may be related to the relatively slow progress in all the classes and the high levels of repetition, although this study did not examine this in detail and insufficient assessment data were collected to draw robust conclusions. The teachers certainly designed the teaching materials themselves. Although the teachers mentioned a shortage of materials, they did not use materials available on the internet, so there may also be an issue of limited subject knowledge in this finding. This study must conclude that, without clear direction, it may be hard for teachers with limited subject knowledge to access materials or to maintain progression.

Regarding the content introduced by the teachers, greetings in Chinese were the most common topic, followed by numbers and body parts. Chinese New Year and Chinese calligraphy were the most common content of Chinese culture introduced by the teachers. Moreover, speaking and listening were the whole or partial focus of all five teachers, and writing and reading was emphasised only by the language specialist teacher (Teacher B). Outside the Chinese lessons, there were few opportunities for the pupils to practise Chinese.

This study has also found a total lack of formal assessment or recording of pupils' learning of Chinese in any of the five cases. Except for the language specialist teacher (Teacher B), who expected pupils to pass an assessment by Year 6, none of the other teachers mentioned it, but mainly expected pupils to have an interest in learning languages and/or Chinese, or some basic communications in Chinese. All head teachers were similarly concerned with the pupils' awareness of and interest in Chinese or other world cultures, but not in terms of their Chinese language competence. However, their view of intercultural understanding was limited. The head teachers assumed that the teaching of Chinese was in itself likely to develop intercultural understanding. The degree to which intercultural understanding was taught in the classes in this study varied from teacher C, who had limited Chinese but promoted real reflection about China, to teacher D, who showed only traditional stories and pictures of modern China to the pupils.

This study has found that the British heritage teachers in these cases had a strong personal interest in Chinese language or culture, and Chinese culture was perceived by most teachers to be the pupils' motivation for learning Chinese. The pupils also

shared some aspects in common, including their enjoyment of learning Chinese characters and Chinese culture. However, the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013a) addresses the importance of ensuring that pupils develop their language skills. Therefore, the teaching of culture and intercultural understanding are unlikely to be the highest priorities for teachers of Chinese in future.

This study did not attempt to establish the absolute difficulty of Chinese relative to other languages. However, the majority of pupils across all five cases believed that Chinese is more difficult than European languages, although their teachers had a range of views about this. Interestingly, fewer pupils taught by the two English primary class teachers agreed that Chinese is more difficult than other languages, suggesting that the way Chinese is taught may make a difference to how difficult children think it is. These findings about teaching and difficulty, though exciting and interesting, raise the question of whether the future of Chinese should be left to the enthusiasm of individual teachers, without any national guidance or framework. If so, it is not clear that Chinese will be able to develop or flourish in primary schools, lacking a sound framework to allow good transfer between classes, progression in learning and good assessment.

6.3. Implications of this Study

This study has outlined a number of issues surrounding the teaching and learning of Chinese in the context of English primary schools which have not been researched before, and has indicated several possible factors that may influence or enhance the teaching of Chinese to English primary pupils. This section will discuss

the implications of this study in the areas of participants' motivation and enjoyment, the teaching of Chinese, and policy demands for government.

6.3.1. Participant's motivation and enjoyment

The results of this study suggest that the novelty of Chinese and the richness of Chinese culture may easily become a motivation for learners from different language and cultural backgrounds, including teachers who are learning to teach Chinese. Therefore, schools who decide to introduce Chinese to their pupils in future may make a positive start. However, this study suggests that pupils only tend to maintain their interest and enjoy their learning of Chinese if they feel the lessons are fun, which may be a particular challenge for teachers who do not have a background in English primary teacher training.

6.3.2. The teaching of Chinese

In this study, the teachers equipped with English primary pedagogy (Teachers C and E) were more appreciated by pupils and head teachers, despite their limited knowledge of Chinese.

The results of this study also raise some suggestions for teachers of Chinese. Firstly, this study strongly suggests that Chinese culture must be included in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils, if only because the pupils find it enjoyable. The inclusion of Chinese culture will also require planning if it is to avoid repetition: Chinese New Year may become the new "French breakfast", something children

enjoy the first time it is done but become disenchanted with it if it is repeated regularly and they do not get to develop a greater depth of cultural understanding. However, one key issue about the teaching of Chinese, which this study has raised but not resolved, is the role of learning about Chinese culture and intercultural understanding. The case in which the pupils had the lowest motivation (Case B) focused exclusively on language learning, but most of them preferred to learn about Chinese culture rather than the language. The cases in which the pupils had the highest motivation (Cases C and E) learnt a lot about Chinese culture, but had a much more balanced view of the language and culture. However, this was not planned or assessed. This raises a huge question about what the goals of language learning in primary schools should be, and gives a warning about possible attitudes towards a language skills-focused curriculum in primary schools.

This study also indicates a demand for teachers to give more attention to reading and writing Chinese, not just speaking and listening, because reading and writing are important for learning Chinese characters. The writing of Chinese characters was also found to be interesting to pupils and should be included in teaching Chinese, but how much and how frequently the pupils should practise writing must be considered carefully because the pupils may be demotivated if they practise the same writing frequently. The teaching of Chinese writing is complicated, and ensuring continuity and progression for children will require careful planning and practice. In this study, none of these cases demonstrates that children can experience continuity and progression in their Chinese learning.

This study also suggests that some teachers may need to make more effort to understand the difficulties encountered by their pupils in learning Chinese. In this study, most teachers believed that Chinese would be easier or no more difficult than European languages for the pupils to learn, but the majority of pupils suggested that Chinese was more difficult to learn. Therefore, in order to help pupils improve their learning, school staff, especially teachers of Chinese, must understand what their pupils perceive as difficulties in learning Chinese. In addition, it may not be appropriate to base the teaching and learning of Chinese on other academic achievements. In this study, pupils' ability to learn Chinese was perceived by two British heritage teachers (Teachers B and C) to be different from their ability to learn literacy, so teachers may need to group pupils differently in their Chinese lessons.

The amount of language learnt in the Chinese lessons in this study also has implications for the future teaching of languages in primary schools. The children learnt very limited amounts of Chinese because the language was allocated little time and, in some cases, had low status. The lesson content also tended to be repeated sometimes. This may be because the pupils and/or teachers could not remember all the content they had already learnt and/or taught. There may also be a need for more practice of Chinese in the lessons and/or outside the classrooms because of the nature of Chinese learning. Tan *et al.* (2005) suggest that writing Chinese characters helps long-term motor memories of Chinese characters. As a native Chinese speaker herself, the researcher learnt Chinese by doing a lot of writing and reading practice in primary school, but this amount of practice was not found in any of the cases. Where children practised writing and reading most (Case

B), the pupils wrote best – but they also disliked the lessons most. English pupils expect fun in lessons; therefore, the balance between fun and making progress with enough practice must be carefully considered. This study cannot answer the question of whether it is possible to learn Chinese (or any language) in an hour a week, but it does suggest that it is an important question to ask as, importantly, the new National Curriculum of 2014 (DFE, 2013) places an emphasis on pupils' language competence in primary language education.

6.3.3. The learning of Chinese

This study also has implications for primary learners of Chinese. As discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5), Chinese is a language that demands a lot of practice in learning, based on memory and rote-learning strategies. However, as discussed in the literature review (Section 2.5.4) and found in this study (Section 4.6.3), the demand for practice and memory in learning Chinese are unfamiliar activities to English primary children. This study has shown that children only enjoy learning Chinese when the lesson is fun (as in Cases C and E), and they do not like learning Chinese when there is a lot of practice (as in Case B). The expectation of “fun lessons” by English primary pupils, or any English school pupil, is a very fundamental point which any attempt to teach Chinese seriously in the primary years must address. The present study cannot offer answers to the conundrum of how to develop complex skills and knowledge in a way which is fun, but it is possible to speculate about this in relation to other subjects in the primary curriculum which are taught very successfully. In mathematics, for instance, it may be said that children have to learn a great many number bonds by heart and to

practise the same calculations often. The same might be said of early reading. However, primary teachers are experts at making this activity acceptable, understood, and even fun for primary children. If we want children to make real progress in learning Chinese, especially in terms of being able to read and write Chinese characters, it may be time to embrace lessons from other areas of the curriculum. Identifying appropriate learning behaviours, skills and knowledge for learning Chinese at primary school, and developing ways to make children learn in ways they see as enjoyable and important, may be the most important steps in spreading the successful teaching of Chinese. This may be the magic ingredient of the “English primary pedagogy of Chinese” mentioned above.

6.3.4. Policy demands

There is little governmental support for teaching Chinese in English primary schools and this needs to be developed. The main sources of support for teaching Chinese in this study were head teachers, the Confucius Institute and partner schools in China. Where support is available, the teachers can use it, but they need more support and guidance.

This study sends a message to the government that there is an urgent demand for appropriate guidance for teachers of Chinese. The frameworks of the past are perceived to be unsuitable for teaching Chinese and unsuitable for teachers who are beginners of Chinese. All of the teachers in this study said that the KS2 Framework (DfES, 2005) was not suitable for Chinese but had been designed for European languages. The only teacher who used the Scheme of Work for Chinese (TDA, 2010)

found it difficult to use it as a beginner of Chinese. No new framework has been proposed and the 2014 National Curriculum is extremely brief (and only applies in some schools). It does not offer the guidance which the teachers in this study wanted. Moreover, all the teachers in this study worked independently in teaching Chinese, unlike the way in which they taught other subjects. This is partly because the teachers of Chinese in this study were the only school staff who knew and could teach Chinese, and few other school staff were able to help or support the Chinese teachers' planning and teaching. Therefore, a network for primary Chinese teachers to share experiences and exchange ideas might be useful.

Another issue suggested by this study is that the training of teachers of Chinese must be developed, as the findings suggest that teachers may have a great impact on their pupils' motivation for and interest in learning Chinese. There were significant variations between the cases regarding the pupils' desire to continue Chinese at secondary school. This suggests that the choice of language is not necessarily about language itself, but other factors may affect children's decision making. In this study, the teachers seemed to be a deciding factor. When the children liked their teacher and enjoyed their lessons, they wanted to continue, and vice versa. One implication of this is that the subject knowledge required to teach Chinese must be considered carefully, and assumptions that native speakers who have no teaching background can be teachers or that language specialists who have no primary training background can teach primary pupils may be unfounded. Future teachers of Chinese to primary pupils must be trained in both primary pedagogy and knowledge of Chinese, but the cultural differences that may be faced by those

from different backgrounds seeking to teach Chinese must be taken into consideration during their training.

6.4. Limitations of this Study

Several limitations of this study must be examined. The first concern is the common criticism of case studies that the findings cannot be generalised (Bryman, 2008). However, the validity of this study is based on the transparency of the presentation of the data collected and there is no intention to generalise these findings. This study offers five distinct cases, not a picture of the whole population of primary Chinese classes. Despite this, it was expected that some common patterns would be discovered across cases and, more importantly, this study aimed to understand features within and across the selected five cases and the relationships between issues within and across the research questions.

The use of mixed research methods helped in the collection of as much data as possible but, as discussed in Chapter 3, every method has its own weaknesses. With regard to the questionnaire, the answers given by the pupils may not be entirely true as they may not answer every question carefully and patiently. Despite the administration of the questionnaire being planned and piloted, and the questions being evaluated carefully through the pilot study to minimise its limitations, it was not possible to eliminate its limitations completely. For example, the teachers of Chinese or class teachers were always present in the classroom, and they sometimes walked around to help the pupils understand the questions. Hence, the pupils might be afraid to write down their true answers if they were negative or related to the

teachers. With regard to lesson observations, the pupils and teachers may still have behaved differently, although the researcher spent a huge amount of time getting to know the pupils and teachers before officially starting the observations. For instance, the teachers were sometimes worried about the fact that their Chinese was not correct while the researcher was there, and checked it with her during the lessons. With regard to the interviews, the participants may not have given entirely truthful answers, but answers they believed were positive, even though they were all assured that their names would not be disclosed and their answers would only be used for this research. For example, one of the teachers (Teacher A) suggested that, to motivate their interest, teachers should not correct pupils much in learning Chinese. However, this teacher corrected the pupils all the time during the observed lessons. These facts could not be excluded, and they are limitations to this study.

The third limitation of this study is the overwhelming volume of data collected. As this study aimed to explore the teaching and learning of Chinese in a completely new context, there were many issues for investigation. Therefore, every second in the school was used to collect all relevant data, using every possible research method. In the end, during the data analysis the amount of data collected was overwhelming. Consequently, a lot of time was spent on data reduction and data display. Future research might focus on a smaller number of issues explored by and identified in this study in order to obtain more detailed results.

6.5. Recommendations for Future Research

Some interesting questions have emerged from this study which are worthy of further research. Firstly, future researchers should conduct further relevant studies to test what the results of this study have suggested. For instance, the relationship between teachers' subject knowledge and pupils' motivation and interest in learning Chinese might be investigated in more detail using quantitative research methods, with a larger sample of pupils. Moreover, future research could be focused on practical issues in teaching Chinese on the basis of what has been found in this study. Some questions for further consideration are listed below.

- How does teachers' subject knowledge impact on pupils' progression in learning Chinese?
- What is the most suitable approach to introducing Chinese characters to beginner pupils in English primary schools? Is it possible to structure the introduction of characters from simple to complicated (to write) or according to the demands of communication? Which approach is more effective?
- How is pupils' ability to learn Chinese different from their general achievement? And how might this knowledge help teachers in teaching Chinese?
- How can pupils' interest in learning Chinese be maintained whilst giving them enough practice in the language?
- How can class teachers and L1 Chinese speaking teachers work effectively in teaching Chinese to English primary pupils?

Another recommendation is that other research methods could be used to explore this area, such as stimulated recall if possible, and experimental research. Stimulated recall was initially considered for this study, but it was difficult to get the consent of the participants and the pupils' parents. However, it would be a useful tool to help teachers and pupils reflect on and discuss their teaching and learning, if permission could be obtained in future. Moreover, experimental research could be used to investigate the introduction of Chinese characters through different approaches, in order to compare which approach is more effective.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Pupils' Questionnaire (Case A, B, C, E – KS2)

YOUR Learning of Chinese

As you are learning Chinese, we would like to know what you think about it! There is no right or wrong answer for any of the questions. Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. I hope you will find it enjoyable!



Section 1:

1. Why do you want to learn Chinese?
I want to learn Chinese because

Section 2: Please put an "X" in the box which shows how you feel.

| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| Example questions: | I enjoy eating cheese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| | Making cakes is difficult. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 1. It is important to learn other languages. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 2. Learning languages is fun. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 3. I like learning Chinese. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 4. I enjoy my Chinese lessons. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 5. It is important for me to learn Chinese. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 6. English is enough for me, because most people in the world can speak English. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 7. Learning Chinese is easy. | | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| 8. I like to learn Chinese language more than I like to learn Chinese culture. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 9. I like learning how to speak Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 10. To speak Chinese is easy. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 11. I like learning the Chinese pinyin. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 12. Chinese pinyin is difficult to learn. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 13. I like learning the tones of Chinese pinyin. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 14. The tones of Chinese pinyin are easy to learn. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 15. I like listening to Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 16. Chinese is difficult to understand. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 17. I like writing Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 18. I enjoy learning the Chinese characters. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| 19. It's easy to write Chinese characters. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 20. My parents are happy about me learning Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 21. I want to be able to speak Chinese in the future. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 22. My Chinese teacher is helpful to me in learning Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 23. I learn Chinese outside my Chinese lessons. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 24. I work hard to learn Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 25. I have the chance to speak Chinese outside my Chinese lessons. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 26. I think I'm learning Chinese well. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 27. I am more interested in learning Chinese now than when I first started. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| 28. I want to continue learning Chinese when I go to secondary school. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |

Section 3:

1. What do you enjoy about the Chinese lessons?

I enjoy _____

2. Is there anything that you don't enjoy about the Chinese lessons?

Yes. I don't enjoy _____

No.

Thank you very much! 谢谢你!

Appendix 2: Pupils' Questionnaire (Case D – KS1)

YOUR Learning of Chinese

As you are learning Chinese, we would like to know what you think about it! There is no right or wrong answer for any of the questions. Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. I hope you will find it enjoyable!



Section 1:

1. Why do you want to learn Chinese?

I want to learn Chinese because _____

Section 2: Please put an "X" in the box which shows how you feel.

| Example questions: | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| I enjoy eating cheese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| Making bread is difficult. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 1. It is important to learn other languages. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 2. I only need to know English. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 3. I like learning Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 4. I enjoy my Chinese lessons. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 5. Learning Chinese is easy. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 6. I like to learn Chinese language more than I like to learn about China and Chinese things. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 7. I like learning how to speak Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |
| 8. To speak Chinese is easy. | ☹☹ | ☹ | ☺ | ☺☺ |

| | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 9. I like listening to Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |
| 10. Chinese is difficult to understand. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |
| 11. My parents are happy about me learning Chinese. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |
| 12. I want to be able to speak Chinese in the future. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |
| 13. I think I'm learning Chinese well. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |
| 14. I am more interested in learning Chinese now than when I first started. | ☹☹ | ☹ | 😊 | 😊😊 |

Section 3:

1. What do you enjoy about the Chinese lessons?

I enjoy _____

2. Is there anything that you don't enjoy about the Chinese lessons?

Yes. I don't enjoy _____

No.

Thank you very much! 谢谢你!

Appendix 3: Head teachers' Interview Schedule

Section 1: Background

1. What languages do you offer in your school?
2. To which year group? (together or separate)
3. How did you find your teacher of Chinese?
4. How is Chinese offered in your school?
5. How often do the classes have Mandarin lessons? (Once a week, or once every two weeks, etc.)
6. How long do you spend on each Mandarin class?

Section 2: Motivation

7. Do you think it is important to offer languages to KS2/primary pupils?
8. What did you decide to offer Chinese in your school?

Section 3: Experience

9. Do you feel it is difficult to undertake Chinese compared to other European languages in your school?
10. Do you think Chinese is difficult for children to learn compared to other European languages?
11. Do you think the children's parents are supportive?
12. Do you think the children enjoy their learning of Mandarin?
If yes, what do you think they enjoy?
13. Do you feel there are any differences between the younger children and the elder children in terms of learning Chinese?
14. When do you think Chinese characters should be introduced to the children?
15. Would you be interested in developing Mandarin (further) in your school?
16. Do you have a partner school in China?
What do you do with your partnership school in terms of teaching Chinese?
17. What sort of support can you get in terms of undertaking Chinese?
18. And what sort of support can the school offer to the Chinese teaching?
19. Is there any barrier you have been/are facing in terms of undertaking Chinese?
20. What are the successes of your Mandarin teaching so far?
21. What do you expect the children to achieve in learning Chinese Mandarin when they leave the school?
22. How do you feel the teaching of Mandarin is progressing?
23. Do you think if there are any challenges you may face in terms of undertaking Chinese in the future?
24. Do you plan to assess the children's learning of Chinese?

Appendix 4: Initial Teacher's Interview Schedule

Section 1: Background

1. What is your first language?
2. What is your role in the school?
3. Have you been trained to teach MFL to children?
4. What made teach Chinese? How did you become involved in teaching Chinese in the school?
5. How long have you been teaching children Chinese?

Section 2: Motivation & experience

1. Do you think it is important to offer Chinese to primary/KS2 children? Why?
2. What is your motivation of teaching Chinese?
3. Do you think Chinese is difficult to teach compared to other European languages? Why?
4. Do you think Chinese is difficult for children to learn compared to other European languages? Why?
5. Do you think is there anything about Chinese, the language, that makes it a good choice for primary children?
6. Do you think is there anything about Chinese, the language, that makes it a difficult choice for primary children?
7. What do you enjoy about your teaching of Chinese?
8. Do you think the children's parents are supportive in their learning of Chinese?
9. Do you give the children any homework to do?
10. Do you think the children need to do homework in Chinese? Do you give them any? If yes, how much homework do you think they need to do?
11. What do you expect from your teaching of Chinese?
12. What do you expect the children to achieve in Chinese when they leave the school?
13. When do you think children should begin to learn pinyin/characters? What would you introduce first?

Section 3: Language skills if not a native Mandarin speaker

1. How long have you been learning Chinese?
2. Have you studied (Are you studying) for any course/qualification in Chinese?
3. How do you rate your Chinese, in terms of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and Chinese culture?
4. What do you feel most confident about in your teaching of Chinese?
5. What do you feel least confident about in your teaching of Chinese?

Section 4: Planning

6. When you plan your Chinese lesson, what resources/materials do you use?
7. Do you use any government published document? Such as the KS2 Framework? (if yes, general or Chinese)
8. If teaching more than one class/years, do you plan for the whole school? Is there any differences between different year groups/classes?
9. Do you plan for a term at a time? Or half term at a time? Or weekly?
10. Do you follow any structures in your planning? Such as themes etc.?

11. Do you plan the lessons in your head or do you write it down?
12. For the (case) class, please could you tell me what you plan to teach them this term?
13. Usually how many characters do you teach them every lesson?
14. Do you include any cultural learning in your planning this term? What are they?
15. What is your goal for the (case) class this term?
16. What are your language priorities in your planning, among listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural understanding?
17. Do you work with other teachers in your planning and teaching?
18. Do you assess the children's learning of Chinese?

Appendix 5: Pupils' group interview schedule (Case A, B, C, E – KS2)

Section 1: Motivation

1. Do you think it is important to learn languages? Why?
2. Do you like learning Chinese? Why?
3. If your school offers other languages at the same time, such as French or Spanish, would you still choose to learn Chinese?

Section 2: Learning Experience

1. What do you enjoy in your Chinese lessons? Explore the reasons...
2. What you do not enjoy in your Chinese lessons if there is any? Explore the reasons...
3. Think about the activities your teacher does with you in the lessons, what do you like most? Why?
4. Among listening, speaking, reading and writing, which one/ones do you like most? Why?
5. Among listening, speaking, reading and writing, which one/ones do you like least? Or say you don't like? Why?
6. Do you think which one is easier to learn? The pinyin or the characters?
7. Which one do you enjoy more? Pinyin or characters?
8. Compare the Chinese language and the culture, which one do you prefer? Why?
9. Do you think you are good at learning Chinese?
10. Do you feel Chinese is difficult to learn compare to other languages, such as French and Spanish? Why?
11. Do you feel difficult to understand your Chinese lessons? Why?
12. Do you feel you have to listen more carefully in your Chinese lessons than you do in other lessons?
13. Do you think your teacher is helpful to your learning of Chinese? How?
14. What do your parents think about your learning of Chinese? Explore this...
15. Do you feel which one is easier: to understand Chinese or to speak Chinese?
16. Do you think you have learnt a lot of different things about China and Chinese?
17. Do you do anything outside your Chinese class to learn Chinese?
18. Are you more interested or less interested than you started learning Chinese? Why?

Section 3: Beliefs

1. Is there anything that makes you feel good in learning Chinese? What are they?
2. What reward do you want to earn from your learning of Chinese?
3. When do you feel successful in your Chinese lessons?
4. Would you like to learn Chinese after you go to secondary school? Why?
5. Are you willing to respond to your teacher in your Chinese lessons?
6. Are you afraid of making mistakes in your Chinese lessons?
7. If they did some homework: How do you feel about the homework Mr/Mrs xx gave to you? Do you feel it is helpful?
8. What do you expect from your learning of Chinese?

Appendix 6: Pupils' group Interview Schedule (Case D – KS1)

Section 1: Motivation

1. Do you think it is important to learn languages? Why?
2. Do you like learning Chinese?
3. If your school offers other languages at the same time, such as French or Spanish, would you still choose to learn Chinese?

Section 2: Learning Experience

1. What do you enjoy in your Chinese lessons?
2. What you do not enjoy in your Chinese lessons if there is any?
3. Think about the activities your teacher does with you in the lessons, what do you like most? Why?
4. Do you think you are good at learning Chinese?
5. Do you feel you have to listen more carefully in your Chinese lessons than you do in other lessons?
6. Do you think your teacher is helpful to your learning of Chinese? How?
7. Do you feel which one is easier: to understand Chinese or to speak Chinese?
8. Do you think you have learnt a lot of different things about China and Chinese?
9. Are you more interested or less interested than you started learning Chinese? Why?

Section 3: Beliefs

1. Is there anything that makes you feel good in learning Chinese? What are they?
2. Would you like to learn Chinese after you go to secondary school? Why?
3. Are you willing to respond to your teacher in your Chinese lessons?
4. Are you afraid of making mistakes in your Chinese lessons?

Appendix 7: Final Teacher's Interview Schedule Example (Case C)

1. Do you think, what is the children's motivation/enthusiasm that drives them to learn Chinese?
2. What do you think are the most important things in teaching Chinese?
3. What do you think are the least important things in teaching Chinese?
4. Do you think there is any difference between the younger children and the elder children in terms of learning Chinese?
5. Do the pupils in your class also speak another language except English and Chinese?
6. I saw the pupils were filming or voice recording each other sometime several weeks ago in their Chinese lesson? What is that for, and why?
7. What resources does the school offer to the pupils in learning Chinese? iPods? How do they use it?
8. If it is possible to see the pupils' Beijing Project afterwards?
9. I feel the boys seemed more active in the lessons, do you notice any difference between boys and girls?

Appendix 8: Lesson Observation Notes Example (Case C)

Date: 9th June, 2011 Time: 1.35-2.40pm School: xxx Class/Year: Y4

Lesson details:

1. Greeting and saying the “I’m going to learn...” sentences in Chinese.
2. Told the pupils a story happened to the teacher in Beijing related to “听” and “说”.
3. Paste a card of 棒极了 (excellent) on the board.
4. Registered the pupils by asking them 你好吗 (how are you)
 - Praise the pupils with 棒极了 sometimes.
 - Corrected the pupils’ tones of 好 once.
 - Explained the meaning of 棒极了 and told the pupils they can use it to respond.
 - One pupil didn’t know how to answer, the teacher asked the others to help.
5. Led the pupils to practise 你叫什么? 我叫... and 你几岁了? 我...岁了 and 你好吗 together.
 - Praise the pupils with Kegan points and star sticker.
 - Praise the pupils by saying 很好 very good.
6. Activity: played a Chinese music 梁祝, and asked the pupils to move around while the music was playing, and find a partner when the music stopped. And then practise those 3 questions as well as 你好 and 再见 with their partners until the music was on again.
 - The teacher practiced with a student too.
 - A couple of the pupils seemed struggled with it, but most of them could do it.
7. Led the pupils to say all the body parts they have learnt with pointing together.
8. Led the pupils to say the body parts needed for the song for several times.
 - The teacher read (has a sheet on the side), and the pupils repeat.
 - The teacher read one at a time at the beginning, and then two at a time, and then four at a time.
9. Led the pupils to sing the body parts song together.
 - Together.
 - Leave some parts with silent sometimes, and only sing some parts.
 - Faster and faster.
 - Sing the song about 10 minutes, the pupils seemed really enjoyed it.
10. Selected a volunteer pupil to stick the body parts labels on her (many pupils volunteered).
 - Activity: reading the body parts in both pinyin and characters.
 - Two sheets for pupils at the same time: one is a printed picture of a simply person with blank boxes next to the body parts; one is full of boxes with the body parts in both pinyin and characters.
 - Asked the pupils to cut off the body parts in pinyin&character, and then paste them into the right boxes next to the picture of the simple person.
 - The teacher played the music 梁祝 at the same time.
 - After the teacher labelled the volunteer girl, the teacher walked around to see the pupils’ work and answer their questions.
 - The labelled girl was the live dictionary for other pupils to check where to put which when they’re not sure.

- The teacher asked a table of pupils is it easy or hard. All of them (4) said easy. Then the teacher asked what if I only give you characters? The pupils said hard.
11. The teacher used a website to teach the pupils how to say the pinyin: all the initials (b p m f d t n l j q x z c s zh ch sh) and 3 finals (i u v).
 12. Asked the pupils to put their work into their drawers, and counted 10-0 in Chinese to get them ready and sit on the carpet.
 13. Showed a slide (smart board) on the IWB: 让我们唱首儿歌 in pinyin and a picture of a frog.
 14. Another slide with all the lyrics in both pinyin and characters of this rhyme.
 - Led the pupils to read it.
 - Introduced the measure words in Chinese to the pupils because there were measure words in the rhyme.
 - The teacher explained the most common measure word is 个, however, she made a mistake by using it as 两个块.
 - Sing the rhyme together.
 - Introduced 两 and 只.
 - Played the rhyme from the website, and pointed to the pinyin of each character one by one while reading.
 - There was also English translation at the right.
 15. Played the sounds of the characters and phrases of the rhyme separately, and asked the pupils to repeat as boys and girls, the teacher then decide which group is better.
 16. Then played the sounds of the whole sentence, do the same.
 17. Played the whole rhyme once.
 18. The pupils requested to compete again: the boys seemed more involved than girls.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Classroom or school settings | Same as last time. |
| Start | Greeting and saying the "I'm going to learn..." sentences in Chinese. |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the phrase 棒极了 to the pupils. • Recap the body parts and its song. • Introduced the initials of pinyin and 3 finals. • Introduced the measure words in Chinese to the pupils. • Introduced 两. |
| Listening | Played the sounds of the characters and phrases of the rhyme separately, and asked the pupils to repeat as boys and girls, the teacher then decide which group is better. |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils answered the teacher's question 你好吗 when they did the registering. • Led the pupils to practise 你叫什么? 我叫... and 你几岁了? 我...岁了 and 你好吗 together. • Played a Chinese music 梁祝, and asked the pupils to move around while the music was playing, and find a partner when the music stopped. And then practise those 3 questions as well as 你好 and 再见 with their partners until the music was on again. • Led the pupils to say all the body parts they have learnt with pointing together. (The teacher read, and the pupils repeat). The teacher read one at a time at the beginning, and then two at a time, and then four at a time. • Led the pupils to sing the body parts song together. (Together; Leave some parts with silent sometimes, and only sing some parts; Faster and faster). |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led the pupils to read the frog rhyme. Sing the rhyme together. Played the sounds of the characters and phrases of the rhyme separately, and asked the pupils to repeat as boys and girls, the teacher then decide which group is better. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity: to read the body parts in both pinyin and characters and match them with the right body parts. Teach the pupils how to say the pinyin using website. |
| Writing | N/A |
| Culture | The teacher played the music 梁祝 during the reading activity. |
| Children's respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very active. Boys seemed more involved than girls. |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrected the pupils' tones of 好 once. Asked the others to help. |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To read the body parts in both pinyin and characters. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Selected a volunteer pupil to stick the body parts labels on her, and that girl became as the live dictionary for the other pupils. 2). Two sheets for pupils at the same time: one is a printed picture of a simply person with blank boxes next to the body parts; one is full of boxes with the body parts in both pinyin and characters. 3). Asked the pupils to cut off the body parts in pinyin&character, and then paste them into the right boxes next to the picture of the simple person. 4). The labelled girl was the live dictionary for other pupils to check where to put which when they're not sure. 5). The teacher walks around to see the pupils work. |
| Target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting and saying the "I'm going to lean..." sentences in Chinese. Praise the pupils with 很好(very good). Registered the pupils by asking them 你好吗 (how are you) Praise the pupils with 棒极了. Counted 10-0 in Chinese to get them ready and sit on the carpet. |
| Teacher's language knowledge | Ok, but the teacher uses lots of resource to overcome her language disadvantages. |
| Pupils' achievements and progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When practising 你叫什么? 我叫... and 你几岁了? 我...岁了 with the music. A couple of the pupils seemed struggled with it, but most of them could do it. Almost all pupils can follow the paces. |
| Assessment | The teacher walked around the see the pupils work about matching the body parts with body. |
| Notes | <p>The teacher asked a table of pupils is it easy or hard. All of them (4) said easy. Then the teacher asked what if I only give you characters? The pupils said hard.</p> <p>A lot of the Y2 and Y3, as well as the Y4 children were saying hello to me in Chinese when I passed by the playground. They seemed quite interested in Chinese.</p> |

Appendix 9: Pupils' Pilot Questionnaire

Questionnaire – “Learning Chinese”!

As you are learning Chinese, we would like to know what you think about it! The questions allow you to think about how you feel about learning Chinese. Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. There is no right or wrong answer for any of the questions. I hope you will find it enjoyable! ☺

Section 1:

1. Why you want to learn Chinese?

I want to learn Chinese because

Section 2:

Put a "X" in the box which shows how you feel.

| Example questions: | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| I enjoy eating cheese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| Learning languages is difficult | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| How do you feel: | | | | |
| 1. It is important to know other languages. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 2. Learning languages is fun. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 3. I like to learn Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 4. I enjoy my Chinese lessons. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 5. My parents are happy about me learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 6. I want to travel to China in the future and speak Chinese there. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 7. Learning Chinese is harder than learning other foreign languages. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |

| | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 8. I have to listen more carefully in Chinese than other lessons. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 9. Learning Chinese is easy. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 10. I spend time studying Chinese after the lessons. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 11. I think I am good at learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 12. It is not important to know other languages. | | | | |
| 13. The longer I study Chinese, the less enjoyable I find it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 14. I like learning about Chinese culture more than the Chinese language. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 15. My teacher is helpful to me in learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 16. Learning languages is boring. | | | | |
| 17. I want to speak Chinese well in the future. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 18. I work hard to learn Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 19. It is not important for me to speak Chinese well, because most people in the world can speak English. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |

| | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 20. I enjoy learning the pronunciation (the tones) of Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 21. In learning Chinese it is important to repeat and practice a lot. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 22. I enjoy learning the characters of Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 23. I am less interested in learning Chinese now than when I first started. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 24. I don't enjoy my Chinese lessons. | | | | |
| 25. I have some opportunity to speak Chinese sometimes. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 26. Learning Chinese is difficult. | | | | |
| 27. It is easier to understand Chinese than to speak it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 28. I don't like learning Chinese. | | | | |
| 29. I enjoy speaking Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 30. I don't want to travel to China in the future. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 31. Even if I learn to speak Chinese very well, I won't have opportunity to use it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 32. The longer I study Chinese, the more enjoyable I find it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |

| | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 33. My parents are not happy about me learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 34. I like learning Chinese language more than learning about Chinese culture. | | | | |
| 35. I don't like learning the characters of Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 36. I don't study Chinese after the lessons. | | | | |
| 37. My parents support me learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 38. I do not have any opportunity to speak Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 39. I don't work hard to learn Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 40. I don't care if I can speak Chinese well in the future. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 41. Learning Chinese is easier than learning other foreign languages. | | | | |
| 42. In learning Chinese it is not important to repeat and practice a lot. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 43. My teacher is not helpful to me in learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 44. In my Chinese lessons, I don't listen as carefully as I do in other lessons. | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 45. It is important for me to speak Chinese, even though most people in the world can speak English. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 46. I am keener on learning Chinese now than when I first started. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 47. I don't think I am good at learning Chinese. | | | | |
| 48. I don't enjoy learning the pronunciation (the tones) of Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 49. If I learn to speak Chinese very well, I will have many opportunities to use it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 50. It is easier to speak Chinese than to understand it. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 51. My parents do not support me learning Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |
| 52. I don't like speaking Chinese. | 😊😊 | 😊 | 😞 | 😞😞 |

Section 3:

53. What do you enjoy the most about the Chinese lessons?

I enjoy _____

_____ most.

54. Is there anything that you don't enjoy about the Chinese lessons?

Yes. I don't enjoy _____

No.

Thank you very much! 谢谢你!

Appendix 10: Example answers of the categories for the question “why do you want to learn Chinese” in the pupils’ questionnaire

1. *Different/more language: want to or feel interested to learn a different or more language:*
 - It is a different experience and a different thing to learn about. And it is a different language. (Case A)
 - It is not fair if you only learn your own language because other people might not get an opportunity to learn other languages. It helps you throughout your life. (Case C)
2. *Travel to China and use Chinese: if go to China they can communicate with local people or read the signs etc. in Chinese;*
 - If I went to China I could speak their language. (Case A)
 - One day I will go to China and I will struggle to get around without knowing the language. (Case C)
3. *Fun: learning Chinese (or languages) or Chinese lesson is fun or interesting.*
 - It is very fun and it is cool to learn different languages and to play with proper brush pen from China and proper ink the China (Chinese) use. (Case C)
 - Because I enjoy it a lot of times. (Case D)
 - So far in our Mandarin lessons, it’s been really fun and exciting. (Case E)
4. *Chinese: interested in learning Chinese or feel learning Chinese is fun.*
 - It is a very interesting language to learn...(Case A)
 - Chinese is interesting and very different from our language. (Case C)
 - I think Chinese is a fascinating language and it will be amazing to learn how to write and speak it. (Case C)
5. *Interact: speak to other people in Chinese.*
 - I want to have contact with people who speak Chinese. (Case A)
 - It will help me to speak Chinese and to understand it and if someone speaks in Chinese to me then I can answer back to them (Case C).
 - We will be able to talk to Chinese people in Chinese language. (Case E)
6. *China: interested in learning about the country.*
 - China is a very good and fascinating country and very multi culture. (Case A)
 - China is a beautiful country/place. (Case B)
 - I like pandas and mite come to China to see them or go on holiday there. (Case B)
7. *Future: good for future job hunting*
 - It will help you get a job. (Case A)
8. *Compulsory: compulsory to learn*
 - It’s compulsory for us... we have to learn it. (Case B)
9. *Chinese culture: interested in learning Chinese culture or feel learning Chinese culture is fun.*
 - It’s a different culture and I like to know about people/other languages. (Case A)
 - It’s nice to find out what’s happening in China. (Case C)
 - I like to learn about different countries. (Case E)
10. *Families/others: want to teach/impress family members or others Chinese.*
 - I want to pass it on to my children and mom, dad and my family. (Case A)

- So I can teach people in my family. (Case B)
 - When I go home I surprise people with everything I've learnt. (Case B)
11. *Confidence: feel good at learning Chinese.*
- I am good at Chinese and Chinese calligraphy. (Case C)
 - I'm really good at it. (Case D)
12. *Get better: want to get better/improve in learning Chinese.*
- I want to get better at it. (Case D)

Appendix 11: Example answers of the categories for the questions “what do you enjoy about the Chinese lesson” in the pupils’ questionnaire and interviews

1. Writing characters
 - I enjoy writing all the words and knowing how to write them because it is fun. (Case A)
 - I enjoy learning different characters. (Case C)
 - It is very good at the characters. (Case D)
 - I enjoy writing in Chinese. (Case E)
2. Chinese culture
 - I enjoy learning about China and their culture. (Case A)
 - I enjoy learning what lots of places in China look like and fairy tales. (Case D)
 - I enjoy learning about the culture such as the musical instruments. (Case E)
 - I enjoy learning about the history of China. (Case E)
 - I enjoy learning what zodiac we are. (Case E)
3. Numbers
 - I enjoy learning how to count in my Chinese lesson. (Case A)
 - I enjoy the Chinese numeracy lessons because it’s really fun and challenging to do our normal maths but to mix it up with Chinese. (Case E)
4. Games
 - I enjoy we play Chinese game. (Case A)
 - I enjoy versing from boy to girl and seeing which team can get the tone right. (Case C)
 - I enjoy playing the games. (Case D)
 - I enjoy the games because they are fun. (Case E)
5. Chinese calligraphy lessons
 - I enjoy that you get to use Chinese ink and paint brushes. (Case C)
 - I enjoy painting the characters. (Case E)
6. Chinese music/music lessons
 - I liked the music lesson it was so relaxing listening to the music. (Case E)
7. Everything
 - I enjoy everything about our Chinese lessons. (Case C)
 - I enjoy everything. (Case D)
 - I enjoy Chinese lessons because it inspires me to do more. (Case E)
8. Nothing
 - I enjoy nothing. (Case B)
 - I don’t enjoy anything because it isn’t interesting. (Case B)
9. Speaking
 - I enjoy that I can pronounce all of the Chinese basics. (Case A)
 - I enjoy being able to speak a different language. (Case C)
 - I love saying hello in Chinese. (Case D)
10. Sing the songs in Chinese

- I enjoy when we sing Chinese songs. (Case D)
 - I enjoy the songs, they help me to learn more about Chinese. (Case E)
11. Working with partners
- I enjoy being able to work with my friends. (Case B)
 - I enjoy speaking in Chinese with my partner like hello, what's your name. (Case E)
12. The teacher
- I enjoy my Chinese lesson is my teacher and the way she teaches. (Case C)
 - I enjoy learning Chinese because Mrs xxx is a good teacher because when she goes to China... she talk about Beijing school and all her others all the time. (Case C)
 - Mrs xxx does all the fun thing to use and she gets all the language from her friends teachers. (Case C)
 - It would not be fun without Mrs xxx. (Case C)
13. Tones
- I enjoy the tones most. (Case A)
 - I enjoy learning about all the different Chinese tones they all sound different. (Case C)
14. Listen to the teacher
- I enjoy listen to Mrs xxx's Chinese. (Case A)
15. To impress family
- I enjoy when we get to speak Chinese and impress our parents. (Case A)
16. To teach others
- I enjoy it when you get to teach other people year group Chinese. (Case C)
17. The homework
- I enjoy doing the Beijing project. (Case C)
18. Chinese arts and crafts
- I enjoy making Chinese lanterns. (Case E)
 - I enjoy making the dragons for Chinese New Year, making lanterns for Chinese New. (Case E)

Appendix 12: Example answers of the categories for the questions “is there anything you don’t enjoy about the Chinese lesson” in the pupils’ questionnaire and interviews

1. Tone: tones or speaking
 - I don’t enjoy speaking it because it’s really hard to say it properly with all the different tones. (Case A)
 - I don’t enjoy all the speaking. (Case B)
 - I don’t enjoy all the tones because it’s hard. (Case C)
 - I don’t like speaking Chinese. (Case D)
2. Hard: the hard words and/or sounds of Chinese
 - I don’t enjoy it when the words and sounds are hard. (Case A)
 - I don’t enjoy sometimes when it is very hard to understand. (Case B)
 - I don’t enjoy learning hard stuff and difficult stuff and things. (Case C)
3. Work: the work the pupils did in the lessons
 - I don’t enjoy the work that we get. (Case B)
 - I hate Chinese fan and pick because it’s very very hard. (Case E)
4. Work of WR: the writing work the pupils did in the lessons
 - I don’t enjoy writing it without copying. (Case B)
 - I don’t enjoy writing Chinese characters that much. (Case C)
5. SP class: speaking Chinese in front of the whole class
 - I don’t enjoy speaking Chinese in from of everybody. (Case E)
6. Repeat: repeatedly learning the same thing
 - I don’t enjoy learning the number because I already know it. (Case A)
 - We learn the same thing over and over again, so we don’t learn anything new. (Case B)
 - I don’t enjoy recapping the stuff that we already know. (Case C)
 - I don’t enjoy the songs because we do the songs all the time. (Case C)
 - I don’t enjoy when we spent the whole lesson on the line cross. (Case E)
7. Tea: the teacher
 - I don’t like our teacher... she always shouted at us. (Case A)
 - Our teacher took our mistake too serious. (Case B)
8. SONG: sing the songs
 - I don’t like singing the songs. (Case D)
9. GAM: the game in the lessons
 - The fan and pick game is too hard. (Case E)
10. NOT: nothing the pupils do not enjoy
 - There is nothing I don’t enjoy. (Case D)
 - I don’t enjoy nothing it is really good lesson all the time. (Case C)
11. EVE: the pupils do not enjoy everything in the lesson
 - I don’t enjoy all of it. (Case A)
 - I don’t enjoy everything. (Case B)

Appendix 13: An example of initial teachers' interview transcription – Case B

Section 1: Background

1. **What is your first language:** English
2. **What is your role in the school?** Class teacher, this term.
3. **Have you been trained to teach Chinese to children?**

Not specifically in Chinese, but I would say I'm a very highly trained language teacher, so I teach languages a lot to children. And my the other post as consultant is my specialist area. So I ran language clubs for 12 years; I interpreted for 9 years; before that I trained to be a secondary teacher, and I worked in middle schools and taught languages. Then I ran language club for 12 years in primary schools. And then I had a teaching post for 5 years, where I was responsible for teaching languages in the school and tried out a number of things, including The Languages Ladder, the trail of that. And then we've got into the time...? Then I supported the schools around me, as a peripatetic teacher, and teach them languages. And then I had my post as consultant for modern foreign languages for 5 years, and that is still going on. I just come out to support the school this term.

You told me you were concerned about the pupils writing in this school. Why?

The writing tends to be neglected in language teaching in my experience, because it's difficult to do and to achieve, and teachers tend to think, well, we just do oral work, have fun, or games. However, I think you can do both. I think you can have fun, and do games, and you can also achieve knowing that children automatically enjoy the lesson if they know that they're making progress. I do think that's the key to their fundamental enjoyment of the lesson. I also know from my experience that if you don't strongly support it with writing strategies, this can be just individual sounds, pinyin, sounds building up to and words building up to phrases. You need to expend the learning to characters. Otherwise, children will not remember their learning or not be secure to feel all four disciplines have to go on. You can't just do listening and speaking, and neglect the writing. It's very important to pick the sound system, teaching individual words, and phrases, and building up slowly.

4. **What made teach Chinese? How did you become involved in teaching Chinese in xxx school?**

I do think that this is a language of the future. China is obviously a strong economic force. There is more willingness to link with school in China, with British council, which 30 years ago it's absolutely unheard of. So there is more willingness to receive the world as it was, and to look out the world in different areas, which is very encouraging. I think the main thing is that primary children will do jobs automatically, that we have not seen or heard of. They don't exist now. That's always be the case that you have to exercise a little bit and try to equip children with the skills they're going to need, and they're going to need to be able to certain it, and surf different language websites. And I think that we've got beyond Europe now. We'll be working increasingly with China, and becoming increasingly important for business. It's already important in the Banking world. I think in the future, people will get job because they've done Chinese.

How did you become involved in teaching Chinese is Chapel Fields school?

The school has supported Mandarin here, I believe, because the school has extraordinary resources. It used to have a Chinese assistant, unfortunately she has moved on now. But they have Mrs Vincent, who is a native Chinese speaker. So she has always been very keen to make this opportunity available to the pupils. But for other schools, it's much more difficult obviously. It's an enormously difficult language for schools to resource and teach, just simple because don't have the teacher. We tried to do this through using foreign language assistants as teachers, but they weren't there to teach Chinese – not trained to do it. They were also some trained teachers came with the impression that they would be foreign language assistant, and they would do numbers and colours. We found that they did numbers and colours for 4 years, and there was no curriculum progress from a word to phrases to sentences. They tended to do a lot of numbers, count up to thousands, but they never learnt to add or to ask how much is something in a shop. They didn't relate to their life. So that didn't tend to work. But as resource, the foreign language assistants are wonderful, but it didn't really work to use them to plan curriculum, regretfully, unless something change. Our experience to date, they are dreadful teachers. I'm sorry to say, but that doesn't mean any disrespect to my Chinese colleagues.

5. How long have you been teaching children Chinese?

If not the same school, how long have you been teaching in Chapel Fields? I did some support teaching last year, just for the Y3s with my previous post as a Modern Language Consultant. I've done bits in my previous school, I did teach Chinese for last 2 or 3 years. Came to support Chapel Fields, it was part of my post. It was my responsibility to find out what the schools are interested to offer and what they could offer. And we basically support schools in offering whatever it is they want to offer. Also because I have the Mandarin too, that I was able to support the school more specifically.

Section 2: Motivation&attitude

14. Do you think it is important to offer Chinese to primary/KS2 children? Why?

Yes, because of the global. It's also important because the pass rate for GCSE for non-Chinese background pupils is not high. Pupils with 11 A* in other subjects tend to get C. So only the most able pupils are able to do it. Secondary schools are not willing to offer it, because it obviously affects their ratings. There isn't much understanding. Perhaps not taking really strong enough consideration that takes much longer, and more dedication, for people to be able to absorb the characters and read them. It's much harder to read than to take on French. There has been a move. There has been reducing the characters, but I don't think it's enough. So if secondary schools wish to offer it to pupils and they want them to get a reasonable grade at GCSE, then we need to start doing much sooner. It's not as if we can wait until they're 16, it will be undoable for them if they're non background. So that's part of the motivation. Within the school, we're trying to put together, what I would describe as a language journey. So we're trying to encourage our infant school to do Chinese. And we have successfully persuaded our secondary school to do it. They're not offering it formally, but they're just exploring it.

15. Do you think Chinese is difficult to teach compared to other European languages? Why?

I think it swings around a little bit, because I do actually think that the speaking and listening is easier particularly, and the way that tenses are formed is much easier to teach or time expressions for example. It's much easier to teach them, for example, nouns, which will require measure words, and learning quite a large group of them. So actually teaching what in European languages would be straightforward, for example, as soon as we've done numbers, we often do classroom objects in the next step, to put the number with the classroom objects, but that is a bit tough to do in Chinese, because of the measure words that would be involved and the different words for number 2. Whereas teaching verbs in European languages is insane, whereas the whole approach of Chinese grammar towards tenses is much more easier straightforward. I think in terms of speaking and listening, once the children have got passed the tones, because it obviously takes a little bit to pass the tones and practise that, then speaking and listening are probably on the level of learning French or German. The months, numbers in Chinese system is much simpler. I felt that when we teach the intercultural understanding, I want to take this into a much deeper level with pupils. Not just teach pupil to respect and tolerate other cultures, but it's also two way thing, it's getting pupils how other cultures can influence and benefit them and what they can learn from other cultures. But also another level is to use that culture to impact learning. For example, one of the workshops that I do is to teach numbers. It's to show people that they can teach a math lesson, we can use the principle and relationship between the dice, we can put characters on there, so that children can just absorb the characters and learn them. I've noticed that the pupils who are less able or lower down in the school, the idea of place value is much clearer. I found that you can use the language in some area to explore, and use the teaching of languages as a window and as a different way of looking at something and take advantage of that opportunity. So there are different ways that we're exploring: the use of different approaches and learning the different way to impact the learning and give children another pair of glasses. I like to call it like looking through a Chinese pair of glasses. So it's just using a different way of looking at something, to reflect in a mirror for the children to impact their learning and to greater understanding. It's just a way of giving them lots of different mirrors to shine their learning in. They call it if I look at that Chinese mirror, I can see that a different way of approaching number system.

Another thing that fascinating about Chinese is that it's the oldest living modern language. So it has got quite resolved grammar, which can almost understand as no form for the children. I think it's teachable, but you have to take account of different issues. So you have to go more slowly in some areas, and just build up slowly that take time over to teach children to logic of Chinese, because Chinese does have a logic, and put it together with the characters.

16. Do you think Chinese is difficult for children to learn compared to other European languages? Why?

Obviously to teach them read and write is quite difficult, because it's quite alien. However, I do feel that the children don't tend to find things hard unless you tell them that it's hard. I think it's a bit about presentation. They're more readily

accept what a teacher place in front of them, but obviously you have to do it very carefully and ensure that they will take appropriate learning steps.

17. Do you think is there anything about Chinese, the language, that makes it a good choice for primary children?

I think it's very good for the children.

18. Do you think is there anything about Chinese, the language, that makes it a difficult choice for primary children?

I think the key issue would be resourcing. It's partly resourcing, partly perception. But I also think the perception at this moment on part of teachers that, teacher would perceive it as being mentally hard. They wouldn't even open the front cover and investigate it. That's really the barrier. I think as a modern language consultant, I found that not only in Chinese, but particularly in Chinese. That's really the barrier that tends to be the perception on how hard it's to do. And there is a resistance to wanting to do training, because schools are overwhelmed by ridiculous amount of box ticking etc.

19. What do you enjoy about your teaching of Chinese?

I think I enjoy it because I think it has got the close relationship with math, and I do take a bit of problem solving approach to the teaching and try to get the children to realise principles and skills that I enjoy in other languages teaching. Sometimes, for example, after I've done some teaching of characters, a boy said "yeah, it actually makes sense", which was just a miracle. I thought it was kind of fun to see from their point of view and they saw what a huge achievement it was. It was lovely, because they perceive as they make progress on it, but actually it's quite special. Just be able to read and write characters and make progress in their learning of languages, and be understand that it's a little bit special of being able to do that. I enjoy that aspect.

20. Do you think the children's parents are supportive in their learning of Chinese?

Yes and no. It depends on how much the school has outreached to state holders, the parents, the governors, teachers, and so force. Because for obviously reasons, if it's not their area of particular expertise, they'll be thinking more about holidays when we would like to do a language. Because we go to Spain all the time, we quite like our child to do Spanish and you can that that would be relevant for the people, whereas to go a holiday in China is a little bit more outside than normal range, because of the expense and whole time difference and distance and so force. Also, the culture is very different, so often people will want to go to a European country because the culture is a little bit more similar and they fell that they can slot into it more. So then we have kind of to talk to parents and just to salt to them the fact that as a life skill, we think look into the future that might be really valuable life skill for the pupils to have. You just have to do your best in that regard, and I think that it's a major major world language, and the world is moving closer to the children.

21. Do you give the children any homework to do?

Yeah I think they certainly have had homework. We do have like half term homework that we set. It's something to explore really, whether or not we can include some Chinese in the official homework. We can do unofficial homework which they don't have to do, which I think would be nice through ICT related activities.

22. Do you think the children need to do homework in Chinese?

It's always helpful to be able to pick it up. Once a week is not a lot, but that's better than nothing. It is helpful if staff could be brought on board to do simple things like take the register. If we're able to produce activity that staff could access and use for 5 minutes every day...

23. What do you expect the children to achieve in Chinese when they leave the school?

I hope they would be able to, after 4 years, access The Languages Ladder breaking through level, and perhaps to get a level 3, and some pupils to start a bit level 4, at least in speaking and listening.

24. When do you think children should begin to learn pinyin/characters? What would you introduce first?

This is really interesting, because I started using pinyin, but I'm finding when I'm teaching it, I'm using it less and less, because I feel that children are getting used to the sound system. Being able to read and write the pinyin is less important than being able to read and write the characters, as long as they can say the words, and recognise the characters, just really to use it (pinyin) a bit as support. I did use it quite a bit at first, because of trying to teach them the sound system. But with the past of time, they're getting a bit more grades with that. I think children in this age are able to adapt more sounds than older person. Now I brought the characters in quite quickly, and the pupils are quite happy with that. I would have said, a little while ago, I would focus more on the pinyin and introduce the characters more slowly, but I'm beginning to feel that maybe it isn't necessary, but it's just with time of doing it. So introduce them together, and losing the pinyin faster.

Section 3: Language skills if not a native Mandarin speaker

25. How long have you been learning Chinese?

Yeah, I taught to myself 6 years ago, and I started the OU course this year.

26. Where do you learn Chinese?

The OU.

27. Have you studied (Are you studying) for any qualification in Chinese?

I'm in the middle of my OU course Beginners Mandarin. It goes through the beginners to AS level.

28. How do you rate your Chinese, in terms of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and Chinese culture? (basic, some subjects, many subjects)

It's about the University sort of level, about AS.

29. What do you feel most confident about in your teaching of Chinese?

Writing.

30. What do you feel least confident about in your teaching of Chinese?

Probably speaking.

Section 4: Planning

31. When you plan your Chinese lesson, what resources/materials do you use?

I have a number of reference books. I look for ideas, but pretty much, everything I write, I write for myself. I don't use the books, I just refer to books. Sometimes, I might just look for some ideas for an activity, but pretty much I write the note books for myself, and I do all the drawing for them. So pretty much I know

where to go. Sometimes, I only really refer to grammars and dictionaries and things like that, because I need to know how correct something is.

32. Do you use any government published document? Such as the KS2 Framework? (if yes, general or Chinese)

The KS2 Framework translated the QCA works for French and for general Latin languages, so it tends to be a bit topic based, and noun based, and it doesn't support that I would call it "generic understanding how a language is put together". It doesn't support the skill building, the knowledge about a language. It tends to be a bit topic bases, and children tend to learn phrases like their age and how to say it. But then if you put those words apart, they can't use them in another context. They can't separate the words out and reuse them in different parts of the sentences. There isn't enough focus, for me, on understanding how the way that language comes from. For example, you saw me practising how to do the questions and focusing on those kinds of questions where you've got the question words at the end.

Why do you think it is important to teach the pupils how to make questions?

Because often, if you change the question, even that means something similar, children won't recognise it. Often, as they progress their learning or go to secondary school, it is a require to them that they're able to ask a question, but often they can't. Not only with Chinese, but also with other languages. They just don't know how to formulate questions.

33. Do you plan for the whole school (number of classes)? If yes, is there difference between different year groups?

In my experience, when we first start teaching languages in 2005, not only Chinese, we had separate plans for different year groups. But we found that the language lesson, in terms of content, pretty much as much enjoyed in Y6 and in Y3. If they were at beginning of their language learning, pretty much, the content would be similar. It's just the pace might speed more. But we found, as we focused on our teaching skills, if they were at the beginning of their learning, no matter what age they were, the age only really affected the pace of abolition, it didn't really affect what was covered. Slightly it affected maybe the type of the activity. So you might have to introduce a bit more writing for older ones.

34. Do you plan for a term at a time? Or half term at a time? Or weekly?

I think about what would I like my learning outcome to be, and at the end of this term, I would like the children to be able to. I do adapt it a bit, especially with the writing and trying out new things. Because I always have got an aisle really for improving the skill base and for them being able to reuse their phrases in other places. Because I do find if you spend time on these, then when you come to introduce other topics, they will take that language on much more quickly, and they'll be able to reuse it because they have been taught to use it. And they'll move towards independence faster, which is obviously the aim. We want the children to be able to talk for real purpose, have language for real purpose, so for me it's more valuable in the primary phase, if the children are able to talk about things, or relate to their activities... sometimes it can be nice to teach them languages that relating a specific topic that permanent to them, so they may talk about picture in simple terms for example. So it's quite important to try and give them languages that enable them to talk about their learning, to some extent that relevant to whatever it is they're doing. We call that "language

for real purpose”. But also it fosters independence and it makes the learning classroom a bit more relevant.

35. Do you follow any structures in your planning? Such as themes etc.?

I just start with greetings, and make sure they understand every individual word within the greetings. And then build up to say their names with a bit about the culture. So there are some basic things that we do like saying their names, their age, maybe their nationality, where they live, because Ofsted will look for that. They will look for some basic things like numbers and colours as well. And then I think I’m more interested in enabling the children to be able to say things that express what they are learning about. I do a little bit mix. I do this topic area, but I just go back to the meaning importance, being able to reuse languages and move towards independence. So that they know what all the different functions are.

36. For the (case) class, please could you tell me what you plan to teach them this term?

Pretty much I’m following the plan that I did for Y3, but because they’re older, I brought the third person. But I haven’t personally found I could go that much faster particularly than I did with Y3.

How do you feel the pupils’ progress?

Initially, it’s a difficult thing because they appear to be going over the same things, but then as I said, suddenly, you’ll see a lot of progress. At the top you spend quite a lot on tube, doing a tiny bit of the language, and reuse them, and suddenly, you’ll find that it moves out and you can start introducing all sorts of topics. It’s also about empowering them to be able to use reference book, like dictionaries. It’s also about trying to get them, as much as possible, to figure things out for themselves, because that is engaging for them, and then they learn better. Pretty much they’ll forget half of you said if you present the topic in front of the class, you do need to get them picking up cards, responding, physically engaging and using all the different sort of technique.

Usually how many characters do you teach them every lesson?

New ones, it won’t be more than 1 or 2 per lesson. But again, with the 谁

37. Do you include any cultural learning in your planning this term? What are they?

I haven’t been able to do it with the Y5.

38. What is your goal for the (case) class this term?

39. What are your language priorities in your planning, among listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural understanding?

I would say fairly balanced, because of all the different strength in the framework. People tend to think that they won’t enjoy the writing, but actually they do enjoy the writing. What they don’t enjoy about the writing is not being able to do it. From my experience, children eventually will enjoy all the learning provided that they see they can do it and they can make progress.

40. Do you work with other teachers in your planning and teaching?

Not surely.

41. Do you assess the pupils’ learning of Chinese?

I use different types of assessment. You have seen I have used the response cards, assessment for learning. Started with a little bit of peer assessment, whereby children are doing a little bit, and then swap. Sometimes, I do listening

task – you listen to me and show me with fingers etc. And sometimes, we do pair work. And obviously we assess them by marking their work. We've got all their folders. My experience is that it's really easy for me to sense where they are, just because I have been doing it for such a long time. I can sense what they know, what they don't know just by seeing their writing or talking to them.

Appendix 14: An example of final teachers' interview transcription – Case E

1. Do you think, what is the children's motivation/enthusiasm that drives them to learn Chinese?

I think it's the same as any other languages that they like learning about new culture. I think they maybe get into then how different sometimes they have to express things, but they find it fun and interesting, about the cultural aspect. I think it automatically comes to the choice of activities you do – it can be dry and boring, or it can be exciting, different and engaging. So it's up to the style of teaching. But Mandarin has its big thing, that it's different characters, different script, the country is so far away. So that's quite exciting for them.

2. What do you think are the most important things in teaching Chinese?

I think it has to be really cultural embedded – the hustling about the cultural and the country is as much as learning the language itself. I think lots and lots practise because with any language they have to get the chance to rebuild the sentences themselves and pick the language, and just to repeat repeat repeat in lots of different ways, to really get it under their belt.

3. What do you think are the important things that can make the teaching of Chinese successful?

I think creativity can be in giving them lots of the opportunity to practise the language, but at the same time making about the cultural and about the fact that it is the language that's really spoken in another country.

4. What do you think are the least important things in teaching Chinese?

I don't worry too much about teaching the characters because I think we should really focus on the languages and then being able to accomplish something. I kind of think the writing of the character is more like an arts and crafts task. If they can communicate and find the pinyin at this stage, I think it's really important.

5. I feel the pupils in your class are very enthusiastic in learning Chinese? Please can you tell me how did you do that?

I was taught in a particular style of language teaching at the University of Birmingham, which is a lot of creating authentic opportunity using a lot of role play, using a lot of games to practise language. So I think that style of teaching is quite motivating, but they're lovely class, and I think our school is very multi-cultural. So a lot of our children come from different countries, first generation, second generation or even themselves. It means that they have the natural enthusiasm and attitude as well, like lots of our kids are learning their home language and English at the same time. So they're quite naturally linguistic, some of our children. And we do a lot of cross cultural activities to learn about one and other's countries, and religions etc. So I think it's ingrained in them that we do cultural activities. And we do the IPC (International primary curriculum), and there is a lot of comparisons between cultures. So it's a big part of our curriculum here.

6. Do you think which one is easier for the pupils – pinyin or characters?

Pinyin, because the characters you have to match them with the sounds. For them to actually being able to pick up the language and build up sentences and things, they need to be able to, like English, see patterns and sounds and that will be more difficult for characters. But obviously I think they will progress in

using characters no problem eventually, but in the first instance, they need something that's familiar to them in a completely unfamiliar language. And pinyin offers that.

7. What do you think they enjoy more? Or about the same?

I think they enjoy pinyin because it gives them a degree of fluency very quickly. But they equally enjoy the exotic characters and being able to paint them. But I think they found it really difficult to do it in the right order, to do it properly. So I think that's a bit frustrated for them. So we have to do it in smaller groups and take our time over it for them to have something that they're proud of. But they did enjoy it.

8. I sometimes felt that the boys are more active than the girls in the lesson.

Do you feel if there is any gender difference in learning Chinese?

No, because boys react better in competition and games, but some of our boys are louder.

9. Do you think this is different from learning other MFLs?

Not in my experience.

10. Complement each other?

We do Kegan in our school, which is cooperative learning structures. Socially aware and emotional aware of others. So in this school we invest really heavily in cooperative learning and emotional literacy.

11. Pair work a lot?

For them to practise the language, they need to work in pairs to give them equal opportunity, but also equal responsibility to participate in our lesson. So you have one teacher at the front, and maybe 3 of them put their hands up, that's 10% participation in the classroom, and actually if you ask 3 children every time that's 10% active participation. But in pair work, you've got 50% active participation.

12. How often do the classes have Mandarin lessons? (Once a week?)

Once a week.

13. How long do you spend on each Mandarin class?

An hour.

Appendix 15: An example of head teachers' interview transcription – Case D

Section 1: Background

1. What languages do you offer in your school?

We do Mandarin from Reception to Y2, and it's optional for Y3-Y5, and it will be for Y6 as well next year as well, so that they can continue it until the end of school. And then in Y3, 4, 5, 6, learn French, but in Y3 particularly they investigate languages. So they were made to look at texts in Spanish or Italian, or French, then they will see if they can understand some of the language, see which words are transferable between one language to another. So I suppose in a way they begin to look at European languages, more than anything else, but the main ones are French and Mandarin.

2. How did you find your teacher of Chinese?

We started to offer Mandarin 4-5 years ago, because we knew one of the parents had done a degree in Mandarin, so we used her to experiment with teaching Mandarin, for 2-3 years. In the mean time, Teacher D came into help the precious teacher on various occasions. So after the previous teacher left, I asked Teacher D if he could help.

3. How is Chinese offered in your school? (As a regular part of the school curriculum, or as taster, or after-school clubs etc.)

It is more regular, because we offer Mandarin through reception to Y2 in curriculum. So a lot of that is based on the culture with bits of language. So the Chinese culture is definitely taught from reception to Y2 as a fixed part of the curriculum. We made it optional above Y3, because French is the language that we would like to teach as part of the curriculum. We have to legally teach French, that's what the parents most want us to offer and what the secondary school is capable of taking further. But we recognised that if the children started, and they really enjoyed the Mandarin, then we ought to give them an opportunity to carry it on.

Section 2: Motivation&Attitude

4. Do you think it is important to offer languages to KS2/primary pupils? – attitude

Yeah, it's a really interesting topic because in England, it's not a very popular subject to secondary school. MFL is one of the least subjects. There are various reasons for teaching it in primary schools, but also we've got to be careful that we don't turn children off, teaching languages earlier, even earlier than they're turned off in secondary school. We can see the benefits because children seem to be less inhibited when they are in primary school. Whereas in secondary school, they're very worried about what their peer think when they're speaking the language out loud and embarrassed about really trying the accent, whereas in primary schools that doesn't seem as the case, particularly if you started early. Also they say that brain change at certain age when you use a different part of your brain to learn the language, and if children learn it too late, they may miss the boat really, and they maybe not as capable of learning languages when they're older. But we feel that we ought to make sure we don't put children off the languages. We felt that children need to see the value of learning a language, and that's why we set along as part of teaching it, as part of being a good global

citizen. So a lot of language they do in reception, Y1 and 2, what we hoping is they really enjoy about learning the Chinese culture, and they're curious about the language, and in similar way in KS2, we don't teach French lesson, we teach global citizen lesson, and the French lesson comes into that. They learn about global issues. We hope that they'll become passionate about those issues and want to do something about those issues, and at the same time recognise that if they want to communicate about those issues, more probably they need to learn another language as well. So that's the real proper context of teaching French.

5. What did you decide to offer Chinese in your school? – motivation

I think initially, that was before I was the head, the previous teacher was available, because it was an opportunity to learn Mandarin. Now, Chinese seems like a good language to learn because of the rich culture, which enables the children from reception to Y2 to get really interested. The country is so different from here. It's much more star, more interesting than... I think they wouldn't get so much of learning about France, because although the language is different, there are lots of similarities in terms of culture. That's quite difficult to differentiate from their normal experience in England, whereas their experience of learning about the different culture in China, which is exciting and different. I think that motivates them more. So I think Chinese language aspect of it, follows on from the richness of the culture. I think that's part of the main reasons, and of course because we have the teacher available as well.

6. Do you feel it is difficult to undertake Chinese compared to other European languages in your school? – attitude

The language itself, yes, because obviously the structure is different and there are no English words that similar to Chinese words. Whereas when they started to learn French, they recognise café is café but finding out that link with Mandarin is much more difficult. And also the tones, it's alien to the teachers, but then again, because it's so different, they just sound so impressive when they speak Mandarin, because it's just different sounds all together. But then again, in terms of easy to motivate children, it's far more exotic to learn Chinese than to learn French in that point of view. So from the motivation point of view, I guess learning Chinese is easier as long as they can manage, we don't push them too hard with it. But from more technical language point of view, it's more difficult to teach, because of the sounds and the tones, and the whole difference between...

7. Do you think Chinese is difficult for children to learn compared to other European languages? – attitude

I think it probably is more difficult for them to learn because there is no similarity. So every single word they learn is brand new, for the same reason.

8. Do you think the children's parents are supportive? – attitude/experience?

Yes, but it has been... we tried to work out how to teach it. Initially we taught very much language based sessions right away from reception and I think children didn't enjoy that so much as with the cultural aspect. So some parents initially asked "why Mandarin"? While some parents would say "there are 1/6 of the world live in China, and it's really important they learn that as a modern foreign language. And there are a lot of business, when they're older, they might be conducted in Mandarin. So that's a far more useful language than French." So a lot of people could see the benefits from that point of view. But we've sold

it more as the richness of the culture and yes it's a very important language. If you gonna pick a language, why not pick Chinese?

9. Do you think the children enjoy their learning of Mandarin? – attitude

Yes, I think they're enjoying it more and more. I think that we're always trying to develop all aspects of teaching. I get a feeling that certainly this next year coming there are be more children in Y2 taking it as an option. But I think it's also a case of what we would like to achieve is that teacher in reception, or Y1, Y2 is the lead professional in the classroom, with Teacher D as the expert, because obviously the teachers were trained at least 3 or 4 years, so they know the best approach to take it on with children, but that's a difficult balance to get because the teacher feel that they don't have the expertise in Mandarin, so it's trying to get the assistance where the teachers are expertise in teaching and the expert of the expertise in Mandarin can come together to delivery our lesson, which is gonna to engage all the children. And I think the aim is to get to point where Teacher D might share a story, and the children might be something else to that story, and you might go from group to group and then teach some Mandarin language into what they're doing. Before they start, you might share with them a bit of language, but not whole class lesson concern Mandarin learning. I think it's trying to get it maybe with drama activity, or maybe making something which is lanterns or kites etc. And then Teacher D comes around and talks about what they're doing and give some Chinese language. I think that way the balance might be better, and that's what we would hope to get to. For the children in Y3-6, we say to the parents that they will be learning the language more purely, so the culture aspect might come across, but by the point, if you wish your children to carry on doing Mandarin, do it because you want to learn the language, and you want to get really competent at the language. And if worry your children might not like that, then don't do it. So the curriculum aspect is really trying to hold their motivation.

10. What do you think they enjoy in their lessons?

I think they enjoy it when there is story aspect. When they're doing something a bit more practical, I think they enjoy that. They enjoy singing aspect, and they really enjoy putting the assembly together. There was an assembly in February, which was acting out a play. Children love to do things which they can see there is a purpose for. So they could see leading up to that assembly was a good purpose. And sometimes when they do the drama, they might be showing that drama in the classroom. So if they can see that result, then it's easier than trying to learn the language.

11. Do you feel is there any differences between the younger children and the elder children in terms of learning Chinese? – attitude

That's a difficult one for me to answer not having been involved too much in the actual lessons. My perception would be that as time is going on, the younger ones' motivation is holding more. We did put some off initially, and now I think we put less off and inspire more.

12. When do you think Chinese characters and pinyin should be introduced to the children? – belief

I think they should be natural fitted in within their progression. Say in Reception, they're beginning to know letters and sounds, and lots of the reception class work is they do work in different creative area, role-play area and so on. I think

if they're learning about Chinese culture, then characters could be introduced, I think they would just be fascinated by them. They would begin to recognise some of them. So I think from the cultural point of view, I think that's important that comes in. As they're getting older, in order for them to properly pronounce things more correctly and then you will need to enforce them to see pinyin as well. I don't think that we can expect children by the end of primary school to have a good knowledge of lots of different characters. I think it's probably more important for them to be able to understand, to speak and listen, than for them to be able to write characters, because I think there is something, you need 3000 to read newspaper. So it's really a large expectation, and I think that doggedly learning that in primary school might be affected to their motivation.

13. Would you be interested in developing Mandarin (further) in your school? – attitude

Yeah. I think the way it's working at this moment is good, and the vision we got for it. I don't want to take it much beyond that vision, that vision of them being really excited, kind of naturally getting to know the words, and being curious to take it as a language option a bit later on, and then learn the language little by little to the point where they're quite confident, but not fluent. By the time they get to Y6, they feel they have some success with learning some Mandarin and they feel they've got the confidence then to take on further if they want to in the secondary school or they've got the confidence in learning a language and prepare to learn a different language later on when they have opportunity to do that.

Section 3: Experience

14. Do you have a partner school in China?

Yes.

What do you do with your partnership school in terms of teaching Chinese?

Not enough. It's very likely that some children from Shenzhen will come to visit us in Sep. The challenge for us is in matching up aspects of the curriculum, because we do teach very much through themes and our curriculum is skills based. What we would love to do is trying and sharing a context or theme, probably those global citizenship things like poverty, will be able to share with the school in China. It would be great for the children to learn from each other about what poverty looks like in different places. But we haven't got there yet. Such as in Y4, we've got the environment theme. So it would be great to link with all our partner schools and be able to do a survey and find out about what's your local environment like, what's your concern about environment, what's your country doing to try to stop global warming, and what do you do about recycling in your country. Then they will find out really interesting, rather than finding out how we celebrate Chinese New Year, which is a bit ciliate just finding out about celebrations, as if that's what the country about.

15. What sort of support you can get in terms of undertaking Chinese (from, the LA, government or anywhere else)?

We've had encouragement. Teacher D and the previous teacher are very good at developing some links with different organisations. But because we felt that it's a new thing, we've involved in a way that we think is best for our school. So the way we deliver it, I feel there are not many schools at this moment are

delivering it in that way. So to gain support for something you are perhaps creating is more difficult. So at the moment, we're at the stage where we're still developing what we want to do and then maybe we could enhance it again. We haven't got the point that is perfect.

16. And what sort of support the school can offer to the Chinese teaching? – support

Again, it's very difficult, but we're in the position where we can put the expert and teaching expert together, and they can help each other. We did at one point very early on, had the sessions where some of the teachers spend some time on learning Mandarin, but doing it once a week after school, because the teachers are so busy, they did stick to it, but didn't get very far in terms of their language progression. It's such a big commitment for them to learn the language, and then it becomes too ambitious. Teacher D has been the SSAT conference. If Teacher D needs some support, then we will give him the support. We definitely support the MFL department.

17. Is there any barrier you have been/are facing in terms of undertaking Chinese?

The main barrier is that the teachers not knowing the language, therefore, in order to deliver Mandarin, they feel more like to let Teacher D do it, rather than to lead the lesson. That's the key barrier. The primary teacher needs to be the expert, for the teaching thing, and decides how the teaching would be delivered. Although Teacher D is very good, the children are very interested, but years of experience are still valuable, and in knowing more what's going to stick, what's going to motivate them more.

18. What are the successes of your Mandarin teaching so far?

I think the children, they have the basics. I get the impression that they will be leaving school with a reasonable level of language, and also just the confidence they get from that. And when you ask the children about other cultures, they're excited about being a global citizen.

19. What do you expect the children to achieve in learning Chinese Mandarin when they leave the school? – expectation

I expect that once they finish it in Y2, they will be excited about learning other cultures and other languages. I expect those ones who take it throughout Y3 to Y6 will have a fairly broad vocabulary and be able to speak in short sentences, and about some topic areas. I don't expect them to hold a conversation in Mandarin, but I expect them so have a reasonable good vocabulary and some senses of sentences.

20. How do you feel the teaching of Mandarin is progressing? – progress

Yes. I do.

21. Do you think if these is any challenges you may face in terms of undertaking Chinese in the future? – attitude/experience?

Teacher D leaving.

Appendix 16: An example of pupils' group interview transcription – Case C

Section 1: Motivation&Attitude

1. Do you think it is important to learn languages? Why?

ABCD: Yes.

A: If there is a fire in a house and I'm a rescue man or something, and if he didn't speak English, he wouldn't know what I'm saying.

B: If you go shopping, and the man is Chinese, you wouldn't know if you didn't learn the language.

C: It's very important if you wanna go to China, you should learn the language and speak to people.

D: We can talk to Chinese people, who don't know English.

2. Do you like learning Chinese?

A: Yes, because it's fun.

B: Yeah, because you learn different things.

C: Yes, because it's fun you get to learn a lot of stuff, and I like learning the culture.

D: Yes, I like learning the culture, and the tones.

3. If your school offers other languages at the same time, such as French or Spanish, would you still choose to learn Chinese?

A: Sometimes it could be a bit boring, and sometimes it could be fun. I want to learn Spanish.

B: I want to learn Chinese.

C: I want to learn both, more than one.

D: Chinese on Monday, and different language on...

Section 2: Learning Experience

4. What do you enjoy in your Chinese lessons?

A: Writing the characters.

B: Writing the characters, and saying the numbers.

C: I like learning about Chinese cultures and Chinese numbers.

D: I like the numbers, characters, pinyin, and fun stuff.

5. What you do not enjoy in your Chinese lessons if there is any?

A: Not really.

BC: Nothing.

D: I don't know.

6. Think about the activities your teacher does with you in the lessons, what do you like most? Why?

A: To find the character board things.

B: The treasure hunting.

C: The treasure hunting, and hiding the things again.

D: Same as C.

7. Among listening, speaking, reading and writing, which one/ones do you like most? Why?

AB: Writing.

C: Writing and when the teacher shows us videos of other people speaking Chinese.

B: Me too, the strokes, how to write it.

- D: Writing the characters, because you got to use the proper ink and paper.
- 8. Among listening, speaking, reading and writing, which one/ones do you like least? Or say you don't like? Why?**
 A: It's difficult. Reading.
 B: I like all.
 C: I don't like speaking it, because it's hard to make the pronunciations.
 A: It's funny.
 D: Speaking and reading. It's embarrassed when you speak wrong, to Chinese.
- 9. Do you think which one is easier to learn? The pinyin or the characters?**
 ACD: Pinyin,
 B: Both.
 A: Because you can say it, it's like English, and it's easy to read.
 C: I like pinyin.
- 10. Compare the Chinese language and the culture, which one do you prefer? Why?**
 ABCD: Culture.
 D: Because you can feel it.
- 11. Do you think you are good at learning Chinese?**
 A: No, because I always get things wrong.
 B: Yes.
 CD: Middle.
- 12. Do you feel Chinese is difficult to learn compare to other languages, such as French and Spanish? Why?**
 ABCD: Middle.
- 13. Do you feel difficult to understand your Chinese lessons? Why?**
 A: Kind of.
 B: It's getting easy.
 C: Sometimes it's easy. Easy and hard, because when you get to know the characters, it's really easy, then you learn another character, it gets hard.
 D: Same as C.
- 14. Do you feel you have to listen more carefully in your Chinese lessons than you do in other lessons?**
 ABCD: Yes.
 AC: Because the words are really hard.
 B: Because Chinese sounds different, not like Maths, it's in English.
- 15. Do you think your teacher is helpful to your learning of Chinese? How?**
 A: Kind of. She is kind, then she get strict.
 C: She will be really easy on us if we just started, but then when we get to know it, she expects us to do it straightaway. So she gets strict.
 B: She just told me to practise it at home.
- 16. What do your parents think about your learning of Chinese?**
 A: They don't mind if I learn anything.
 B: They don't mind.
 C: They don't mind, and I think they'll be happy for me, because they always want me to learn languages.
 D: My mum wants me to learn a different language.
- 17. Do you feel which one is easier: to understand Chinese or to speak Chinese?**
 A: To speak, I don't know, I just think it's easy.

B: To understand.

C: Both, I think it's easy to speak it, because the teacher speaks it all the time. I think it's easy to understand, because the teacher always use the pinyin, then after a while, she teachers us to use the real characters.

D: Speaking, because it's hard to understand.

18. Do you think you have learnt a lot of different things about China and Chinese?

A: Kind of.

BCD: Yeah.

19. Do you do anything outside your Chinese class to learn Chinese?

B: I do a lot of things at home. I make a lot of things (the great wall etc.) to get a raffle tickets.

C: I research about China and Chinese.

D: I do write characters at home sometimes.

20. Are you more interested or less interested than you started learning Chinese?

ABCD: More.

Section 3: Beliefs

21. Is there anything that makes you feel good in learning Chinese? What are they?

A: When I get the answers right, I'm happy.

B: When I'm doing Chinese, when I can say the words.

C: Learning about the culture.

D: Saying the words.

22. What reward do you want to earn from your learning of Chinese?

ABCD: I don't know.

23. When do you feel successful in your Chinese lessons?

A: When we do fun stuff.

B: All the time.

C: Chinese treasure hunting.

D: When I get the Chinese character right.

24. Would you like to learn Chinese after you go to secondary school? Why?

ABCD: Yeah.

25. Are you willing to respond to your teacher in your Chinese lessons?

ABC: Yeah.

D: Kind of embarrassed.

26. Are you afraid of making mistakes in your Chinese lessons?

AB: No.

CD: I'm not afraid, because you can just redo it, and keep practising.

27. How do you feel about the homework Mrs Haughey gave to you? Do you feel it is helpful?

A: Sometimes.

BC: It's fun.

B: I do it all the time anyway.

D: I do work at home.

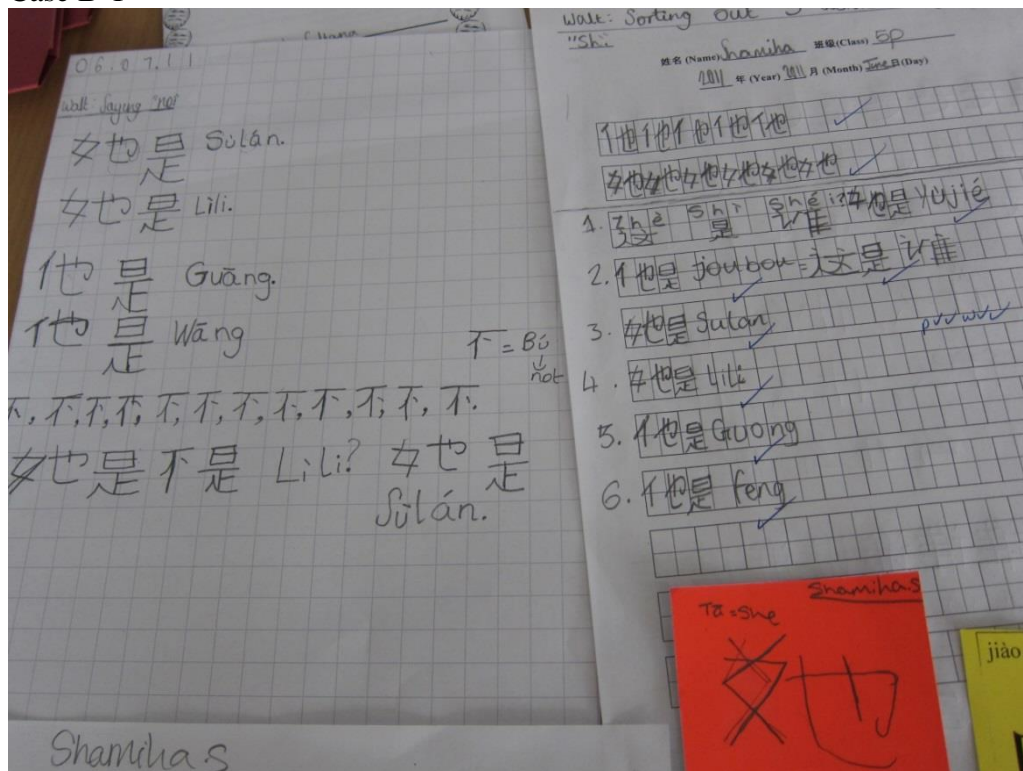
28. What do you expect from your learning of Chinese?

ABCD: To speak to Chinese people.

Appendix 17: Example photos of the pupils' work



Case B-1



Case B-2



Case E

Appendix 18: Examples of field notes

02/02/2011 Wednesday

- The teacher spent quite some time to ask the children quiet down and disciplining the classroom.
- One child who came before seemed have some problem with the teacher. ^(Maybe some other children too) and stop coming for the Chinese today. (I feel)
- The teacher suggested the 75 class that the class is ahead of them.

★ I'm not sure if the teacher's method demotivated the children or not. A couple of the children seemed getting worse at.

★ The class is keeping doing numbers for least 3 weeks.

★ No time for writing today.

Case A

16th July, 2011 Chapter
The teacher with better subject knowledge
doesn't mean that he/she can teach better.
Even if the teacher is doing it from the aspect
of an expertise, but the ~~teaching~~ teaching is constrained
by the children's expectations.
If the children's interests of learning long
are turned off, ~~no matter~~ the efforts of
the teaching progress is worth or not?

Case B

Appendix 19: Example of the data analysis table of the rating scale of the pupils' Questionnaire (Case C)

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Sum | Agree | Strongly agree | Sum | Missing |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------|-------|----------------|-------------|---------|
| 1. It is important to learn other languages. | 6.7 | 6.7 | 13.4 | 13.3 | 70 | 73.3 | 3.3 |
| 2. I only need to know English. | 76.7 | 10 | 86.7 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 6.6 | 6.7 |
| 3. Learning languages is fun. | 3.3 | 0 | 3.3 | 16.7 | 76.7 | 93.4 | 3.3 |
| 4. I like learning Chinese. | 3.3 | 0 | 3.3 | 26.7 | 66.7 | 93.4 | 3.3 |
| 5. I enjoy my Chinese lessons. | 3.3 | 0 | 3.3 | 30 | 63.3 | 93.3 | 3.3 |
| 6. It is important for me to learn Chinese. | 3.3 | 16.7 | 20 | 16.7 | 60 | 66.7 | 3.3 |
| 7. Learning Chinese is easy. | 23.3 | 20 | 43.3 | 26.7 | 23.3 | 50 | 6.7 |
| 8. I like to learn Chinese language more than I like to learn Chinese culture. | 30 | 20 | 50 | 16.7 | 20 | 36.7 | 13.3 |
| 9. I like learning to speak Chinese. | 0 | 10 | 10 | 30 | 56.7 | 86.7 | 3.3 |
| 10. To speak Chinese is easy. | 26.7 | 30 | 56.7 | 23.3 | 16.7 | 40 | 3.3 |
| 11. I like learning the Chinese pinyin. | 3.3 | 3.3 | 6.7 | 33.3 | 56.7 | 90 | 3.3 |
| 12. Chinese pinyin is difficult to learn. | 40 | 30 | 70 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 26.7 | 3.3 |
| 13. I like learning the tones of Chinese pinyin. | 3.3 | 13.3 | 16.7 | 26.7 | 53.3 | 80 | 3.3 |
| 14. The tones of Chinese pinyin are easy to learn. | 6.7 | 10 | 16.7 | 23.3 | 53.3 | 76.6 | 6.7 |
| 15. I like listening to Chinese. | 0 | 10 | 10 | 13.3 | 73.3 | 86.7 | 3.3 |
| 16. Chinese is difficult to understand. | 16.7 | 16.7 | 33.4 | 33.3 | 23.3 | 56.6 | 10 |
| 17. I like writing Chinese. | 6.7 | 3.3 | 10 | 13.3 | 73.3 | 86.7 | 3.3 |
| 18. I enjoy learning the Chinese characters. | 10 | 3.3 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 70 | 83.3 | 3.3 |
| 19. It's easy to write Chinese characters. | 6.7 | 16.7 | 23.4 | 43.3 | 30 | 73.3 | 3.3 |
| 20. My parents are happy about me learning Chinese. | 3.3 | 3.3 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 83.3 | 90 | 3.3 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------------|------|------|-------------|-----|
| 21. I want to be able to speak Chinese in the future. | 3.3 | 0 | 3.4 | 23.3 | 70 | 93.3 | 3.3 |
| 22. My Chinese teacher is helpful to me in learning Chinese. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 86.7 | 96.7 | 3.3 |
| 23. I learn Chinese outside my Chinese lessons. | 60 | 6.7 | 66.7 | 20 | 10 | 30 | 3.3 |
| 24. I work hard to learn Chinese. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 73.3 | 93.3 | 6.7 |
| 25. I have the chance to speak Chinese outside my Chinese lessons. | 30 | 10 | 40 | 20 | 33.3 | 53.3 | 6.7 |
| 26. I think I'm learning Chinese well. | 6.7 | 6.7 | 13.4 | 30 | 53.3 | 83.3 | 3.3 |
| 27. I am more interested in learning Chinese now than when I first started. | 3.3 | 3.3 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 83.3 | 90 | 3.3 |
| 28. I want to continue learning Chinese when I go to secondary school. | 10 | 3.3 | 13.3 | 20 | 63.4 | 83.3 | 3.3 |

Appendix 20: The letter sent to school before data collection

Dear Head teacher/Teacher:

My name is Li Li. I am a PhD student at the University of Warwick, under the supervision of Dr Jane Medwell. I have a CRB clearance and my supervisor is happy to be contacted about me.

My research is about **The Experience of Teachers and Pupils Teaching and Learning Chinese in English Primary Schools**. I am interested in:

- Why schools want to teach Chinese?
- Why pupils want to learn Chinese?
- How schools deliver Chinese?
- What pupils and teachers get out of their learning and teaching?

I would like to conduct some case studies. Each case study would include:

- Interviewing the head teacher
- Interviewing the Chinese teacher (or class teacher)
- Administering a questionnaire to a class of children
- Observing four or five lessons during an 8 week period (with the same class)
- Doing a group interview with a small group of children from the class

In my thesis, no teacher or pupil will be identified and confidentiality will be maintained. I am very excited about the teaching of Chinese in English primary schools and keen to learn about all the different ways it is done. ☺

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor:

| | <i>Telephone</i> | <i>Email</i> |
|-------------------|------------------|--|
| Li Li: | 075 1542 6296 | L.Li.9@warwick.ac.uk |
| Dr. Jane Medwell: | 024 7652 2285 | j.a.medwell@warwick.ac.uk |

Thank you very much! Your help is much appreciated.

Kind regards,

Li

Appendix 21: Case Schools' Background

Description of the schools:

School 1 (Case A and B): This school is average in size. The proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are eligible for free school meals are below average. Pupils benefit from extended services before and after normal school hours.

School 2 (Case C): This large school's population is mixed with over 60% of the pupils of Pakistani and Indian heritage. Since the last inspection, the attainment of children on entry to the EYFS has declined. It is now well below that expected of three-year-old children. The leadership and management structure has altered significantly with many more staff given responsibility for improving provision and raising standards. The school has gained numerous awards including The Future Visions Award, The Becta Information and Communication Technology Award, The Arts Council Art Mark and The Creative Partnerships Change School Award.

School 3 (Case D): The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average in this school. The great majority of pupils come from White British families, and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school is trialling a government scheme providing specialist status for primary schools. This school has been designated a specialist school for modern foreign languages.

School 4 (Case E): This school is smaller than average-sized school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. More pupils than average are learning to speak English as an additional language. A significant minority of pupils do not attend over the full duration of a school term, or over the full length of a key stage. They start at the school when their parents and carers begin their studies at the nearby university and teaching hospital and often leave when their parents and carers return to their home countries at the end of their studies. As a consequence, there is a much higher level of pupil mobility than is typical. Almost a third of pupils live outside the local community.

| | School A | School C | School D | School E |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Size | 266 | 477 | 201 | 170 |
| Overall effectiveness | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Achievement and standard | 3 | 1 | | 2 |
| Personal development and well being | 2 | 1 | N/A | N/A |
| Quality of provision | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |

Appendix 22: The detailed summaries for each case

Case A:

Case A was carried out with a Y5 class of thirty-two pupils in School 1, a junior school. The majority of the pupils in the school are of white British background, and only a few pupils learn English as their second language. All pupils began to learn Chinese from Teacher A, who was a specialist language teacher in the school teaching Chinese in curriculum time on a weekly basis for at least one hour. The class began learning Chinese in September 2010, four months before my study started. A group of pupils identified as “high ability” in this class had learnt Chinese for one year already when they were in Y4, from the same teacher, as the trial for offering Chinese in the school.

Teacher A was originally from Singapore, and trained to be an English primary class teacher. She had been a class teacher in School 1 prior to September 2010, so the specialist language teacher role was new to her, and she had substantial experience of teaching primary classes. When my study started, Teacher A only taught Chinese and covered some PPA time in School 1. The teacher had learnt Chinese as a child in Singapore, but she did not learn Chinese pinyin and the simplified characters. Therefore, Teacher A was also studying Chinese herself and from the Open University.

Teacher A’s Chinese lessons seemed a bit dry because most of the lessons were focused on numbers, and Teacher A spent a lot of time managing the pupils’ classroom behaviour. The pupils in Case A learnt numbers up to a hundred for at least twelve lessons during the period of the case study, but they learnt limited new content which included a number of related topics such as age, date and month. Teacher A placed emphasis on the technical skills of speaking and writing Chinese characters in the lessons. For examples, she corrected the pupils’ pronunciation almost every time when the pupils pronounced the tones wrongly; she asked the pupils to practise only one stroke properly in the Chinese calligraphy lesson.

Teacher A usually started the lesson by greeting the pupils in Chinese and registering the pupils with their numbers in Chinese (every pupil had a number to answer when his/her name was called by the teacher). Then, the date and month of that day would usually be introduced to the pupils in Chinese. During the lessons, Teacher A usually asked the pupils some questions about the content they had learnt before, mostly related to numbers, as well as introducing new content if there was any. In the last 10-20 minutes or so, Teacher A normally asked the pupils to copy some characters into their writing book, and/or let the pupils play a particular software package of games about tones, numbers, and body parts on the IWB.

Case B:

Case B involved another Y5 class of thirty-three pupils in the same school as Case A (School 1). The pupils in this class did Chinese twice a week for a total of two hours a week and were taught Chinese by the language teacher of School 1 (Teacher A – who taught in Case A as well), although I did not study these lessons. The class was also doing Chinese with the temporary class teacher (Teacher B) on a weekly basis for at least one hour, within the curriculum time, and the case study was

focused on their learning of Chinese from Teacher B, who had been an advisory teacher for primary languages in the Local Authority in the past.

Teacher B had previously been a secondary teacher. She was of British heritage, and was studying Chinese by herself and from the Open University for six years. As a language expert who had mastered four languages already, Teacher B was very interested in Chinese. The classes were distinctive because the teacher was perceived to be strict by the pupils. Teacher B sometimes put the pupils' names on amber or red to manage their behaviour. This was quite a serious sanction for the pupils, and it was notable that the other teachers observed in the school did not use this technique as often. In the observed lessons in Case B, there were a number of incidents of poor behaviour from pupils when they clearly did not follow class rules and argued with the teacher. Some pupils in their group interviews said that they did not like Chinese because of their teacher.

As a specialist in languages, the teacher in Case B planned her Chinese lessons in much greater detail than the other cases, and this was the only case to have a detailed written scheme of work, which was produced by Teacher B. The lessons usually started with revision of known characters and an introduction of new ones, through activities such as matching characters and pictures, showing the characters/pictures with the IWB, and worksheet exercises involving the characters. In the observed lessons, Teacher B always led the pupils to do a lot of activities to practise the speaking, listening, reading, and writing of the characters of the greetings. She also led the pupils to work out the structures and patterns of Chinese in the lessons. The pupils were asked to read and write/copy the characters frequently. However, the content was mainly focused on the basic greetings of Chinese, and the detailed learning of every single word of the greeting. Nothing about Chinese culture was introduced. The teacher in this case was very positive and motivated to teach Chinese. She enjoyed Chinese and had considerable expertise in teaching languages. This teacher planned and structured sequences of lessons and lessons well, yet this was the class where pupils were least positive about learning Chinese. Both the questionnaire and interview data show that many pupils suggested that they felt bored in the lessons and did not enjoy their learning of Chinese.

Case C:

Case C was conducted with a Y4 class of thirty pupils in a primary school, School 2. Over 60% of the pupils in School 2 learn/speak English as their second language. During the period of the case study in the academic year of 2010, this class of Y4 pupils was learning Chinese from their class teacher (Teacher C) on a weekly basis for at least one hour within the curriculum. Teacher C had been learning Chinese by herself and from the local language centre on and off for about three years when the case began, and the teaching content of Case C was planned on the basis of what Teacher C had learnt. At that time, French was the main language offered in the school. However, after the case study had finished at the end of 2010 academic year, School 2 began to offer Chinese across the whole school within curriculum time since September 2011 and Teacher C became the language teacher of Chinese and French in the school since then.

This case was interesting because the pupils of this case showed the highest enthusiasm and interest for learning Chinese. The pupils seemed to like their teacher very much. Some pupils mentioned in their group interviews that they liked to learn Chinese because of the teacher. Teacher C was of British heritage, and was trained to be an English primary class teacher. Teacher C specialised in MFL when she did her teacher training, but not in Chinese. The teacher was asked by the previous head teacher at her recruitment interview to learn and teach Chinese. After Teacher C started to learn Chinese, she liked Chinese and Chinese culture very much.

Teacher C's lessons had lot of activities, songs, videos and games. The pupils seemed to enjoy their Chinese lessons very much. The teacher also encouraged the pupils to learn Chinese outside the lessons, including giving them a voice recorder and camera to record or film their peers in learning Chinese; showing the handcrafts the pupils made at home about Chinese and the leaflets they got from Chinese restaurant to the whole class; uploading the lesson and interesting things related to China and Chinese to her blog for the pupils to view and leave comments; giving the pupils homework about learning China and/or Beijing and let them present their work and filmed/photographed it. The lessons always started by greetings in Chinese, and then all pupils read “现在我们说中文，现在我们听中文，现在我们写中文，现在我们读中文。跳一跳！（Now we're going to speak Chinese, now we're going to listen Chinese, now we're going to write Chinese, now we're going to read Chinese. Jump and Jump!）” in Chinese aloud with Teacher C, doing actions at the same time. The lessons were always lively.

Case D:

Case D was conducted with a Y2 class of thirty pupils in a primary school, School 3. The great majority of the pupils of School 3 come from White British families, and almost all of them speak English as their first language. At the time the case study was conducted, School 3 provided Chinese to the pupils from reception to Y2 twice a week, 20 minutes for each lesson. For the pupils above Y3, Chinese was made optional, and French was the main language offered by the school, so this may have affected the status and attitudes to Chinese. When I started my case study in School 3, Chinese had been available to the pupils for about five years already. The previous teacher of the Chinese left the school two years before my study started, and recommended the current teacher of Chinese (Teacher D), who was also a parent of the school to teach Chinese. Therefore, this class of pupils had been learning Chinese since Reception from the previous teacher of Chinese, but now from Teacher D, who was the teacher of Chinese in School 3. However, Chinese was stopped not long after the case study had been finished, because Teacher D resigned and the school could not find a new suitable teacher to continue Chinese.

This is the only case involving KS1 pupils, and the only case where the teacher of Chinese had not received any English teacher training. Therefore, the Chinese lessons from reception to Y2, where Chinese was the only language offered to the children, were supported by the class teachers of the school. Teacher D also met the class teacher regularly, to discuss what to teach and to plan the Chinese lessons based on the content the class teacher taught in class. The optional Chinese lessons for the pupils from Y3 to Y6 were taught without their class teachers. In the

observed lessons in Case D, the class teacher always sat in the classroom and helped Teacher D to manage the class, praise and encourage the pupils. Therefore, this case was an external teacher with the support of the class teacher and very young children.

The observed lessons always started with greetings in Chinese, and then counting the numbers in Chinese until all the pupils were ready for the lesson. It seemed that what the teacher could do was limited by the length of the lessons, which were only 20 minutes. Teacher D often led the pupils to sing some songs during the lesson, and occasionally asked the pupils to practise as groups. At the end of the lesson, he usually gave out some stickers and a China Olympic mascot to some pupils. There was very little writing and reading in the lessons, and the teacher spent most of the time teaching the pupils speaking. Pinyin and/or characters were seldom introduced to the pupils either, as Teacher D suggested that the target of teaching Chinese set by the head teacher in School 3 was to teach Chinese culture, not the language.

Case E:

Case E was conducted with a mixed Y5 and Y6 class of nineteen pupils in a primary school, School 4. Similar to School 2 (where Case C was conducted), most pupils of School 4 are from minority ethnic heritages, and they learn to speak English as an additional language. This mixed Y5 and Y6 pupils just began to learn Chinese two weeks before the case study started, on weekly basis for one hour from their class teacher (Teacher E). They were the only pupils who were learning Chinese in this school, and German was the dominant language offered by the school at that moment.

Teacher E had a similar background to Teacher C, as she was also British heritage and a trained English primary teacher who specialised in MFL, but not in Chinese. Teacher E was also required by her head teacher to learn and teach Chinese at the recruitment interview. The head teacher of School 4 was also the previous head teacher of School 2, and the same head teacher who requested Teacher C to learn and teach Chinese at the recruitment interview. Teacher E was the subject leader of German in School 4, and had just started to learn Chinese by herself and from the evening class of the local university a year ago.

The lessons observed in this cases always started by recapping on the content of previous lessons. Although the teaching content might be a bit limited because of the teacher's own knowledge of Chinese, there were a variety of activities in the lessons. A lot of the pupils in the class in Case E showed great interest in learning Chinese both in their questionnaires and group interviews. The pupils were very engaged in the lesson, and seemed very excited to learn Chinese.

Appendix 23: The detailed observation summary tables of each case

Case A:

| | |
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| Classroom/school settings related to Chinese | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the school: • There are some Chinese paintings hanging on the wall opposite the reception; • Some Chinese New Year's decoration on a board at the entrance of the school; • A board of Chinese stuff, including middle Autumn festival and the great wall in the corridor. • Some Chinese masks are displayed on the wall of the stairs. |
| Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register all the pupils with their Chinese numbers. • Greeting the pupils. |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the meaning of teacher-pupils greeting orally; • Numbers, with pinyin, characters and tones. • Learn to say a couple of colours while playing the balloon games of tones; • Introduced "how old is he/she/it" and "how old are you" in Chinese. • Introduced the pinyin: i, ia, ie, in, ing. • Months and Dates (just once) • Introduced the characters and pinyin of "brush pen, Chinese ink, paper, ink stone" to the pupils; • Introduce the Chinese calligraphy, including the characters and pinyin of pen, ink, paper, and ink stone; the right way of holding a brush pen and sit properly; and how to write the characters of 大, 太, 夫; • Introduced the body parts. |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher asks the children to listen to her saying number in Chinese, and answer what tone are they. • Listen to the sound and read the characters of the numbers – game; • Listen to the sound and choose the right tones – game; • Listen to the sound and match the characters and pinyin of the numbers – game; • Listen to the teacher saying the numbers in Chinese and answer them in English; • The teacher says the body parts in Chinese and asks the children to answer what are they; • Watch and listen 2 video of saying "look, my nose/eyes/mouth/ears" in Chinese. The teacher asks the children to recognise the body parts mentioned in the video |

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| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing the number song together; • Practise the four tones of; • Practise saying the numbers with partners or group members. • The teacher says the numbers and ask the children to say it in Chinese and spell the pinyin; • Read the month Jan to Jun in Chinese with the teacher once; • Pare work: practising saying the months in Chinese – one says it in English, the other says it in Chinese and vice visa; • Practise the pronunciation of pen, ink, paper, ink stone, and big once with the children • Follow the teacher to say the body parts several times with pointing to their body parts. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match the pinyin and character of the numbers. • To recognise the body parts and then select the right one on a picture; |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy and practise the writing of numbers <100 in their writing books. • Copy “我两岁” (I’m 2 years old). • Copy “三月二日”; • Copy the months from Jan to Dec in Chinese pinyin and characters; • Write the horizontal stoke in Chinese calligraphy for 10-15 minutes, but the teacher didn’t let them do the whole character. • Copy the pinyin and characters of the body parts. |
| Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the children to figure out the Chinese for different months |
| Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn some culture background of the Great Wall. • Watch a video about the Great wall twice – ask the children to notice the numbers, what it was built for and who wants to visit it in the future (most children want to); • Watch a video of Lion Dance; • Introduced a little bit of the culture about Chinese calligraphy; |
| Activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games of tones/pinyin and number (last 10 minutes); • Sing the number song together; • Games: listen to sound and read the characters of the numbers; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the sound, and click the right tones; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listen the sound, as well as match the characters and pinyin of the numbers – select children to touch the interactive white |

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| | <p>board – some children are helping the them;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing the song of “Gong Xi Ni” together – the children really enjoyed singing the “gong xi” and doing the gestures. • Watch a video about a conversation of asking ages; • Do a little bit basic maths plus and minus with Chinese numbers • Sing the body parts song. • Watch a video of saying “look, my nose/eyes/mouth/ears” in Chinese. The teacher asks the children to recognise the body parts mentioned in the video; • Watch a video of how to write the strokes for the character of “ear”, and ask 3 children to do it with on the IWB with the software; |
| Children’s respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the children respond to the questions by hands up; |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher corrects the children’s tones, and writing almost every time, as well as the order of the writing: character with pinyin on the top first, and then English translation. • The teacher also corrects the pupils’ writing of the horizontal stroke. • When children make mistake, the teacher give them plenty of time and ask them to finish the question, except the children cannot do it anyway, the teacher will say the answer herself or select some other children to finish it. |
| The use of target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeting the pupils in Chinese: good morning pupils, good morning teacher, good morning classmates; • Register the children with their Chinese numbers. • Praise with “很好” (very good) once. |
| Teacher’s language knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally good, but sometimes pronounce the tones wrong. • The teacher’s teaching of the language is not very consistent. For example, she can pronounce the number 5 right, but she write it wrong in pinyin at the beginning, and then write it right again without realising her mistake earlier; she pronounce the number 1 in 4th tone, and write it down in 2nd tone. |
| Pupils’ achievements and progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils seem can copy the numbers and say most of them. • More girls finished the writing sheet from last week (5 girls 1 boy). |
| Encouragement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher uses table points to praise the children who did well |

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|------------|---|
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher walks around to see the children's progress: ask them how to pronounce the numbers they wrote down; to correct the children who wrote the numbers wrong; |
| Note | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher tends to select the children from 3 tables out of 6. The children who sit on that 3 tables seem more abled. The teacher asked the children to write down the numbers, and then write down the Chinese, and then pronounce it at home (however, this seems doesn't happen). One boy seemed really hates learning Chinese, and had some conflicts with the teacher. |

Case B:

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|------------------------------|--|
| Classroom or school settings | Same as Case A. |
| Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap previous content. Puzzle board activity of matching the characters/pinyin and pictures. |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the characters of 口 mouth, 月 moon, 水 water, 山 mountain, 火 fire, 木 tree, 人 person, 林 forest, 明 bright, 炎 hot, 火山 volcano, 人口 population, 口水 mouth water, 山水 scenery, 好 good. Explain the progression of Chinese characters and the way how Chinese characters are combined. Making phrases using the characters. Introducing 您 you (respect), 你 you, 再见 goodbye, 见 see, 早 morning, 早安 good morning, 你好 hello, 老师 teacher, 中国 China, 英国 England in pinyin and character. Demonstrating how to write 再, 见, 你, 好 to the pupils. Introduced the greeting of "hello, Good morning, Good afternoon, Bye bye". Introduced the conversations: "What's your name? I'm called.../I am..." "Hello, my name is..." Introduced the pinyin of he/she/it to the pupils and the sentences of "what is his/her name? his/her name is..." in Chinese. Introduced how to say "who are you? I'm..." |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the teacher saying the characters, and find the correct mini flash cards of the characters. The teacher says the characters, and asks the pupils to do actions. |

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|----------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher asked the pupils to listen and match the sounds and the characters; • The teacher asked the pupils to listen for the tone for each character. • The teacher asked the pupils what does 见 mean with saying it and doing the action for it. A boy answered it's "see". • The teacher read the phrases, and asked the pupils to do actions. • The teacher read the phrase (下午好), and asked the pupils to say which one it is. • The teacher asked the pupils to select the characters to make phrases said by the teacher (such as 我叫) from the mini cards |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher read the characters, and pupils repeated. • The teacher reads the characters one by one, and asks the pupils to repeat; and then 2 characters together, then 3 characters together, then 4 characters together. • The teacher leads the pupils to practise reading every character and phrases and conversations with actions. • The teacher read the characters, and the pupils repeat for several times; • The teacher led the pupils to read the phrases/characters/sentences with actions (for each character) – together or repeat. • The teacher practiced the conversations with each table, as well as the whole class with doing the actions at the same time, loud, quiet, wiggle, etc. • The teacher led the pupils to practise the sounds by using hand to show the tones. • The teacher asked the pupils to say the phrases she chose from the white board. • The teacher asked the pupils to practise the conversation with their neighbours. • The teacher selected some pupils to share their practising to the whole class. • Ask the pupils to practise in pairs. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match the 3 sets of mini flash cards: one picture set, one seal form character set, one character sets. • Listen to the teacher saying the characters, and find the correct mini flash cards of the characters. • Try to make phrases using the characters. • The pupils match the pictures and the pinyin/characters by doing the puzzle boards. • The teacher asked the pupils to match the pinyin and characters for the characters. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher asked the pupils to select the right characters to fill in the boxes next to the conversation (pinyin is already there): 你好, 你早, 你叫什么, 我叫... • The teacher asked the pupils to match the phrases and the pictures. • The teacher asked the pupils to say the phrases she chose from the white board. • The teacher asked the pupils to select the characters to make phrases (such as 我叫) from the mini cards. • When demonstrating how to write the characters, the teacher asked the pupils if they can remember the parts of the characters. • The teacher asked the pupils to recognise the characters on the board and hold the cards for them. • Worksheet exercise: there are 我叫 and 我是 missing from the sentences. The teacher asked the pupils to fill in the gaps. • The teacher asked the pupils to recognise the characters on the board and hold the cards for them. |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Draw” the “seal form” of the characters – traditional characters and the character. • The teacher demonstrate how to write the characters 再, 见, 你, and 好 on the board stroke by stroke (saying in Chinese), and asks the pupils to copy. • The pupils practising copying and writing almost all the characters on the worksheets. • The teacher asks the pupils to try and write the characters in blank boxes when they can remember. • Copying and writing the characters and phrases: 是, 我, 叫, 你好, 我叫, 我是. • To copy and write the characters next to the pinyin. • The teacher demonstrated how to write 是, 我, 叫 on the board, saying the strokes in Chinese. • The teacher asked the pupils to copy 我 on the worksheet, and try to write it with memory. • Worksheet exercise: there are 我叫 and 我是 missing from the sentences. The teacher asked the pupils to fill in the gaps. • Worksheet exercise: there are 我叫 and 我是 missing from the sentences. The teacher asked the pupils to fill in the gaps. • The teacher asked the pupils to write 你好, 我叫 and their names at the back of the worksheet, trying by memory. |
| Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher explained the meanings of some characters. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher led the pupils to think the nature of Chinese characters: the teacher asks the pupils what is Chinese writing based on. A boy said symbols, another boy said pictures. The teacher then explains that Chinese characters are ideogram and asks the pupils to think the advantages and disadvantages of Chinese writing form. • The teacher led the pupils to think about the combination of Chinese characters: ask the pupils to choose a character on the board to mix with the character 火, some pupils answered 水. The teacher then puts 火 and 山 together, and asks the pupils to guess the meaning. A boy guessed it's fire on the mountain, another boy guessed it's volcano. • Ask the pupils if they want to make the character of saliva, what characters they should put together. The teacher asks the pupils to put the cards for saliva (口水), scenery (山水), and bright (明) together. • The teacher asks the pupils to think which 2 characters can make sense of population. The pupils guess 人山, 人月, 人水. The teacher explains it's 人口. • Explain the meaning of the characters. • The teacher asks the pupils what is the meaning of 再见. • The teacher asks the pupils to think 中国 and 英国 has how many syllabuses, and what is the same syllabus between 中国 and 英国, and what does 国 mean – leads the pupils to think. • The teacher then explains the meaning of 国 country, 中国 China, 中 centre, 英 (relate to warrior) 国 country to the pupils. • While introducing 你, the teacher explains the side character. While introducing 好, the teacher explain the character 女. • The teacher then asked the pupils if they've noticed anything in common between English greeting and Chinese greeting, and led the pupils to figure out they both have good 好 in it. • The teacher wrote 叫 on the board, and explained the left part 口 means mouth, and 叫 means people speak, and it is related to mouth. • Led the pupils to think through the difference between English and Chinese sentences. • Led the pupils to figure out the patterns of Chinese questions: question word, start with. |
| Culture | The culture of Chinese characters: what they are based on, how they progressed, and how they combined. |

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| Children's respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 3-4 pupils are not very concentrated on the activities, but most of them are. The pupils are more active in the beginning than at the end. |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher asked the pupils to think again when they picked up the wrong mini flash cards. Sometimes if the pupils read the characters wrong, the teacher read it again and asked the pupils to repeat together. |
| Encouragement | Use table points to praise the pupils who do well. |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match activity: handed out three sets of mini flash cards of Chinese characters to each group of pupils: one set are the characters of 2000BC – the Seal Form; one set are the characters; and one set are the pictures. Three sets are in different colours. 2 or 3 pupils work together as a group to match the 3 sets of cards. The teacher says the characters, and asks the pupils to choose the correct cards and hold them in pairs: one holds the character, another holds the picture. The teacher hides the picture of the characters on the board, and says the characters, and asks the pupils to choose the correct cards and hold them in pairs. And then display the pictures for the pupils to check if they're right. Draw the picture and seal form of the characters. The teacher hands out the puzzle boards (blank) and the mini flash cards to the pupils: two pupils share one set: 8 cards, 4 of them are pictures, 4 of them are pinyins/characters. The pupils are supposed to match them on the puzzle boards. The cards are for characters: 您, 你, 再见, 见, 早, 早安, 你好, 老师, 中国, 英国. Game: all pupils close their eyes, the teacher chose one pupils to whisper one phrase 我叫, and the pupil repeat 我叫, and then the whole class guess who said it by saying "name... 说". Colour the characters of the conversation: at the side, there was introduction of which colour to be used for each phrase, and that was in pinyin. Pair work: to complete the sentences in the worksheet. ____叫什么. ____是谁 (with pinyin below them). Colouring the character 是 on the worksheet. |
| Target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher counts 5 to 0 in Chinese to finish the activity. The teacher demonstrates the strokes in Chinese. Please listen, please quiet down, don't talk in Chinese with actions. |

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| Teacher's language knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher knows everything she needed in the lesson. • Some of the tones were pronounced not very correct. |
| Pupils' achievements and progress | Most pupils can pick up the right cards after practising. Some pupils need to copy the cards when they write the characters at the end, some pupils can write by memory |
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher checks if the pupils can pick up the right cards. • The teacher walks around to see the pupils' work. |
| Notes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils of this class are learning Chinese from the language teacher of this school, so this is an additional Chinese lesson with the temporary class teacher focused on writing. • The lesson normally is over an hour, longer than other observed cases. • The teacher introduced the form of Chinese characters in the art lesson. • The teacher led the pupils to figure out the pattern and structure of Chinese sentences and Chinese characters. • The teacher said she was concerned about the pupils writing and she wanted them know how to make questions. |

Case C:

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| Classroom/school settings related to Chinese | <p>In the classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A board displayed the pupils' and the teacher's work related to Chinese; • A set of Chinese face masks at the back board, as well as a big dragon made by the pupils, a big picture of Chinese strokes, a world map with "language of the world" in the middle, and a big sheet of paper, saying "imagine the world is in peace" in many languages. • A table displayed some Chinese artefacts and some works relating to China of a girl in this class. • The updated board has been pasted some letters written by the pupils from their partner school in Beijing. • A map of China has been added to the board at the back, as well as the character 我 with its pinyin, the character 爱 and 学, the teacher's name in Chinese. <p>In the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some pictures of the staff visits to their Chinese partner school on the wall, as well as some letters from the pupils of their partner school. |
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| Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeting the pupils in Chinese; • Saying “Now we’re going to speak Chinese, now we’re going to listening Chinese, now we’re going to write Chinese, now we’re going to read Chinese. Jump” in Chinese together, with actions. • Showing a girl’s work – a handmade Great Wall of China, to the whole class. |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce family members, and a little bit of the Great Wall of China from the Mulan story. • Introduce how to write the character of mum. • Recap the previous lesson of family members. • Introduce some relevant phrases of family members: such as my dad. • Introduce a new character: home 家。 • Demonstrate how to write the character of dad 爸 and I 我. • Introduce the character love 爱, and introduce the phrase of “I love...” and the sentence of “I love China” in characters. • Introduce the body parts and the song of it. • Introduce how to write the character of love 爱. • Introduce the sentences of saying “I love my family...etc”. • Introduced the phrase terrific in Chinese to the pupils. • Introduced the initials of pinyin and 3 finals. • Introduced the measure words in Chinese to the pupils, specifically 两 (another way of saying two in Chinese, usually together with measure words). • Introduce the pinyin “b p m f z c s ong ia”. • Introduced how Chinese radicals related to characters. 水, anything to do with water would have it. 火车 – fire and car = train. • Explained anything to do with mouth has 口 radical. • Writing the character 口 and 手. • Introduced Dragon Boat festival to the pupils. • Introduce 2 songs of body parts. |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the video and the teacher, and repeat. • Play a video of introducing family members to the pupils. • Watched and listened to a video of introducing body parts in Chinese. • Played the sounds of the characters and phrases of the Frog rhyme separately, and asked the pupils to repeat as boys and girls, the teacher then decide which group is better. • Asking the pupils to listen pinyin “z c s”. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher read the body parts and asked the pupils if they remember them. • When do the cut and paste body parts activity, the teacher read some body parts and asked if the pupils have done them. • The teacher played a body parts song to the pupils, and asked the pupils to guess what the meaning – the song has both English and Chinese. |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeting, “learn Chinese” sentence at the beginning, • Repeating after the teacher/video. • The teacher led the pupils to read the body parts together: teacher says, pupils repeat. (The teacher pretended the voices of an old lady, a little baby, and a big masculine man to say these body parts, and the pupils imitated and repeated). • The teacher led the pupils to sing the song of body parts. • The teacher led the pupils to say I love China/mum/dad/brother in Chinese. • The pupils answered the teacher’s question 你好吗(how are you)when they did the registering. • Led the pupils to practise the conversation of “what’s your name? my name is...” and “how old are you? I’m ... years old” and “how are you? I’m good/ok/not good” in Chinese together. • Asked the pupils to move around and find a partner to practise those conversations as well as hello and good bye. • Led the pupils to say all the body parts they have learnt with pointing together. (The teacher read, and the pupils repeat). The teacher read one at a time at the beginning, and then two at a time, and then four at a time. • Led the pupils to read the frog rhyme. • Teach the pupils how to say the pinyin using website. • Asking the pupils to repeat pinyin “b p m f”. • Teacher read the body parts first, pupils repeat once with pointing to them. • Asked the pupils to say the body parts while drawing them. • Read the lyrics of the two body parts songs together. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the character 妈妈 and 爸爸. • The teacher Introduced the meaning of 爱: love, as well as the change of the character from traditional to simplified. • Read the body parts in both pinyin and characters and match them with the right body parts. • Asking pupils to look for radical 口 from 嘴巴. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils to paste the body parts written both in pinyin and characters next to the picture of themselves – the teacher said they should be able to read the pinyin, probably not characters yet. |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practising copying and writing the character 妈, 爸 and 我 on the worksheets. • The teacher demonstrated how to write 爱 on the board strike by stroke twice, and the pupils copied it, then the pupils practising copying it. • The pupils copied the character of love using brush pens with their big sheet. • Selected the pupils to write the character 口 on the IWB. • Practising copying and writing the character 口 and 手 on the worksheets. |
| Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced how Chinese radicals related to characters. • 水, anything to do with water would have it. • 火车 – a boy said coal fire. • Explained anything to do with mouth has 口 radical. |
| Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulan story, and the Great Wall. • The teacher demonstrated how to use the brush pen. • The teacher played the Chinese music during the reading activity. • Introduced the story of Dragon Boat Festival. |
| Children's respond | Very active. Boys seemed more active. |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct the pupils' stroke order. • Corrected the pupils' tones of 好 once. • Asked the others to help. • The teacher corrected one pupil who wrote it in a wrong order, but still praise her with stick and points. • Praise the pupils terrific and very good in Chinese. |
| Encouragement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher hand out a star sticker to each of the pupil, to praise that they copy the characters well. • The teacher showed some pupils' work of copying the characters to the class. |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher read the body parts, and the pupils point to the body parts. • The teacher reads and points, the pupils just point. • The teacher selected a volunteer and labelled him using small pieces of tags with the body parts written on them in pinyin and characters. • The teacher led the pupils to sing the “head shoulders...” song in Chinese together with actions for several times. • The teacher pointed to the body parts, and the pupils sung; and the teacher led the pupils do the moves faster |

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| | <p>and faster, and only say the end or the beginning of the song for several times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played a Chinese music and asked the pupils to move around while the music was playing, and find a partner when the music stopped. And then practice the conversations with their partners until the music was on again. • Introduced a frog rhyme related to numbers, and asked the boys and girls to compete reading the rhyme as correct as possible. • Cut and paste: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Selected a volunteer pupil to stick the body parts labels on her, and that girl became as the live dictionary for the other pupils. 2). Two sheets for pupils at the same time: one is a printed picture of a simple person with blank boxes next to the body parts; one is full of boxes with the body parts in both pinyin and characters. 3). Asked the pupils to cut off the body parts in pinyin&character, and then paste them into the right boxes next to the picture of the simple person. 4). The labelled girl was the live dictionary for other pupils to check where to put which when they're not sure. • Led the pupils to sing the body parts song together. (Together; Leave some parts with silent sometimes, and only sing some parts; Faster and faster). • Sing the body parts song with the teacher together, missing some parts and emphasising some parts. • Handed out a worksheet of making dragon boat and asked the pupils to make one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat race: boys as a group, girls as a group. • Worksheets: cut off the body parts in pinyin from the worksheet and paste them next to the picture of themselves. |
| Target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeting • “learn Chinese” sentences at the start. • The teacher praised the pupils very good in Chinese 很好. • The teacher said the strokes in Chinese. • Registered the pupils by asking them 你好吗 (how are you) • Praise the pupils terrific in Chinese 棒极了. • Counted 10-0 in Chinese to get them ready and sit on the carpet. • Teacher said sit down in Chinese. |

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| Teacher's language knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher is learning with the pupils together. For example when they listen to the video – the teacher repeat – then pupils repeat. Tones are not all correct, but the teacher knows everything she need in the lesson. |
| Pupils' achievements and progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the pupils can finish the worksheet work of copying the characters, but about a third of the pupils can't. When practising 你叫什么? 我叫... and 你几岁了? 我...岁了 with the music. A couple of the pupils seemed struggled with it, but most of them could do it. |
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question the pupils sometime about the knowledge they have learnt. The teacher asks the pupils to show their copying to her while she demonstrating how to write the character. The teacher walks around to see the pupils' copying. |
| Notes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher linked Chinese to the literacy lesson, and asked the pupils to read an ancient Chinese story "Mulan". A lot of the Y2 and Y3, as well as the Y4 children were saying hello to me in Chinese when I passed by the playground. They seemed quite interested in Chinese. The teacher asked a table of pupils is it easy or hard. All of them (4) said easy. Then the teacher asked what if I only give you characters? The pupils said hard. The pupils leant the song really fast! The teacher only played twice, and they all can sing it. |

Case D:

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| Classroom/school settings related to Chinese | N/A |
| Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting in Chinese. Counted numbers in Chinese to get the pupils ready. |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced the location of China to the pupils on a tellurion and told the pupils how big China is; Introduced Beijing Shanghai and Hong kong. Introduced a traditional Chinese story: "Kong rong rang li". Recap the greetings, and the number rhyme. Recapped 7 characters of the numbers "4,9,8,6,10,5" and the character of "day". Introduced the sentence "somewhere has something", "what does somewhere has" in Chinese. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the pinyin of bridge, mansion, advertisement, river, fountain, boat, and beautiful, castle and park. • Introduced how to say he/she has; you have; what do you have and what do I have. • Recap the 12 Zodiacs with the flash cards. |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the teacher to read the number rhyme. • Demonstrated the greetings and sentences to the whole class and the pupils listened to it. |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the greetings and sentences after the teacher. • Practise the greetings and sentences with the teacher. • Read the number rhyme after the teacher and with the teacher. • Practise the greetings as pairs. • Say the 12 Zodiacs while showing them the flash cards. • Group activity of practising the conversation of “what do you have” and “I have”. • Say the number rhyme together. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked the pupils to say the characters of numbers and zodiacs on the flash cards, but the pupils might be remembering the pictures. |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A |
| Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked the pupils how to say he and you in Chinese, and asked what is 我. • Explained to the pupils the sentence pattern of how to say somebody has... |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story telling; Finding China/England on the tellurion. • Watch a video about modern Shanghai. • Sing the song of London Bridge – body parts. • Sing the 2 tigers song; • Hold the mascots and asked the pupils questions. |
| Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story of 孔融让梨 • Introduced China is very big by explained how long it took to travel from W to E, N to S, and the shape of China – rooster. • Beijing and Shanghai. |
| Children’s respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally active. • More girls were doing the hand gestures with the teacher together when they said the number. |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher reminded the pupils or asked other pupils to remind or to do it instead. • The pupils read the tone of 兔 wrong, the teacher corrected them and read with them again. |
| Encouragement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise the pupils very good in Chinese. • The teacher gave out 5 stickers to 5 pupils at the end of each lesson. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher gave the Chinese mascot to one pupil who did well to take home at the end of every lesson and gave it to another pupil next time. |
| Target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting the pupils when lesson start. Say goodbye in Chinese when lesson finish. Praised the pupils “very good” in Chinese. Count 1-30 to get the pupils ready and sit on the carpet. |
| Teacher’s language knowledge | Native speaker. |
| Pupils’ achievements and progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of them were better than others in terms of remembering the stuff they learnt before. Most of them could follow. |
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q and A |
| Note: Other things | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The class teacher helped to engage the pupils to learn, and sing the rhyme London Bridge with the pupils. |

Case E:

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| Classroom/school settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A card of 你好 both in pinyin and character on the wall; Characters of numbers from 1-10 on the side wall. A card of 我叫, 你叫什么 both in pinyin and characters on the wall; Map and pins, where the pupils’ come from, all over the world. When Chinese New Year came, there are some pupils’ work in the classroom: lanterns, dragons/other zodiacs drew by the pupils, and painted dragon on soft clay. At the back wall of the classroom, there are some pictures printed out of the lion&dragon dance of the Chinese New Year celebration, taken by the pupils who went to see it in the China town. A silk bag, Chinese knot at the back. A Chinese calendar. |
| Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap the content of previous lessons. Ask the pupils what are the 4 skills of learning languages (2 boys, 1 girl): SLRW |
| Teaching content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice the dialogue of “hello, what’s your name, my name is... goodbye” in pinyin. Introduce the dialogue of age “how old are you, I’m... years old”. Introduce how to write the characters 你好, and use the brush pens. Introduce the story of Chinese zodiac. Chinese New Year: making lanterns; painting and decorate the zodiacs on the soft clay made by flour and |

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| | <p>water; decorate the biscuits; paper cut a dragon, and then put on the windows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the numbers from 1-10, and 11-20. • Introduce how to say “how are you? I’m good, I’m ok, and I’m not good” in pinyin. |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the teacher, and read after the teacher. • Listen to the teacher saying the age, and match the names to the ages (card with names and ages). • Listen to the teacher, and answer what age the teacher said. • The teacher say the numbers in Chinese, and the pupils write it on the flash board as pairs. • Teacher read the sentence of the conversation “how are you...” with face expression and hand actions, and asked the pupils to listen. • Bingo game for listening the numbers. |
| Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read after the teacher, using hand to demonstrate the tones and hand actions. • Demonstrate how to do the conversation with selected pupils. • Practise the dialogue with their partners. • Practise the dialogue with the teacher. • Read 1-10 with the teacher together. • Selected pupils to do the conversation with the teacher – a girl and a boy. • Answer the teacher’s question like how to say I’m 11 years old. • Table work of take turn to say the previous things they have learnt listed in the slide by spin the Kegan mat. • The teacher asked and selected some pupils to answer the things on the list, and numbers given by the teacher. • Fan and Pick activity: a dozen of cards with all the content they had learnt, and 4-5 pupils on the same table take turn to pick a card and practice the content on the cards. • Asked the pupils if any of the numbers they’re not sure, then teacher led them to read these numbers again – 7 and 10. • Teacher do hand gestures of the numbers, the pupils say them. • Build a conversation with all of the things that have learnt before and ask the pupils to walk around to practise with other pupils. • Speaking: find the hidden treasure – say the number and then click. |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected pupils to say what is “你” (you) in pinyin. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the numbers in pinyin. • Cut and match the pinyin to make the conversations. • Read the pinyin on the IWB • Match the numbers to their pinyin and characters (together). • Read the pinyin of some numbers and write down the numbers for them (12 numbers). |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the dialogue in pinyin. • Showed a video of how to write 你好. • Demonstrate how to do it on the board. • Worksheet practise – copying and writing. • The teacher walked around to help, and demonstrate for the pupils who can't do it or didn't follow the stroke orders. • Write 你好 with the brush pen and Chinese ink. • Copy the pinyin of the numbers (1-10) to their Chinese writing book, but not characters. |
| Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the difference between pinyin and characters and showed a slide and video about it for the pupils. • Link the Chinese zodiac to western astrology. • Ask the pupils to discuss how the number from 11-2- are formed, and explained. • Led the pupils to figure out what the meanings of “how are you, I’m good, I’m ok, I’m not good” based on “hello” as almost all of them include the characters of 你 and 好. • Explain the Chinese word to word to the pupils. Such as: 你好 you good. • Compare it with English, and said Chinese is simpler in this lesson. |
| Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played a video of Chinese characters: History, form, invented, how from pictures to characters, some examples in the video. • The story of the 12 Chinese Zodiac. • The symbolisation of lanterns. • A video of people celebrate lantern festivals in Taiwan/floating them. • Chinese calligraphy. |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game of matching names and ages. • Game of reading the numbers competition: boys vs girls. • Spin the Kegan Mat – 4 as a group to say the stuff they have learnt. • Teacher say the numbers in Chinese the pupils write it down on the flash board as a pair. • Fan and Pick activity. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the pupils to walk around the classroom to find different partners to practice the conversation – 3 minutes (hands up if available; the teacher participated as well). • Bingo game for listening the numbers. • Cut and match: gave the pupils a worksheet of “hello” and the questions of “what’s your name, how old are you, goodbye”, and another sheet of the answers “my name is Ben, goodbye, hello, I’m 9 years old”, and ask the pupils to cut and match to make a conversation, working as pairs. • Card activity: give each pupil a card with one of the words they have recapped, and ask the pupils to walk around to practice with each other. • Find the hidden treasure • Table group discussion. • Pair work • Laptop activity (collaborate learning) |
| Children’s respond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active, more boys than girls. • Active, especially doing the flash board pair work – house point. • Pupils seemed enjoying the Chinese New Year lesson very much and very enthusiastic about making the crafts. |
| Mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the pupil can’t answer the question, chose others instead. • Corrected the pupils and led him/her to read again. • A boy couldn’t answer, other try to help, the teacher stop them and ask the boy to think. |
| Encouragement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praised the pupils; • Asked the pupils to complement peers. • Asked if the pupils found it easier than last lesson, the pupils said yes. • Hung the pupils’ work in the classroom. • The first pair get the answer right can get a house point. • Ask the pupils to feedback of who thought their partner did well. |
| Target languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counted 5-1 in Chinese to get the pupils ready for the next activity. • Say goodbye in Chinese to another member of staff who came into the classroom in the middle. • Say correct and incorrect in Chinese to respond to the pupils’ answers. |
| Teacher’s language knowledge | Fair, know what she needs to know in the lesson. Some tones are not correct. |

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| Pupils' achievements and progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of them can keep the pace. • Most of them seemed already know about the things they have learnt before. |
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A; Flash board occasionally; • The teacher walks around and practise with the pupils as well. • While do the pair work, ask the pupils to face the back if confident, face the IWB if not, and face the sides if in the middle. |
| Note: Other things | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher encouraged and asked the pupils what strategies they used to remember the numbers – 3 boys 1 girl. • The teacher let the pupils to give peer compliment almost every time when they do group/pair work. • The teacher linked it with science while talking about the floating lanterns. • The teacher sk the pupils what can be improved next time – a boy said to improve the numbers; a girl said to help everyone. • The teacher always ask the pupils' feedback, regarding what they feel confident what they don't, and their compliments to peers. • The pupils seemed very exciting in learning Chinese. all said 你好 to me when I entered the classroom. |