The Comparison Between TESL and TCSL in Chinese Universities

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Abstract: TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) and TCSL (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language), they are both the second language teaching in Chinese Universities, which have some similarities in the second language teaching process and they are both need to apply some of the same teaching strategies. However, there are more differences between these two kinds of second language teaching in Chinese universities. This paper has compared TESL and TCSL in Chinese Universities from three perspectives: what are taught in second language teaching class? How to teach the second language? What are the different effects of the second language teaching? Then some conclusions have been summarized to understand the overall goals of second language teaching so as to contribute to the improvement of second language teaching techniques of TESL and TCSL.
Keywords: second language teaching; TESL; TCSL

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the distinctive characteristic of human beings and one of the most important ways of expressing our love or our hatred; it is vital for achieving many of our goals and our careers; we use language for planning our lives and remembering our past; we exchange ideas and experiences through language, so some people know more than one language. Knowing another language may helpful for us to getting a job; a chance to higher education; an access to others' original edition of literature and cultural knowledge; the opportunity to go abroad to travel or emigrate to another country... It affects people's career and possible futures, their lives and future. In today's world, with the development of economy and international connection, more and more people speak more than one language, so language learning and language teaching are vital to the everyday lives of millions of people.

Since the 1970s, a new academic subject has emerged, called second language learning (L2) research or second language acquisition (SLA) research, which looks at second and foreign language learning from a scientific perspective. Though it is still in the early stage of development, it has already produced many teaching theories and methodology from many perspectives. Teachers are assumed to aware of the theory and techniques of second language teaching. Although in such an assumption, successful teaching concerns about: students who have different physical characteristics; a particular educational context in which students are placed; and learning purposes and motivations in the students' minds through which

they are coming to acquire a new language; techniques that have to fit in with the particular students. Now, let compare the TESL and TCSL from the following aspects in Chinese universities to see what are the differences and what can be concluded.

2. COMPARISON BETWEEN TESL AND TCSL STUDENTS

There are more than 26000000 students in Chinese universities and most of them are Chinese native citizen, aged form about 17 to 26 years old, who have graduated from high school and passed the College Entrance Examination. Students enrolled by different kinds of colleges and universities according to their scores. All of them have had learned English more than 6 years. More over, in recent years, English is being attached greater and greater importance that a great number of students began studying English from Primary School or even Kindergarten. So they have had acquired the basic knowledge of English that including the basic grammar knowledge, thousands of vocabulary and certain degree of oral English competence.

While the characteristic of TCSL students in Chinese universities are quite different. Statistics shows that there were 223500 foreign students in the year of 2008, coming to china from about 160 countries and regions and the number has reached to 230000 in 2010. I think the number will be increasing rapidly in the following years along with Chinese steady improvement of the comprehensive national strength, as a result, Chinese is becoming a popular language. When the foreign students come to China, most of them know little of Chinese and they just know "你好""謝謝""對不起"etc. ; not too many of them have had learned some of Chinese in their countries; few of them have had a good command of Chinese. So a lot of them need to start to learn Chinese from rearly zero foundation, so that Chinese is really difficult for them.

Through the comparison, we can conclude that the main physical distinctive features of TESL and TCSL students lie in different age of majority students; different first language; different starting point of learning second language.

3. THE DIFFERENCES OF LEARNING PURPOSES AND MOTIVATIONS

What are the purposes of learning and teaching a second language? That can be divided into three types: local goals, international goals, individual goals and here we just discuss the international goals.

A. Careers that require a second language

An important function of language teaching is indeed to train student for the international business world. The universities' syllabus points to English as "an important language to enable students meaningfully in international trade and commerce". Degrees in English are popular among Chinese universities, because our society will always need individuals who are capable of bridging the gap between two countries for economic or political purpose. So after graduation, students can find jobs like English teacher, translator, English tourist guide etc.

B. Higher education

In many countries, second language is a must to get access to higher education. The importance for students is not the second language itself, but the information that is gained via second language. For example, in China, if a student wants to get higher education, he or she must pass the required English

exam. Here are College Entrance Exam, Post Graduation Entrance Exam etc. If you want to go abroad to have a higher education, you need to have the IELTS & TOEFL or GRE required scores. For foreign students coming to have higher education, they are required to pass the exam of HSK (Test of Chinese language ability for foreigners).

C. Access to research and information

It has been known that Chinese universities encourage the students to read factual prose and fiction for information and enjoyment. At a different level is the need for English to support various careers that are not primarily based on language-for scientists, doctors, or journalists. To keep up-to-date or to be well-informed, it may be necessary to use English. English provides an additional means of access to academic, professional and recreational materials.

D. Travel

The motivation behind many students' second language learning is to travel abroad. Nowadays, more and more people tend to go aboard to have an international travel, and English is a national language, that travel in most places in the world could be successful through English.

China is a country with an ancient civilization of long standing. During the prolonged process of historical development, the Chinese nation has created its unique traditional culture. For foreign students, they are attracted by Chinese brilliant culture, so they all want to come to travel and study or work in China. When they were in China, they would found that learning Chinese can help them get a well understanding of Chinese people and Chinese culture. So it becomes a necessity to learn Chinese.

Motivation in second language learning is has been used to refer to the long term fairly stable attitudes in the students' minds that influence the degree of effort that learners make. There are various types of motivations have been identified: integrative, instrumental, resultative and intrinsic motivation, introduced by Garner and Lambent in a series of books and papers (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985). The integrative motivation reflects whether the student identifies with the target culture and people in some sense, or rejects them. The more that a student admires the target culture—reads its literature, visits it on holiday, looks for opportunities to practice the language, and so on—the more successful the student will be in the second language learning. For the TCSL students, most of them admire Chinese culture, by coming to China and studying Chinese, they will be able to participate more freely in the activities of Chinese cultural groups.

Instrumental motivation means learning the language for an ulterior motive unrelated to its use by native speakers—to pass an examination, to get a certain kind of job, and so on. Studying a foreign language can be important for our college students because it will someday be useful in getting a good job. Most of Chinese college students have to learn English, because they are required to pass the CET4 and CET6, which is also a requirement for getting the degree. Some of the English majors learn English to increase their career possibilities, while some of them learn English for going abroad. However a student might learn a second language with an integrative motivation or with an instrumental one, or indeed with both. Generally speaking, TESL students are recognized as the instrumental motivation.

4. COMPARISON BETWEEN LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT

In the classroom: Teachers for TCSL and TESL students are different, that TCSL's teachers are Chinese-speaking teachers whose first language are Chinese and with a degree of Chinese Literature or Linguistics. And you know, lessons including language and explanation are given totally in authentic Chinese, while for TESL students, most of their English teachers are also Chinese-speaker without learning or working experiences in English-speaking countries. And TECL students' English class for non-English major are given half in English that is to say, the content of the text is taught in

non-authentic English and the teachers' explanation is in Chinese.

Out of the classroom: Both the TESL and TCSL students learn the second language in China, so it seems that their learning environment is the same. However, for the TESL students, China is their motherland where people speak Chinese which is not the target of English. So with little or no exposure to English language environments and a heavy emphasis on exams in the education system, many students find that, despite studying English very hard, they still have difficulties in using English effectively in real situations.

While for TCSL students, China is the best Chinese target language country, in such an environment, they can not only learn Chinese in the TCSL classroom, but also, they can learn outside the classroom. And more over, what they will have learned are the pure and authentic language, culture and real Chinese life.

So compare the environment for TCSL and TESL students, we can conclude that within the same second language learning environment, TCSL students have an advantage than TESL students, so it is much easier for them to study the second language well.

5. COMPARISON BETWEEN CLASSROOM TEACHING STYLES

There are six main branches of second language teaching methodology: Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Audiolingual Method, Functional Approach, Communicative Teaching Method, and Task-Based Teaching Method. In this paper, I will use another term "teaching style" and "teaching techniques", which as Clark (1984) puts it, is a "label for what we do as teachers". Teachers combine different techniques in various ways within a particular teaching style. Put a structure-drill with a repetition dialogue and a role-play and you get the audio-lingual style with its dependence on the spoken language, on practice, and on structure. Put a functional drill with an information gap exercise and a role-play and you get the social communicative style with its broad assumptions about the importance of communication in the classroom. A teaching style is a loosely commence set of teaching techniques believed to share the same goals of language teaching and the same views of second language learning. This paper relates Vivian Cook's (2000) six teaching styles to second language teaching: academic teaching style common in academic classrooms, the audiolingual style that emphasizes structured oral practice, the social communicative style that aims at interaction between people, the information communicative style that stresses information transfer from one person to another, the mainstream EFL style which combines aspects of the first three, and finally, other styles that look beyond language itself.

The academic teaching style is characterized by teaching techniques of grammatical explanation and translation, and so is sometimes known as the grammatical –translation method. The style is similar in concept to marton's reconstructive strategy or Alien et al's analytic activities. The academic style is a time-honored way of teaching foreign language, popular in secondary schools and widespread in the teaching of advanced students in university systems around the world. And in Chinese universities, it is just the main teaching style of English as the second language for students. A teacher explains how to apologize in the target language—'when you bump into someone on the street you say "sorry"'; a teacher gives a quick grammatical explanation of the present perfect tense—"I have been to Paris" means that the action is relevant to moment of speaking; a teacher describe where to put the tongue to make the sound |θ| in 'think' —all of these are slipping into an academic style where the students have to understand the abstract explanation before applying it in their own speech.

The academic teaching style emphasizes the acquisition of grammatical competence as rules of a type and lists of vocabulary. It does not directly practice language use in the classroom, and it holds a traditional view of the classroom and of the teacher's role: teachers are still acting the leading role in the class where about 70 per cent of the utterances in most English class come from the teacher. However, this kind of teaching style is widely used in TESL class, which is seldom used for TCSL students. You

can see academic English teaching style in Chinese universities have many shortcomings which result in Chinese students' poor communicative competence.

The audiolingual style is attached to a teaching style that reached its peak in the 1961s, best conveyed in Robert Lado's thoughtful book *Language Teaching: a Scientific Approach* (Lado, 1964). Its emphasis is on teaching the spoken language through dialogues and drills. A typical lesson in an audiolingual style starts with a dialogue, say about buying food in a shop:

A: Good morning.

B: Good morning.

A: Could I have some milk please?

B: Certainly. How much?

The language in the dialogue is controlled so that it introduces only a few new vocabulary items, 'milk', 'cola', 'mineral water', say, and includes several examples of any new structural point: 'Could I have some cola?' 'Could I have some mineral water?' etc. the students listen to the dialogue as a whole, either played back from a tape or read by the teacher; they repeat it sentence by sentence, and they act it out: ' Now get into Paris of shopkeeper and customer and try to buy the following items…'. Then the students drill grammatical points connected with the dialogue, such as the polite questions used in requests 'Could I...' The teacher writes on the board:

'Could I have some (milk, water, and cola)?

He says: 'milk'.

And so on. The drill practices the structure repeatedly with variation of vocabulary. Finally, there are expansion activities to make the students incorporate the language in their own use. Hence the audiolingual style stresses the spoken language rather than the written and the so-called 'active' skills of speaking and writing rather than the 'passive' skills of listening and reading.

The goal of the audiolingual style is to get the students to 'behave' in common second language learning situations, such as the station or the supermarket; it is concerned with the real-life activities the students are going to face. In one sense it is practical and communication-oriented. So this kind of teaching style is very useful and practical for foreigners coming to travel or learn Chinese in China. At the same time, it is being widely used for TCSL students, while it isn't being widely used for TESL students in Chinese universities.

In the early of the 1970s, there was a shift towards teaching methods that emphasized communicative competence rather than linguistic competence: the ability to use the language appropriately rather than the knowledge of grammatical rules implied in the academic style or the habits of the audiolingual. In the social communicative style, language is defined as communication between people, rather than as texts or grammatical rules or patterns: it has a social purpose. Language is for forming relationships with people and for interrelating with them. Using language means meeting people and talking to them. Language is not so much rules or structures or texts as ways of talking to people. The aim is to give the students the ability to engage in conversations with people. In the classroom, the teacher no longer dominates the classroom, controlling and guiding the students every minute. By contrast, the teachers ask the students make up their own conversations in pairs and groups, learning language by situational activities. While the teacher provides some feedback and correction, this plays a much less central part in his or her classroom duties. The teacher plays a role of helper and guide rather than the leader. This is a jump in teaching techniques, and has being applied to TESL and TCSL class, but it is used much more in TCSL than TESL.

The mainstream EFL style has developed in British-influenced EFL from the 1930s up to the present day. Till the early 1970s, it mostly reflected a compromise between the academic and the audiolingual styles, combining techniques of grammatical explanation with techniques of automatic practice. Until the 1970s this early mainstream style was characterized by the term 'situation' in two senses. In one sense language was to be taught through demonstration in the real classroom situation; teachers rely on the props, gestures and activities that are possible in a real classroom. This is a combination of other styles, and it can be properly used for both TESL and TCSL.

6. CONCLUSION

By the above comparison, we can simply see the differences and the teaching effects between TESL and TCSL in Table. 1, and then some strategies have been given to improve the second language teaching in Chinese universities.

Table 1: Comparison between TESL and TECL

Comparison	TESL	TCSL
Starting Point	Learn English more than 6 years and have had acquired the basic knowledge of English	Know little of Chinese
Learning Environment	Non-English target language country	Chinese target language country
Motivation	Instrumental motivation	Integrative motivation
Teaching Techniques	Academic Teaching Style	Audiolingual Style Communicative Style
Teaching Effect	Good at grammar, reading but poor at communicative competence	Good at communicative competence but poor at Chinese character recognition and writing.
Strategies to Improve the Second Language Teaching	a. The introduction of situational teaching model b. Integrate grammar, communicative competence and culture input together c. Learn from the multi-media such as English TV programmer and English movies d. Make friends with foreigners and learn English from them.	a. Intensify the functional usage of Chinese sentences b. Improve the teaching of writing and recognition of Chinese character. c. Introduction of Chinese history and culture d. Learn more Chinese from daily life outside the classroom

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