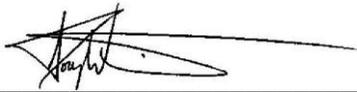


CULTIVATING CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' ORAL COMMUNICATIVE
COMPETENCE THROUGH ENGLISH MOVIE DIALOGUES

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CULTIVATING CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' ORAL COMMUNICATIVE
COMPETENCE THROUGH ENGLISH MOVIE DIALOGUES

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Abstract

CULTIVATING CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' ORAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH ENGLISH MOVIE DIALOGUES

Chen Guoliang

Under the Supervision of Dr. Kory Wein

The oral English classroom plays a very important role in College English teaching in mainland China. It is a favorable environment to cultivate college students' communicative competence in oral English. However, evidence shows that current oral English teaching does not reach a satisfactory level. How to cultivate and promote college students' oral communicative competence has become a critical issue for all English teachers and scholars in mainland China. This paper reviews the literature that addresses this problem and finds possible solutions to cultivating students' communicative competence, especially oral communicative competence. By reviewing the domestic and international research on this issue, the author intends to arouse in English teachers in mainland China an awareness of the imperfect situation in oral English teaching. By conducting a questionnaire and interview, the author probed into the current teaching situation and found out the existing problems, then sought a teaching method that might help with the problems. Focusing on the cultivation of college students' oral communicative competence, the author introduced English movie dialogues into the oral English class in the hope of creating an effective way of teaching oral English—one that enhances students' communicative competence.

Key Words/Phrases: *college oral English teaching; English movie dialogues; communicative competence*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
APPROVAL PAGE.....	i
TITLE PAGE.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction	
Statement of the Problem	
Definitions of Terms	
Delimitations	
Method of Approach	
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	5
The Concept of Communicative Competence	
Research on Communicative Competence in Language Teaching	
Research on Oral English Communicative Competence in TESL/ TEFL	
Research on Using Movie/ Movie Dialogue in TEFL/ TESL	
CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANALYSIS.....	15
Questionnaire Design and Implementation	
Interview Design and Implementation	
Analysis of the Findings	
CHAPTER 4. ORAL ENGLISH TEACHING MODEL AND PROCEDURE DESIGN....	22
The Scope of English Movies for College Students	
Oral English Teaching Model and Procedure with Movie Dialogues Applied	
A Sample of Oral English Teaching with English Movie Dialogue Applied	
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	27
APPENDIX	29
REFERENCES.....	33

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The past ten years has witnessed the reform of College English teaching in mainland China. Indeed, this is the third round of Chinese college English teaching reform (Cai, 2010). According to the College English Curriculum Requirement issued by the Department of Higher Education of Ministry of Education PRC, “The objective of College English is to develop students’ ability to use English in a well-rounded way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future studies and careers as well as social interactions they will be able to communicate effectively, ...” (2007, p.18). In terms of speaking abilities, conversational strategies in dialogue are required basic skills. During these ten years, college students’ communicative competence has been stressed and cultivated by English instructors, especially listening and speaking abilities.

Has everything gone as well as people expected? Is the cultivation of communicative competence carried out in oral English teaching? Is students’ communicative competence really promoted? What is the response from students, teachers, and society? All these questions revolve around the effectiveness of the College English teaching reform.

Oral English plays a very important role in College English teaching in mainland China. It is a favorable environment to cultivate college students’ communicative competence in oral English classes. However, evidence shows that current oral English teaching does not reach a satisfactory level. A survey conducted by National College English Guiding Committee shows that employing units in China are dissatisfied with college graduates’ English integrated abilities, estimating that only 5% of college graduates have a high level of spoken English competence, and 37% of college graduates have poor spoken English competence (Cai, 2002).

How to cultivate and promote college students' oral communicative competence has become a critical issue for all English teachers and scholars in mainland China. This paper is a review of the literature that addresses this problem and finds possible solutions to cultivating students' communicative competence.

Statement of the Problem

To what extent does the present method of teaching oral English in China cultivate college students' communicative competence? What methods or devices are used in oral English teaching and how effective are they?

There are various methods of cultivating college students' oral communicative strategies. Applying movie dialogues into oral English teaching will be the focus of this paper.

The above two general questions will be divided into the following specific questions:

- What is the goal of college oral English teaching?
- Does the goal comprise communicative competence?
- What's the current situation of college oral English teaching?
- What are the specific teaching methods applied in oral English teaching?
- What are the specific devices applied in oral English teaching?
- Are movie dialogues applied in oral English teaching?
- What's the effect of applying movie dialogues in oral English teaching?
- Do movie dialogues improve students' communicative competence?

Based on these questions, the following three aspects will be covered in this paper:

First, the current situation of College Oral English teaching and learning; second, the cultivation of communicative competence in College Oral English teaching; third, effective methods and devices applied in College Oral English teaching.

Definition of Terms

Communicative competence: a term in linguistics that refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. Based on Dell Hymes' (1966) theory of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of three components:

- grammatical competence: words and rules
- sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
- strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies

CET: College English Teaching

COET: College Oral English Teaching

Movie Dialogues: a literary and theatrical form consisting of a written or spoken conversational exchange between two or more people. *Movie dialogue* refers to conversation between characters in a movie.

TEFL: Teach English as Foreign Language

TESL: Teach English as Second Language

Delimitations of the Research

The research was conducted in and through the Karrmann Library at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, over ninety (90) days. Primary searches were conducted via the Internet through EBSCO host with ERIC, Academic Search Elite, and Google/Google Scholar as the primary sources. Key search topics included "communicative competence," "CET," "COET," and "movie dialogue."

Method of Approach

The methodology of this project involved traditional library research as well as a teaching improvement project. A brief review of literature on the Chinese and oversea studies of communicative competence and oral English teaching situation was conducted. A second review of literature concerning teaching oral English via movie dialogues was also conducted. A Teaching project was designed. A qualitative study was conducted. Twenty-one students were interviewed about their opinions and attitudes towards viewing movies. A quantitative study was conducted in which about 500 students were questioned online about their opinions of viewing movies. The findings were summarized and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Since the term *communicative competence* was introduced by Hymes in 1966, and further developed by Canale and Swain (1980) in its categorization, the past forty-five years has witnessed the continuous research on communicative competence in the second and foreign language teaching (known as TESL and TEFL) throughout the world. Research has primarily focused on the following three aspects:

- The theoretical research in communicative competence
- The application of communicative competence in English language teaching
- The research of the cultivation of oral English communicative competence

The purpose of my research paper is to gauge the efficacy of using movie dialogues to cultivate students' oral English communicative competence. Therefore, the research of using movies in English teaching will be included in my literature review.

Influenced by Western countries, China has adopted a communicative approach in late 1970s, and has been deeply involved in communicative language teaching (CLT) ever since (Hu, 2010). In this case, my review of the research paper will be composed of both Chinese and foreign research.

The Concept of Communicative Competence

As illustrated in Wikipedia, *communicative competence* is a term in linguistics that refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. Chomsky (1965), in his book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, illustrates the distinction between competence and performance in language use. Against the perceived inadequacy of Chomsky's abstract notion of

competence, Hymes (1966), for the first time introduced the term *communicative competence* that included “communicative form and function in integral relation to each other” (Leung, 2005). Based on Hymes’ theory of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of three components:

- grammatical competence: words and rules
- sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
- strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies

Later, Canale improved the above model adding discourse competence—cohesion and coherence—to the original model. Bachman (1990) divides communicative competence into the broad headings of “organizational competence,” including grammatical, discourse (or textual) competence, and pragmatic competence. In pragmatic competence, both sociolinguistic and illocutionary competence are included.

Research on Communicative Competence in Language Teaching

Communicative competence has been widely recognized and cultivated among students in language teaching since communicative competence was introduced and developed by linguists. Well known scholar Savignon (1997) claimed that through the influence of communicative language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the goal of language education, central to good classroom practice. This is in contrast to previous views that argue that top priority should be given to grammatical competence. Many researchers have done a lot of work in this field.

Rababah (2002) focuses on strategic competence in English language teaching. Strategic competence includes paraphrase, circumlocution, literal translation, lexical approximation, etc. He argues that successful language learning is not only a matter of developing grammatical,

sociolinguistic, and semantic competence but also strategic competence, which involves the use of communication strategies and their role in transmitting and comprehending messages successfully. However, communication strategy is only one of the communicative competences in language learning. Other competences remain to be discussed.

Different from Rababah, Zhuang (2007) demonstrates the developmental history of the concept “communicative competence” from three representative models: Hymes, Canale and Swain, and Bachman in order to find out the interrelationship between communicative competence and actual communication. Furthermore, he highlights three components, organizational competence, pragmatic competence and strategic competence, in Bachman’s. The significance of the research is to apply the communicative pedagogical applications properly into English language teaching to achieve these competences.

To further develop Zhuang’s research of the communicative pedagogical applications in English language teaching, Hu (2010) argues that making the communicative approach as a viable approach for Chinese English teaching (CET) is of vital importance. Although the State Commission of Education set teaching of Chinese English learners’ communicative competence as the ultimate pedagogic goal in the new English Teaching Syllabus in 1992, the practice of communicative language teaching in Chinese has not provided the expected results. In Hu’s research, possible solutions have been explored to develop students’ communicative competence, which may benefit EFL educators in China.

Cai (2007) applies a new approach, IEDC (Interaction of English Dormitory and Class teaching), in the hope of cultivating students’ communicative competence through various means of cooperative learning. IEDC is unrealistic to some degree because learning can be observed and controlled while in dormitory things can be very different. However, compared with Zhuang

(2007) and Hu (2010), to cultivate students' communicative competence through cooperative learning is a new attempt.

Several researchers attach importance to the inward and outward factors of language acquisition to explore the cultivation of students' communicative competence. Based on interviews with high school EFL teachers, Nazari (2007) hypothesizes that some teachers have an indistinct view about communicative competence that moves between autonomous and ideological concepts. Based on his observation of high school EFL classes, he claims that raising high school EFL teachers' awareness of the autonomous and ideological concepts of communicative competence is essential and this can better prepare teachers to base their classes on a broader view of communicative competence. In Contrast to Nazari, Ying (2007) investigated the communicative competence of Chinese students in a British university to find out more about Chinese students' difficulties in communication and to explore learning strategies for developing communicative competence. The research results show that Chinese students had both linguistic and socio-cultural problems in communication. A range of findings support the view that attitudes, motivation and immersion were important in the development of communicative competence.

Besides exploring the cultivation of communicative competence by adopting different teaching methods, some effective teaching facilities can be employed. Zha *et al* (2006) focused their attention on the use of electronic discussion boards with elementary-aged English as Second Language (ESL) students. The purpose of their study was to investigate students' communicative competence in a computer-mediated communication environment. They employed qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze 956 messages that were posted by 28 ESL students on the electronic discussion board within six weeks. They found changes in

children's use of language for social purposes and the appropriateness of language use in different social and cultural backgrounds. They suggested that teachers should design online discussion activities and consider introducing to students peer assistance in language learning.

Different from Zha *et al*, Murillo (2007) conducted a case study at a school in Santiago, Chile in 2007. The purpose of his study was to explore the impact of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) with an emphasis on developing metacognitive skills and critical thinking in high-school students. Drama was used to stimulate and develop such skills. By playing roles in dramas, students paid much attention to putting their theoretical knowledge into active communicative practice. Murillo concluded that using drama in the classroom has greatly promoted students' cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective skills.

Research on Oral English Communicative Competence

Cultivating students' communicative competence in oral English must be the center of the research for TESL or TEFL because these communicative competences can be best achieved in oral English teaching.

Asato (2003) explored how secondary level English teachers in Japan adopted effective teaching methods to help students obtain oral communicative skills. These teachers enhanced language learning conditions and employed task-based learning strategies in order to help students acquire communicative strategies. Asato concluded that teachers should help students improve both their accuracy and communicative abilities. Actually, Asato attempted to cultivate students' real communicative abilities through adopting task-based teaching approach.

Based on a case study of a tuition-free, vocational ESL program offered at a large community college, Klinghoffer (2008) recommends that adult vocational ESL classes make further use of interactive situational dialogue methodologies as a means of heightening student

satisfaction. Collaborative strategies have been applied to the researcher's teaching, but the limitation of the research is that the communicative competence is not mentioned in this research.

Zuheer (2008) investigated the effectiveness of using a cooperative learning strategy, Student Team Achievement Division (STAD), to develop oral communication skills of second-level students. The researcher recommends that in order to help students develop their oral communication skills, teachers should provide students with a relaxing, effective, and interactive teaching environment in oral communication.

Zhang (2009) argues that a primary motivation for learning a second language is to be able to converse with speakers of that language. However, students must master several difficult micro skills, including the pronunciation of unfamiliar phonemes, the correct placement of stress and intonation, and the appropriate use of formal and informal expressions. Zhang presents three activities that provide students with opportunities to practice their spoken English—"read to act," "read to debate," and "read to interview." But speaking fluently does not mean that these students have acquired the communicative competence they need to improve their communication abilities. Therefore, the micro skills mentioned in Zhang's research are limited. But, on the other hand, practicing spoken English in a reading class is a good method to enhance students' speaking abilities.

Pattanapichet *et al* (2011) investigated the competencies required for oral communication in English among Thai undergraduate PR students. Via three research questions, the researchers found that oral communication in English played a significant role in PR jobs, that some competences are required for job interviews, entry-level PR jobs, and others are expected by students. Competencies identified in this study referred to general descriptions of English

language abilities described as ‘can do’ statements such as “can introduce themselves,” “can welcome company guests,” “can share their opinions,” etc. In terms of the subjects and scope of their research, the competencies for oral communication are very specific and narrow, which is rather different from the communicative competence in a broad sense.

Some researchers have made some attempts to improve the current situation of oral English teaching in higher education in China by enhancing English teachers’ ability to teach oral English. Chen (2011) investigated the difficulties that English teachers in China encountered in oral English teaching in higher education in EFL context. The findings showed that besides outward restrictions, such as large class sizes and inadequacy of teaching resources, EFL teachers are frustrated by their low effectiveness concerning oral English proficiency and a lack of knowledge of teaching methodology. It is of great significance that English teachers in China need further training in order to improve the effectiveness of oral English teaching. This research in oral English teaching is actually a survey report. Though the researcher criticized the current situation and problems of oral English teaching in higher education in China, he did not provide practical teaching methods to solve the problem. What he did was to call for training programs to strengthen teachers’ knowledge base for effective oral English instruction.

Research on Using Movie in TEFL/ TESL

Much research has been done on enhancing English learners’ oral communicative competence, but only a few of the studies address the use of English movies. Communicative competence is the ultimate goal of language teaching and learning, and various teaching methods have been applied, including viewing movies, which is useful and practical. “Incorporating motion pictures as part of classroom instruction has been spurred by the endorsement of both of the major reading and language arts organizations in the United States” (Considine & Baker,

2006, p. 12). Some researchers used movies in ESL teaching, listing the advantages of authentic film in L2 instruction (Stempleski, 1992). Other researchers used movies in specific ways—enhancing ESL students’ listening abilities and communicative skills (Holden, 2000). However, few researchers focused on enhancing oral English communicative competence through movie dialogues.

Several researchers, such as Kenny (2001) and Hwang (2005), are in favor of using movies in language education. Kenny argues that younger students live in a media-centric world. Since media has become an indispensable part of people’s life, instructors should make full use of the media, such as movies, TV programs, etc. to “teach to a student’s strengths in order to remediate their possible weaknesses” (p. 211). By comparing different viewpoints towards young students’ viewing media, Kenny supported young people but argues they should be given guidance such as “fast-seeing as cognitive activity,” “construct-related validity of leisure-time studies,” etc. Kenny concluded that video might be able to play a significant role in the learning process because it contained three elements of perception and learning: frequency, intensity, and duration. This is a more practical measurement for using video media than academic achievement alone.

Hwang (2005) identifies two advantages of viewing movies: simultaneous audio/visual input and complete and contextualized conversations. And drama is a rich vehicle in foreign language instruction. Hwang argues that viewing drama promotes English language learning and is particularly outstanding because drama “contains a captivating storyline, true-to-life scenarios, on-location scenes, various social interactions, realistic yet easy-to-follow linguistic and cultural information, as well as high-quality filming and acting” (p.1). Hwang discusses how the video dramas connected with English can help enhance learners’ intercultural communicative competence on three levels: cultural awareness, phraseological accuracy, and pragmatic

appropriateness. Therefore, learners may find viewing drama an effective way to increase their cross-cultural language power.

Some researchers have focused their attention on other aspects of language acquisition such as grammar and vocabulary. Van Lommel, *et al* (2006) found evidence for the acquisition of grammatical rules in watching subtitled foreign movies. Yuksel (2009) examined the effects of watching a closed-captioned movie clips on incidental vocabulary learning in a pre-test and post-test experimental design. He concluded that it could be argued that watching movie clips helps students enhance their knowledge of vocabulary regardless of the subtitles. Although the above two studies have little connection to my research, they have definitely demonstrated that movies are of great help for English learners.

Conclusion

Several aspects of the research literature review have been discussed:

- Communicative competence
- Research on communicative competence in language teaching
- Research on communicative competence in oral English
- Research on using movies in TESL/TEFL

This research offers much help to my research in cultivating students' oral English communicative competence through movie dialogues. However, in terms of the specific scope of research in cultivating Chinese English learners' oral English communicative competence, the above-mentioned research has not explored this proposition.

Movies, as one kind of mass media, with various advantages as mentioned above, such as simultaneous audio and visual input, complete and contextualized conversations, true-to-life scenarios, on-location scenes, etc., should be fully made use of in order to arouse English

learners' interest, cultivate their cross-cultural consciousness, and, of course, enhance their communicative competence. With the review of the previous research, it seems reasonable to expect that a meaningful and insightful teaching improvement project can be undertaken.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS FOR THE TEACHING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In order to be familiar with the current situation of college oral English teaching (COET) in China, a research questionnaire and an interview was conducted in the author's school, Wuhan Polytechnic University (WHPU), a provincial second-level university in Hubei Province, China, with more than 15,000 students, 48 undergraduate programs, 20 post-graduate programs. WHPU is supposed to be a representative sample of the teaching situation in China. The majority of the research questionnaire was conducted online, so the number of participants is comparatively large, thus the authenticity and reliability are fairly high. As for interview, twenty-one students participated. Their response is was recorded and scientifically analyzed. The findings of this empirical research are supposed to be significant to the following teaching design.

Questionnaire design and implementation

The purpose of conducting this questionnaire is to be acquainted with the current situations of oral English teaching and learning in the target university (WHPU), and to provide the first-hand raw material for the further research and teaching design.

The rating scale ranges from 1 to 5, among which 1 refers to “absolutely disapprove / disagree,” 2 refers to “basically disapprove / disagree,” 3 refers to “be uncertain,” 4 refers to “basically approve / agree,” and 5 refers to “absolutely approve / agree.”

The questionnaire was divided into three parts: oral English teaching, movie viewing, and communicative strategies. Each part included four to fifteen questions/statements involving the evaluation of overall oral English teaching and learning, students' response to English movie viewing, and students' understanding of oral communicative strategies.

The questionnaire was conducted both online (Platform in English Language Self-Access Learning Center, a software for students to learn English online) and on paper. All students (English majors were excluded) were able to participate in this online questionnaire. The duration of conducting this questionnaire began on February 22, 2012, and ended on May 30, which was the main part of the students' academic term. Questionnaires were released online in different stages, so the number of participants was different, ranging from 61 to 5,611. Except for some oral communicative strategies, other parts of the questionnaire were entirely conducted online. The online data were automatically calculated by the online questionnaire system. The data of the paper questionnaire were calculated manually.

The questionnaire is located in Appendix I.

Interview design and implementation

The purpose of the interview was to become acquainted with the current situations in which college students relate English movies to their English learning. Among the author's over 200 students, 21 students who watched English movies frequently voluntarily participated in this interview. Participants were well informed of the purpose, process of the interview, and the dissemination of the results. Participants' responses to the questions were recorded on paper and no personal information was recorded.

Two questions were included in the interview:

1. In what aspects can watching English movies help you learn English?
2. To what extent can watching English movies improve your English competence?

Analysis of the findings

The overall feedback of college oral English teaching

The final data of this aspect turned out to be slightly disappointing. As for the first statement “College Oral English Class improved my pronunciation,” the positive side (basically / absolutely approve / agree) accounts for 53%, while the negative side 28% (basically / absolutely disapprove / disagree); meanwhile, 19% of participants are uncertain. As for the second statement “College Oral English Class improved my self-expression ability,” the positive side accounts for 55%, while the negative side 26%; meanwhile, 19% of participants are uncertain. As for the third statement “College Oral English Class improved my communicative strategic competence,” the positive side (basically / absolutely approve / agree) accounts for 56%, while the negative side 26% (basically / absolutely disapprove / disagree); meanwhile, 18% of participants are uncertain. As for the fourth statement “College Oral English Class improved my oral communicative competence on the whole,” the positive side (basically / absolutely approve / agree) accounts for 57%, while the negative side 25% (basically / absolutely disapprove / disagree); meanwhile, 18% of participants are uncertain. The following chart demonstrates a concise view of the data:

Item*	Basically / Absolutely Disagree	Uncertain	Basically / Absolutely Agree
1	28%	19%	53%
2	26%	19%	55%
3	26%	18%	56%
4	25%	18%	57%

** Items 1, 2, 3, 4 refer to the four statements of College Oral English Class in Part A, Appendix I.*

A conclusion can be made that the current situation of oral English teaching in the target university is far from perfect; only slightly over half of the students agreed that they had improved their pronunciation, which is in accordance with the results of Cai’s (2002) research.

The feedback of the application of oral communicative strategies in oral class

The results of the application of oral communicative strategies in oral classes are almost one-sidedly negative: about 70% of participants (from absolutely disagree to be uncertain) are unaware of oral communicative strategies or seldom apply these strategies in practice. The following chart will provide specific data:

Item*	Number of participants	Absolutely Disagree	Basically Disagree	Be Uncertain	Basically Agree	Absolutely Agree
1	834	77 (9%)	202 (24%)	318 (38%)	218 (26%)	19 (2%)
2	843	73 (9%)	205 (24%)	263 (31%)	278 (33%)	24 (3%)
3	4725	464 (10%)	997 (21%)	1675 (35%)	1343 (28%)	246 (5%)
4	259	10 (4%)	31 (12%)	60 (23%)	118 (46%)	40 (15%)

* Items 1, 2, 3, 4 refer to the four statements of oral communicative strategies in Section A, Part C, Appendix I.

As for the specific data towards students' application of oral communicative strategies, detailed information will be provided. Among 15 listed oral communicative strategies, there are 12 positive strategies and 3 negative strategies. A positive strategy means that speakers adopt positive and voluntary methods or techniques to achieve the goals of communication; a negative strategy means that speakers give up or keep silent during the communication, which may hinder both sides from understanding each other, thus failing to achieve the goal of communication.

There were 61 participants in the paper questionnaire. For negative strategies (No. 2, 9, 11), 25 to 32 students admitted that they adopt a negative attitude during the communication, which accounts for about 50% of all students. In No. 11, 32 participants chose to give up when they found it impossible to express their ideas. Actually, the positive attitude is to turn to others for help, or to use easier or more familiar expressions, or to convey ideas through non-verbal language, such as facial expressions, gestures, etc. For positive strategies, 12 to 40 students gave negative responses when in use, which reflects the participants' insufficient knowledge and skills about adopting appropriate communicative strategies. Responses to two positive strategies (No.

10 and 12) should be stressed because 40 (No.10) and 39 (No.12) participants gave negative responses to these two. Switching the conversation voluntarily and avoiding or using euphemistic terms when talking about taboos or sensitive topics are supposed to be vital and hard-earned strategies in real communication.

The above data reveal that students in the target university are insufficiently unfamiliar with oral communicative strategies, which reflects another problem in oral English teaching, which is that, to some extent, teachers failed to employ sound oral communicative strategies in class. English teachers in the target university pay insufficient attention to the cultivation of students' communicative competence.

The feedback of English movie viewing

The reasons for questioning students who watch English movies are as follows: (a) to make sure English movies are one of the major parts of students' English learning and (b) to be acquainted with the students' focuses while watching English movies. The subsequent teaching design will be based on the feedback.

As for the frequency of viewing English movies, 61% of 4,304 participants gave positive feedback, which shows that viewing English movies is one of the major parts of learning English. Another possible explanation is that these students only regard viewing English movies as recreation, ignoring the purpose of learning English. However, the following questionnaire about the emphasis of viewing movies reflects some important facts. There were 3,714 students who participated in this questionnaire, among whom 39% indicated they are more likely to emphasize plots of the movie; 36% language expression; 21% pronunciation and intonation; 20% conversational techniques. Participants could make more than one choice when completing the questionnaire, so the percentage of emphasizing language itself is higher than expected.

Findings of interview about viewing English movies

The purpose of conducting this interview was to acquire detailed feedback from students who frequently watch English movies. Twenty-one students voluntarily participated in this interview.

For the first question, “In what aspects can watching English movies help you learn English?” participants listed several aspects such as listening, reading, oral expression/spoken English, writing, comprehension of foreign culture, enhancing their interest in English learning, etc. Ninety percent of participants mentioned that through watching English movies, they could improve their listening ability, enlarge their vocabulary, especially idiomatic expressions, and correct their pronunciation and intonation. One of the interviewees mentioned in the interview that watching English movies the student could “accumulate new words, especially some daily practical words; have a better understanding of western culture; improve oral English.”

For the second question, “To what extent can watching English movies improve your English competence?” participants listed several points, such as communicating with foreigners more easily; speaking English more fluently; improving listening comprehension, etc. However, some participants also pointed out the limitations of viewing English movies in helping with their English learning. For example, one of the interviewees stated that “in terms of English grammar, there turns to be little help through watching movies.” Without Chinese subtitles, students find it impossible to understand the plots of the movie, let alone original English movies without subtitles. Besides, some participants become so engrossed in the fascinating plots of the movie that they do not entirely reap the communicative benefits of viewing English movies.

Some students actually pay much attention to English learning while they are watching movies, but there remains a problem—pronunciation and intonation as well as conversational techniques are less likely to be emphasized among students. Now that students are interested in

watching English movies or a TV series, it is a necessity for English teachers to guide them in the right direction, making full use of this powerful media to assist these students in learning English.

CHAPTER 4

ORAL ENGLISH TEACHING MODEL AND PROCEDURE DESIGN

In the previous chapter, some advantages and disadvantages have been discussed concerning watching English movies. In order to tackle these problems, taking the utmost advantage of English movies, the author introduced to students an essential part of movies—movie dialogue, which is closely related to language learning. The author applied movie dialogue into oral English teaching in the hope of improving students' oral communicative competence.

In this chapter, the author mainly discusses an oral English teaching model and its procedural design. But before designing the oral English teaching mode and procedure, the author needed to restrict the scope of English movies, which plays a vital role in oral English class because the subjects are Chinese college students.

The scope of English movies for college students

There are many different genres of movies, some suitable for children, some for adults, some restricted to younger people. Therefore, the scope of English movies for Chinese college students is of great importance. Two main factors should be taken into account: interior and exterior. The interior aspect includes students' age and social identity, students' scope of interests, students' English proficiency, etc. The exterior falls into the goals of oral English teaching, the content of teaching materials, and the teaching patterns, etc. Based on these factors, some principles of selecting English movies can be observed:

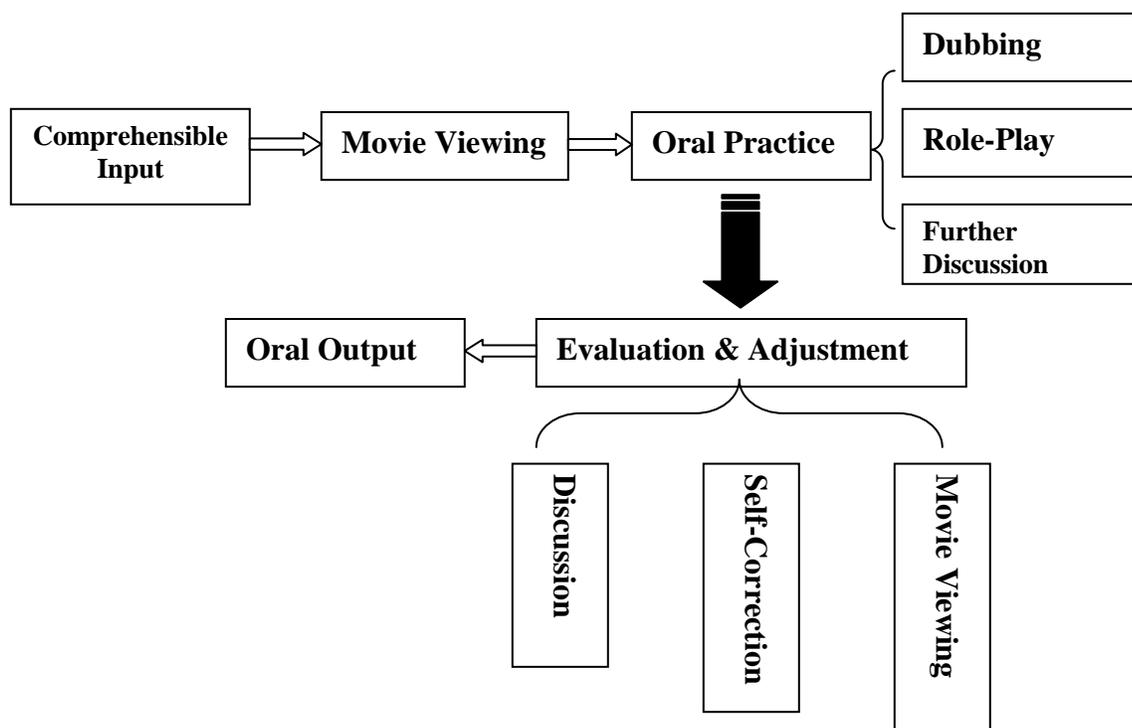
- Closeness to college students' campus life
- Emphasis on dialogue and language expression
- Comparative ease of understanding

According to these principles, several types of English movies can be selected, such as

campus youth dramas (e.g., *College Road Trip*, *High School Musical*, etc.), animated films (e.g., *Lion King*, *Ice Age*, *Kong Fu Panda*, etc.), TV situational comedies (e.g., *Friends*, *The Big Bang Theory*, etc.).

Oral English teaching model and procedure with movie dialogues applied

Based on Krashen’s *Input Hypothesis* (1982), the author constructed a teaching procedure with English movie dialogue applied. The following flow chart demonstrates the whole procedure of oral English teaching.



The “Input” step can be relevant communicative competence such as grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence; it can also be language support from English movies. This part is designed to get students acquainted with the goal of learning or to activate students’ learning interest. “Oral Practice” often falls into three categories: Dubbing, Role-Play

(situational movie dialogue), and Further Discussion (about movie themes, plots, etc.). Through practice, students are supposed to get familiar with the learned knowledge and skills of communicating with other people. “Movie Viewing” is twofold and different in their functions. For first-time movie viewing, students are expected to acquaint themselves with the plots and content of the dialogue between characters. The focus should be on the language in use. They are expected to imitate the dialogue in pronunciation, intonation, and language expression. For the second time, students are required to attach great importance to oral communicative competence, especially appropriateness and strategic competence. They adjust themselves to the original movie dialogues by correcting and improving their grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence through group discussion and movie viewing. Actually, in this part, students complete their self-evaluation and correction. For the last part, students are required to summarize what they learn in the oral class, including pronunciation, idiomatic expressions, communicative strategies, as well as related themes in the movie.

A sample of oral English teaching with English movie dialogue applied

Teaching objectives:

- get students familiar with certain communicative competence such as grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence
- get students to learn some new idiomatic expressions
- get students to use English in real situation

Teaching content:

An excerpt play script from *Friends* (Season 1 Episode 6) (Appendix III)

The One with the Butt (2 scenes at the beginning)

Teaching procedure:

1. Language support:
 - 1) no sense of impending doom: failing to realize the coming misfortune
 - 2) I feel violated: I feel intruded or harassed, sexually in general
 - 3) out of my league: I cannot match her / him because she / he is excellent
e.g., He was so good-looking and so popular that I felt he was out of my league
 - 4) be aware of one's tongue: be cautious of one's words
 - 5) trolls: sing a round
2. Movie viewing and blank filling:
 - 1) play the movie clip and ask students to fill in the blanks
 - 2) give students several minutes to complete their play script through discussion
3. Oral practice:
 - 1) form small groups with 6 students, assign them roles in the play
 - 2) ask students to read the script according to their roles in the play
 - 3) remind students of their pronunciation, facial expressions, gestures, tone, etc. while inspecting them
4. Evaluation and adjustment:
 - 1) play the movie clip again, ask students to pay much attention to the characters' performance such as their facial expressions, gestures, tone, etc., and then adjust themselves to the original play. Some details will be given to the students while playing the movie:
 - ① Ask students pay much attention to the following lines especially Phoebe's gestures:
Phoebe: The exclamation point in the title scares me. (Gesturing) Y'know, it's not just *Freud*,

it's *Freud!*

- ② Ask students pay much attention to Phoebe's tone when she commented Joey's performance:

Phoebe: Based on *this play?* ...Based on *this play!*

(Remarks: People tend to express their feelings in different tone. When they raise their tone, they are likely to question something showing doubt. When they stress their tone, they are likely to approve or to praise. The above line reveals Phoebe's complex and changeable attitude towards Joey.)

- 2) Ask students to play the roles again, and then select some excellent groups to perform on stage
 - 3) Ask students to make some comments on the performance of each group
5. Oral output:
- 1) Students make a summary about what they have learned in class based on the play script and movie viewing and their performance (representative in each group)
 - 2) Teacher makes comments on students' performance in class and scores each group

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the review of existing literature related to the thesis of Cultivation of College Students' Oral Communicative Competence through Movie Dialogues, the following conclusions can be drawn: cultivating Chinese college students' oral communicative competence through English movie dialogues proves to be an effective teaching method.

Through empirical research, findings are obvious to support the above conclusion. First, Chinese college students attach great importance to their oral English, yet college English teachers find it difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning, so students' oral communicative competence remains to be improved. Second, as powerful media, movies and TV series arouse English learners' interest in their language learning. Chinese college students pay much attention to English learning while they are watching English movies, but there remains a problem—pronunciation, intonation, and conversational techniques are less likely to be emphasized. So it is necessary for Chinese college English teachers to guide students in the right direction and help them in their English learning.

Based on these conclusions and findings, it is recommended that integrating English movie dialogues into oral English teaching in the hope of cultivating college students' oral communicative competence. The remaining task is how to implement this type of teaching. There are several aspects to which Chinese college English teachers should pay much attention.

First and foremost, choose the proper movie dialogues based on the teaching objectives and certain communicative competence.

Second, give students sufficient time to view the movie and practice their oral English in various ways. Teachers should inspect students' learning behaviors, reminding them of what they

are expected to learn and in what time.

Third, feedback on students' performance is of great significance in the process of teaching and learning, which will encourage students to learn further and to adjust themselves in the right way.

There are various ways to cultivate students' communicative competence; one effective way is integrating English movie dialogues into oral English teaching. This thesis paper provides a teaching model and procedure for English teachers in the expectation that it can be useful and meaningful for the development of Chinese college English teaching.

APPENDIX

I Questionnaire

Part A College Oral English Class

Directions: *This part is to question your evaluation of Oral English Class. This scale consists of Four questions, each question with Five levels of choices. Please Circle the one which can truly reflect your situation. (1=absolutely disapprove, 2=basically disapprove, 3=be uncertain, 4=basically approve, 5= absolutely approve)*

No.	Question/ Statement	Choice
1	College Oral English Class improved my pronunciation.	1 2 3 4 5
2	College Oral English Class improved my self-expression ability.	1 2 3 4 5
3	College Oral English Class improved my communicative strategic competence.	1 2 3 4 5
4	College Oral English Class improved my oral communicative competence on the whole.	1 2 3 4 5

Part B English Movies Viewing

Directions: *This part is to question your situations of viewing English movies. This scale consists of Five questions, each question with Five levels of choices. Please Circle the one which can truly reflect your situation. (1=absolutely disagree, 2=basically disagree, 3=be uncertain, 4=basically agree, 5= absolutely agree)*

No.	Question/ Statement	Choice
1	I often watch English movies or TV series.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I focus on the plot while watching English movies.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I focus on the language expression and accumulate new and idiomatic expressions while watching English movies.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I focus on the characters' pronunciation and intonation, and try to imitate.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I focus on the communicative strategies between speakers, and try to imitate.	1 2 3 4 5

Part C Oral Communicative Strategies

Directions: This part is to inquire the situations of oral communicative strategies you adopt in oral English class. There are 19 questions / statements in two sections with 5 levels of choices in each question. Please **Circle** the one which can truly reflect your situation. (1=absolutely disagree, 2=basically disagree, 3=be uncertain, 4=basically agree, 5= absolutely agree)

Section A General Understanding of Oral Communicative Strategies

No.	Question / Statement	Choice
1	I am familiar with communicative strategies.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I received relevant training of communicative strategies in oral English class.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I adopted some communicative strategies in daily communication.	1 2 3 4 5
4	Communicative strategies should be taught in oral English class.	1 2 3 4 5

Section B Oral Communicative Strategies in Practice

No.	Question / Statement	Choice
1	I will repeat my words to make me understood.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I will express myself in literally-translated Chinese directly if I don't know how to use it in English.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I can use conventional verbal exchange to gain more time to think.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I will ask others to explain in another way if I cannot understand what they say.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I will turn to the other for help if I cannot express myself.	1 2 3 4 5
6	I can figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word or expression according to its context during the conversation.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I will use an easier or more familiar expression or structure when I am unsure of a certain word or sentence structure.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I can understand and continue the talk when the other finds it hard to express his or her idea.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I will keep silent if I don't understand other's words, implying my incomprehension.	1 2 3 4 5
10	I will switch the conversation to a new topic voluntarily when I find it hard to express my idea on a certain topic.	1 2 3 4 5
11	I will choose to give up when I find it impossible to express my idea.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I can avoid or use euphemistic terms when talking about	1 2 3 4 5

	taboos or sensitive topics.	
13	I will convey my ideas through facial expressions or gestures when I forget some words.	1 2 3 4 5
14	I will ask the other whether he or she can understand my words when I attempt to speak in English.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I will avoid some unfamiliar topics during the conversation.	1 2 3 4 5

II Interview

Questions:

1. In what aspects can watching English movies help you learn English?
2. To what extent can watching English movies improve your English competence?

III Teaching Content: *Friends* (Season 01 Episode 06)

The One With the Butt (about 5 minutes)

[Scene: A Theater, the gang is in the audience waiting for a play of Joey's to start.]

Rachel: (reading the program) Ooh! Look! Look! Look! Look, there's Joey's picture! This is so exciting!

Chandler: You can always spot someone who's never seen one of his plays before. Notice, no fear, no sense of impending doom...

Phoebe: The exclamation point in the title scares me. (Gesturing) Y'know, it's not just *Freud*, it's *Freud!*
(The lights dim.)

Ross: Oh, shhh, shh. Magic is about to happen.

(The lights go up on the stage, Joey, as *Freud*, is talking to a female patient.)

Joey: Vell, Eva, ve've done some excellent vork here, and I vould have to say, your pvoblem is qviiiite clear.

(He goes into a song and dance number.)

All you want is a dingle,
What you envy's a schwang,
A thing through which you can tinkle,
Or play with, or simply let hang...

[Scene: The Theater, the play has ended and everyone is applauding. As soon as the cast leaves, the gang all groan and sit down heavily.]

Rachel: God. I feel violated.

Monica: Did anybody else feel they just wanted to peel the skin off their body, to have something else to do?

Chandler: (staring at a woman across the room) Ross, ten o'clock.

Ross: Is it? Feels like two.

Chandler: No, ten o'clock.

Ross: What?

Chandler: (sighs and gestures to explain) There's a beautiful woman at eight, nine, ten o'clock!

Ross: Oh. Hel-lo!

Chandler: She's amazing! She makes the women that I dream about look like short, fat, bald men!

Monica: Well, go over to her! She's not with anyone.

Chandler: Oh yeah, and what would my opening line be? 'Excuse me. Blarrglarrghh.'

Rachel: Oh, c'mon. She's a person, you can do it!

Chandler: Oh please, could she be more out of my league? Ross, back me up here.

Ross: He could never get a woman like that in a million years.

Chandler: Thank you, buddy.

Phoebe: Oh, oh, but y'know, you always see these really beautiful women with these really nothing guys, you could be one of those guys.

Monica: You could do that!

Chandler: Y'think?

All: Yeah!

Chandler: Oh God, I can't believe I'm even considering this... I'm very very aware of my tongue...

Ross: C'mon! C'mon!

Chandler: Here goes. (He walks over to her but just stands there.)

Aurora: ...Yes?

Chandler: Hi... um... okay, next word... would be... Chandler! Chandler is my name, and, uh...(He clears his throat noisily)...hi.

Aurora: Yes, you said that.

Chandler: Yes, yes I did, but what I didn't say was what I was about to say, what I wanted to say was, uh... would you like to go out with me sometime, thank you, goodnight. (He walks back to the others but she calls him back.)

Aurora: Chandler?

(Joey enters from behind a curtain. The others all talk at once.)

All: Hey! You're in a play! I didn't know you could dance! You had a beard!

Joey: Whadja think?

(Pause)

All: ...Hey! You're in a play! I didn't know you could dance! You had a beard!

Joey: C'mon, you guys, it wasn't that bad. It was better than that thing I did with the trolls, at least you got to see my head.

All: (admitting) Saw your head. Saw your head.

Chandler: (running back) She said yes!! She said yes!!

(To Joey) Awful play, man. Whoah.

(To All) Her name's Aurora, and she's Italian, and she pronounces my name 'Chand-lrr'. 'Chand-lrr'. I think I like it better that way.

(To Joey) Oh, listen, the usher gave me this to give to you. (He fishes a card out of his pocket.)

Rachel: What is it?

Joey: The Estelle Leonard Talent Agency. Wow, an agency left me its card! Maybe they wanna sign me!

Phoebe: Based on this play? ...Based on this play!

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