

Description of the Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program

The Chinese-American telecollaborative learning program was a 15-week exchange project, involving two natural Chinese language classes, CHN102 (i.e., second-semester first-year Chinese) and CHN112 (i.e., second-semester second-year Chinese) at a U.S. liberal arts college and a group of Chinese-speaking English majors at a Chinese university in Shanghai. The first researcher was the instructor of CHN102 and CHN112 at the U.S. college. The teaching assistant of these two courses was a Fulbright TA, who was a faculty member at the Chinese university and responsible for convening the Chinese group.

In the first week of the semester, each student from the American group was paired up with one from the Chinese group of their own choice based on a brief biography required of each participant. Meanwhile, two separate WeChat groups were created for CHN102 and CHN112 for participants to socialize and discuss cultural topics with their partners. The Chinese-American learning program had the following four components: one-on-one Skype conversations, WeChat group cultural discussions, one-on-one WeChat conversations, and reflection journals.

CFL students from the American side were required to spend at least half an hour conducting **one-on-one Skype conversation** with their Chinese partners on one of the department lab computers, half in Chinese and half in English. These conversations were to occur on a weekly basis except for the first week, the Spring break week, and the final week, resulting in twelve Skype conversations over the course of the semester. For the part in Chinese, the Chinese language instructor provided a list of topics in Chinese within the CFL learners' vocabulary range to mitigate the problem of target language proficiency gap. For the part in English, a list of topics concurrent with the cultural themes in the Chinese textbooks was also provided, but students were welcome to switch to any other topics they found more interesting. CFL students at the U.S. college were instructed to record their Skype conversations on the lab computers.

WeChat group cultural discussion served as cross-cultural forums for the exchange, with the main working language being English. For eight weeks in the semester (i.e., weeks 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12), one or two partner pairs posted a selected cultural topic as well as associated discussion questions in each class WeChat group to invite comparison and contrast of aspects of Chinese and American cultures (see Table 1). The discussion topics were supposed to be posted no later than 10pm every Sunday and closed for discussion at 10pm the following Saturday. The Chinese language instructor and the Fulbright TA participated in the WeChat group discussions mainly as observers and occasionally as facilitators when student participation was low.

Table 1 Topics Covered in WeChat Group Discussion

	CHN102 Elementary Chinese	CHN112 Intermediate Chinese
Week 4	Holidays and food	Differences and similarities between Chinese New Year and the regular New Year
Week 5	Favorite kind of music	Your favorite American/Chinese food
Week 6	Traditions of the Chinese New Year and the regular New Year	Getting a job after graduation in China and US
Week 7	Heroes in Chinese and American culture	Popular music in China and US
Week 9	Plans to visit China or US	Dating culture in US and China

Week 10	Main activities outside of school	Drinking culture in the US and China
Week 11	Reasons for learning the foreign language	The role of social media in people's life
Week 12	Social lives on campus	What pets people raise in China and US

The students from the American side were required to connect with their Chinese partners individually through **one-on-one WeChat conversation** on a daily basis. They were encouraged to discuss anything they were interested in and allowed to type texts, send voice messages, or video chat in English or Chinese. Five minutes of each class meeting in CHN102 and CHN112 was reserved for students to share the most interesting things they learned from their Chinese partners through this component.

For the weeks when Skype conversations occurred, every student from the American side was required to write a **reflective journal** on their experiences with the Chinese-American program due at 10pm on Sundays, with the last journal being a holistic reflection of the exchange. The goals and expectations of reflective journals were openly discussed in class at the beginning of the semester and a document titled "Guidance for Writing Reflective Journals" was handed out to the students. The students could reflect on how they liked or disliked the program and its components, what they learned, the challenges they encountered, and/or recommendations for improving the program.

The American group was required to take part in this program as it was incorporated into the syllabi of CHN102 and CHN112 and their performances in this program accounted for 20% of their final grade. In contrast, the Chinese group was selected on a volunteer basis and their participation and performance in this program were not related to their final grade in any course.

As described above, the Chinese-American exchange under discussion incorporated the most updated developments in the general field of telecollaboration into its design. Specifically, the exchange combined the e-tandem model (through one-on-one Skype conversations) and the intercultural model (through WeChat group cultural discussions), integrated different task types (i.e., information exchange tasks through one-on-one Skype and WeChat conversations, comparison-analysis tasks through WeChat group discussion, reflective tasks through journals), alleviated the issue of target language proficiency gap through various means (e.g., breaking the rule of equal L1 and L2 usage, providing scaffolding within the CFL learners' vocabulary range), and combined the use of different technological tools (i.e., Skype and WeChat).

CHN112 End-of-Semester Questionnaire for Chinese-American Telecollaborative Project

Instructions: Please give a rating of the following questions and give your reasons.

1. Please rate how well you like the curriculum of CHN 112 this semester in general.

Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

2. Please rate how well you like the Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program this semester.

Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

3. Please rate how well you like the following components of the Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program this semester.

Weekly Skype Conversation Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

Wechat cultural Discussion Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

Reflective Journals Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

One-on-one Wechat conversation with your Chinese partner

Very Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very High

Reasons:

4. Please rate to what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements.

This Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program has helped improve my Chinese skills.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Reasons:

This Telecollaborative Learning Program has helped promote cultural learning.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Reasons:

This Telecollaborative Learning Program has helped enhance my motivation in learning Chinese.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Reasons:

This Telecollaborative Learning Program has helped facilitate a supportive Chinese language learning community.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Reasons:

5. Please rate to what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements:

I would recommend this Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program to other students interested in taking Chinese.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

I hope the Chinese language program will continue the Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program in the future.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Reasons:

6. In order to make the Chinese-American Telecollaborative Learning Program better, what suggestions do you have?

CHN102 Skype Conversation Topics

*Please just use the suggested questions and topic as a guide. Please be as creative as possible in accommodating and adding to the questions according to your own situations.

	Chinese Part	English Part
Week 1 (1/26-30)	Setting up Skype meeting time and connecting with Partners via WeChat	
Week 2 (2/2-2/6)	<p>Chinese Part:</p> <p>1) Self-introduction Sample Questions: 你叫什么名字? 请问, 你贵姓? 你姓什么? 你是中国人吗? 你是哪里人? 你是老师吗? 你是学生吗? 我不是老师, 你呢?</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week, 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <p>1. In-depth self-introductions and introductions to your college/university, your hometown etc; 2. Cultural topic of the week; 3. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>
Week 3 (2/9-2/13)	<p>Chinese Part:</p> <p>1) Family Sample Questions 你有兄弟姐妹吗? 这张照片是谁的? 你爸爸妈妈有女儿吗? 儿子呢? 这个男孩子是谁? 那个女孩子呢? 你家有几口人? 你爸爸妈妈做什么工作?</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week, 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <p>1. In-depth discussions on family or family members, relationship between children and parents in the U.S. and in China; 2. Cultural topic of the week; 3. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>
Week 4 (2/16-2/20)	<p>Chinese Part:</p> <p>1) hobbies Sample Questions 你周末常常喜欢做什么? 你喜欢看电视还是看电影?</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <p>1. In-depth discussions on your hobbies and the most popular hobbies among your friends or parents;</p>

	<p>你的同学周末常常做什么？ 看书的时候，你喜欢听音乐吗？ 有的中国人喜欢看中国电影，有的中国人喜欢看外国电影，你喜欢看什么电影？ 你今天为什么请客？ 昨天是几月几号？ 这个电影很不错，我明天晚上请你看电影，怎么样？ 好久不见，你好吗？/你怎么样？ 你这个周末想做什么？ 中文课有意思吗？ 你常常什么时候睡觉？什么时候吃晚饭？ 今天晚上我们去唱歌、跳舞，好吗？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week, 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>2. Other questions to discuss: when you hang out with friends, do you usually split the bills or do you take turns to treat each other? What's the common practice in US/China? 3. Cultural topic of the week; 4. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>
<p>Week 5 (2/23-2/27)</p>	<p>Chinese Part: 1) Dates and Time Sample Questions: 你那儿现在几点？ 你的生日是什么时候？ 今天是几月几号？ 你的生日是几月几号？ 今天是星期几？ 你今年多大？ 我星期六晚上请你吃饭，怎么样？ 你喜欢吃中国菜还是美国菜？ 今天晚上我们吃什么菜？ 你的中文老师怎么样？ 现在几点？ 你明天忙不忙？ 你认识高老师吗？她怎么样？ 你为什么喜欢学英文？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part: 1. In-depth discussions on time and dates, celebration of birthdays, events that happened in a specific time, popular American/Chinese food, 2. Cultural topic of the week, 3. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>

<p>Week 6 (3/2-3/6)</p>	<p>Chinese Part:</p> <p>1) Visiting Friends Suppose you and your Chinese partner are friends and you are visiting his/her house. Role play a scenario with your partner with reference to Lesson 5 in Integrated Chinese Level 1, part 1. Please try your best to incorporate the following vocabulary: 请进, 快进来, 请坐, 对不起, 介绍一下, 吧, 很, 一点儿, 怎么样, 一起, 才</p> <p>Possible questions could include: 你想喝点儿什么? 你在哪儿工作? 你昨天晚上/上个周末做什么了? 你的家怎么样? 大不大? 漂亮不漂亮? 你今天为什么这么高兴? 你可以介绍一下那个人吗? 他是谁? 你爸爸妈妈在哪儿工作? 你的学校在哪儿? 你想喝点儿什么, 水、茶、咖啡还是可乐 昨天晚上你十二点才睡觉, 你去做什么了? 你喜欢和谁聊天? 为什么? 你每天什么时候回家? 你怎么才来?</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week</p> <p>3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-depth discussions on Chinese and American ways of viewing/treating friends, customs of inviting friends over to your place, 2. Cultural topic of the week, 3. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.
<p>Week 7 (3/9-3/13)</p>	<p>1) Making Appointments: Try to make an appointment with your Chinese partner over Skype for something.</p> <p>Sample Questions: 你的电话号码是什么? 你什么时候给我打电话?</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-depth discussions on Chinese and American ways of making appointments and making a date, 2. Cultural topic of the week; 3. Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between

	<p>你今天下午有时间吗？明天上午呢？ 听说你想问问题。 你有什么问题？ 你今天有几节课？ 你是几年级的学生？ 你什么时候有考试？ 你常常怎么准备考试？ 明天下午四点以后你有空儿吗？ 要是你不喜欢看电影，我们周末去跳舞，行吗？ 我想到你的办公室去问几个问题，你什么时候方便？ 我在哪儿等你？ 谢谢你帮我练习说中文！ 你今天晚上为什么得去图书馆？ 我们在哪儿见面？ 你今天晚上什么时候回来？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	China and the U.S.		
Week 8 (3/16-3/20)	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break	No tutorial
Week 9 (3/23-3/27)	<p>1) Boyfriend and girlfriend Sample questions: 你有女/男朋友吗？ 你的女/男朋友是中国人还是美国人？ 他/她喜欢中国菜还是美国菜？ 他/她是学生还是老师？ 你想找什么样的男/女朋友？ 他/她长得怎么样？ 他/她也是大学生吗？ 他/她做什么工作？ 你为什么喜欢他/她？ 你们是怎么认识的？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>		<p>English Part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth discussions on Chinese and American values on what makes one attractive, what makes an ideal boyfriend/girlfriend or husband and wife, , any celebrities who you find particularly attractive, at what age people usually start to have a boy/girlfriend; Cultural topic of the week; Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S. 	

<p>Week 10 (3/30-4/3)</p>	<p>1) Studying a foreign language Sample questions: 你喜欢学英文吗？为什么？ 你是什么时候开始学英文的？ 你认识美国朋友吗？你有几个美国朋友？ 现在学中文的人多吗？ 你以后想来美/中国吗？什么时候来？ 你的英文课有考试吗？你考得怎么样？ 你怎么准备考试？怎么练习英文？ 上英文课的时候，你听得懂老师说话吗？ 除了中文和英文以外，你还会说什么语言？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week 3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-depth discussions on foreign language learning in China and in the U.S., why people learn a foreign language, what languages are popular to learn, the differences between English and Chinese and why you learn to choose Chinese, exchange your experience in learning foreign languages; 2. cultural topic of the week; 3. any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.
<p>Week 11 (4/6-4/10)</p>	<p>1) School life Sample Questions: 你这个星期忙不忙？为什么？ 你一个星期有几节课？什么课？ 你是大学几年级的学生？ 大一、大二、大三、大四的学生喜欢做什么？ (in general) 你最喜欢上什么课？为什么？ 什么最难？什么最容易？ 你最喜欢的老师是谁？为什么？ 你觉得大学生活有意思吗？为什么？ 你住在学校宿舍吗？ 你几点起床，几点做功课，几点睡觉？ 你喜欢上网吗？你常常上网做什么？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week 3) any other creative questions in</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In-depth discussions on college life in China and in the U.S., fraternity, extracurricular activities, favorite professors, plans after graduation, a typical college day; 2) cultural topic of the week; 3) any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.

	Chinese	
Week 12 (4/13-4/17)	<p>1) My best friends</p> <p>Sample Questions: 你有几个好朋友? 他们在哪儿? 你们是怎么认识的? 你们为什么是最好的朋友? 你们有什么共同的爱好? 他们做什么工作? 他们的爸爸妈妈做什么工作? 你们常常见面吗? 你们在一起的时候, 常常做什么? 要是他们是学生, 他们是大学几年级的学生? 你觉得男孩儿和女孩儿会有真正的友谊吗? (pure friendship?)</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week</p> <p>4) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <p>1) In-depth discussions on the concept of friends in China and in the U.S., what friends do when they hang out together, what are the most fun things to do with your friends, any movie/show/games that are popular among you and your friends? How often you hang out with friends/ have a party,</p> <p>2) cultural topic of the week;</p> <p>3) any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>
Week 13 (4/20-4/24)	<p>1) shopping</p> <p>Activity: Suppose your Chinese partner wants to buy something and you work at a store. Please role play a dialogue with your Chinese partner on shopping. Try to incorporate the following new vocabulary: 衣服、颜色、长短、合适、钱、贵、试一下。</p> <p>Sample Questions: 请问, 你想买什么? 你喜欢什么颜色? 你想买多大号的? 给你买还是给朋友买? 要是你觉得这件衣服太贵了, 你看看这件怎么样? 一共多少钱? 您刷卡还是付现金? 要是你给男朋友买生日礼物 (present), 你会买什么?</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the</p>	<p>English Part:</p> <p>1) In-depth discussions on people, especially college students' shopping habits in China and in the U.S., are they crazy about famous brands, what gifts do they buy for friends/boy or girlfriends, parents or for different occasions like wedding, birthdays? What are the favorite gifts that you have received? Have you given out any creative gifts? Do people bargain when shopping? Do people prefer to use credit cards or cash in China/US?</p> <p>2) Cultural topic of the week;</p> <p>3) Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>

	<p>week</p> <p>5) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	
<p>Week 14 (4/27-5/1)</p>	<p>1) Transportation</p> <p>Sample questions</p> <p>你怎么去学校？走路还是坐车？</p> <p>你有车吗？你会开车吗？</p> <p>中国人开车开得快吗？</p> <p>听说在中国坐火车很方便，是真的吗？</p> <p>要是你寒假从学校回家，你怎么回去？坐飞机还是坐火车？</p> <p>中国的飞机票贵吗？地铁呢？</p> <p>打车方便不方便？你经常打车吗？</p> <p>上海的地铁方便吗？从你的宿舍到 shopping mall 要坐地铁吗？怎么坐？</p> <p>你常常怎么去机场？为什么不开车？</p> <p>你最喜欢的交通方式是什么？为什么？</p> <p>你寒假/暑假怎么过？你最有意思的寒假是哪一年？为什么有意思？</p> <p>2) oral practice sentences of the week</p> <p>3) any other creative questions in Chinese</p>	<p>1) In-depth discussions on ways of transportation in China and in the U.S., advantages and disadvantages of different ways, is/was the most interesting winter/summer break you have had? Why is it so fun? Do you want to have you own car soon? Why? How do people get a driver's license in China/US?</p> <p>2) Cultural topic of the week;</p> <p>3) Any other topic related to China or cultural differences between China and the U.S.</p>
<p>Week 15 (5/4-5/8)</p>	<p>No Skype Conversation</p>	
<p>Week 16 (5/11-18)</p>	<p>No Skype Conversation</p>	