The Training Curriculum Development Based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach to Develop Basic Chinese Speaking for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession Students

Tong Wu
Master's degree in Education Program in Curriculum Development and Instructional Innovation, Faculty of Technical Education, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Pathum Thani, 12110, Thailand
tong_w @mail.rmutt.ac.th

Rossarin Jermtaisong*
Faculty of Technical Education, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Pathum Thani, 12110, Thailand
Rossarin_j@rmutt.ac.th

Pornpirom Lhongsap
Faculty of Technical Education, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Pathum Thani, 12110, Thailand
Pornpirom_l@rmutt.ac.th

Abstract

The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, organizing the learning process to emphasize language acquisition through actual communication. It prioritized student-centered activities, providing opportunities to practice language and communicate meaning in various situations. The objectives of this research were to: 1) develop a training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach aimed at improving basic Chinese speaking skills for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students, ensuring effectiveness according to the criteria 75/75, 2) compare the students' basic Chinese speaking before and after training through the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, and 3) assess the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum. The research samples consisted of 1 classroom with 26 Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students at the Faculty of Technical Education, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand, in the 2023 academic year. The sample was selected by cluster random sampling. The research instruments were: 1) a training curriculum; 2) a knowledge and understanding test; and 3) a satisfaction questionnaire. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, E1/E2 efficiency, and a dependent samples t-test. The research findings were as follows: 1) a training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach was effective according to 83.46/80.73, which was higher than the set criterion of 75/75, 2) the students' basic Chinese speaking after the training was higher than before at the statistical significance level of .05; and 3) the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum was at a high level.
Keywords: training curriculum, basic Chinese speaking, Language Teaching for Communication Approach

Introduction

In recent years, China's peaceful rise has captured global attention, sparking a growing interest among foreigners in understanding the country (Sun Yue, 2014). This rise elevated China's political and economic stature and drove the global spread of the Chinese language, transforming language learning into a collective effort supported by favorable social environments (Qiu Ye, 2023). As the language of the Chinese nation, Chinese embodied the rich tapestry of Chinese civilization and the essence of Chinese culture. Therefore, language was a "calling card" for a region or nation. Through the exchange and propagation of language, culture was seamlessly conveyed and diffused (Liu Yujia, 2021).

This growing global significance of Chinese has led to a surge in educational curricula focused on teaching the language. Chinese language instruction aimed primarily at developing proficiency and was typically divided into two categories: native speakers and those learning Chinese as a second language (Wang Dan, 2014). For non-native speakers, the abstract nature of cultural learning posed significant challenges, as cultural concepts were difficult to teach in isolation (Ma Hongyan, 2023). Various teaching strategies and techniques have been developed to address these challenges, emphasizing key language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Lorena Manaj Sadiku, 2015). Notably, teaching Chinese as a foreign language focused on cultivating oral communication skills, considered essential for effective language use (Yao Jianmei, 2022).

In addition to linguistic proficiency, effective language learning requires using the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways. The Language Teaching for Communication Approach introduced significant changes in teaching methods, materials, learning objectives, and assessment practices (Michael Byram, et al., 2002). This approach, which emphasized communication and contextual learning, aligned well with student-centered educational philosophies and was particularly suited to learners who thrived in interactive, communicative environments (Zhang Jiaxin, 2019).

Acquiring a language did not always equate to achieving fluency. This discrepancy could arise from rigid formal training methods that prioritized theoretical knowledge over practical usage. Additionally, a lack of communicative activities could inhibit learners' ability to use the language effectively. Richards emphasized that learners should be encouraged to actively participate and express their ideas, regardless of their proficiency level. The focus should have been on fostering a willingness to engage and practice consistently, as this approach promoted gradual improvement and fluency over time (Richards, 2006). As had been seen, communicative language teaching emphasized the importance of interaction and the use of language in real situations. The objective was to enhance learners' communication competencies, encompassing both grammatical accuracy and the capacity to utilize language effectively and appropriately across diverse contexts.

In addition, three key elements of learning theory were central to effective practices: the Communication Principle, the Task Principle, and the Meaningfulness Principle. These principles established a theoretical foundation that ensured teaching methodologies were both practically applicable and firmly rooted in robust educational theory (Richards and Rodgers, 2014).

It also highlighted the importance of teachers mastering the method and embodying their educational principles in actual teaching. Practically, it was crucial to balance communication and grammatical accuracy, prioritize cultural distinctions, provide personalized instruction, and align with the educational system (Jiang Jie, 2022). Focusing on these pedagogical challenges, the research developed a curriculum specifically designed for foundational oral Chinese training for the Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students. This curriculum, grounded in the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, aimed to equip students with the necessary skills and expertise to effectively use Chinese in real-world contexts. By refining and improving these curricula, educational institutions could better support students in mastering the language, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of Chinese language education globally

Research Objectives
1. To develop a training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach to develop basic Chinese speaking for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students to be effective according to the criteria 75/75.
2. To compare the students' basic Chinese speaking before and after training through the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students.
3. To assess the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students.

Literature Review
The training curriculum was described as a structured process intended to modify attitudes, enhance knowledge, and develop skills and behavior through learning experiences. The goal was to achieve effective performance in specific activities, developing individuals' abilities to meet current and future organizational needs (Beardwell & Holden, 2001 cited in Wajdi Milhem and Khalil Abushamsieh, 2014). The training curriculum was linked to a planning process and was considered an ongoing effort involving task replication to achieve the intended benefits. The design and implementation of the training programs were informed by multiple disciplines, with a particular emphasis on sociolinguistics. The importance of teaching methods was emphasized, as not all training courses were suitable for a single teaching method. The choice of method was based on training objectives, course content, and goals (Liu Wei, 2013). The effectiveness of teaching methods was crucial in achieving the desired training outcomes. The successful completion of tasks and attainment of training objectives required an integration of the teacher's instructional methods and the student's learning strategies (Wu Wensheng & Zhu Xiaoli, 2022).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach emphasizes cultivating students' language communication abilities. It was characterized by being student-centered, focusing on skill training, and aiming for real or simulated communication (Huang Huihua, 2016). According to Richards (2006), CLT was based on principles regarding language teaching goals, how learners acquired language, the types of classroom activities that enhanced learning, and the roles of teachers and learners. CLT has been widely discussed since the 1970s and was known for its emphasis on student participation, leading to better engagement and learning outcomes (Higgs & Clifford, 1982; Brown, 2000). Recent advancements in technology and teaching methodologies also contributed to improved outcomes in a Learner-Centered Teaching (LCT) environment (Kumar, 2020; Nikolaos Tzenios, 2022).

This underscored the critical importance of a structured and deliberate approach to both training and teaching, emphasizing the necessity of adapting methods to align with the specific needs of learners and the overarching objectives of the training. The emphasis on communicative approaches in language teaching reflected a broader trend towards learner-centered education, which aimed to improve engagement and effectiveness through tailored methodologies and technological integration.

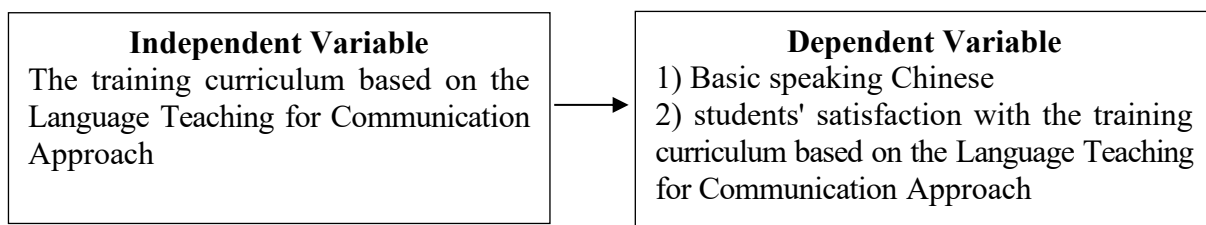The conceptual framework for the research could be summarized as illustrated in Figure 1.

Independent Variable The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach	→	**Dependent Variable** 1) Basic speaking Chinese 2) students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach

Figure 1 Conceptual Research Framework

Methodology
The study was designed as experimental research, employing a one-group pretest-posttest design. The details of the research methodology were as follows:

1. Population and Sample
The population of this study comprised all Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students at the Faculty of Technical Education, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand, in the 2023 academic year. The total number of students was 134, and they were distributed among 5 classrooms. The research sample was selected by cluster random sampling and consisted of 1 classroom with 26 students.

2. Variables
The variables consisted of the independent variable: The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, and the dependent variables: 1) basic speaking Chinese, and 2) students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach.

3. Research instrument
The research instruments used in the experiments and data collection were divided into the following categories:

3.1 The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach consisted of 18 academic hours, covering the following 6 units: 1) Daily talk, 2) Shopping, 3) Introduce myself, 4) Relationship, 5)Weather, and 6) Holiday. The training curriculum was developed through the following steps:
  1) Theories and concepts related to the training curriculum and the Language Teaching for Communication Approach were studied.
  2) The training curriculum was developed based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach. The main components of the training curriculum included 12 elements: Principles and Rationale, Training Curriculum Objectives, Training Curriculum Content, Training Curriculum Structure, Training Curriculum Implementation Guidelines, Training Activities based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, Target Groups, Dates, Times, and Locations, Learning Resources/Equipment, Measurement and

Evaluation, Expected Benefits, and Training Schedule. The training activities based on the Language Teaching for Communication approach were designed in three steps:

Presentation: The teacher provided language information to the students, introducing new content aimed at helping them understand the meaning and common usage of the language, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and appropriate grammatical structures for different situations, along with relevant rules.

Practice: The students engaged in using the language they had learned through controlled or guided practice, with the teacher leading the exercises in a step-by-step manner. The goal was for students to memorize correct language forms, understand their meanings, and learn how to use those language structures appropriately.

Production: The students practiced using the language for communication, applying the knowledge they had gained in the classroom to real or simulated situations. The teacher assigned tasks or scenarios and primarily acted as a guide, allowing students to use the language in various contexts.

3) The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach was proposed to the advisor and five experts. The evaluation of the appropriateness of the training curriculum outline was at a very good level, and the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) value, according to the experts' opinions, was found to be 0.80-1.00 in all aspects, indicating consistency in the training course outline.

4) The draft of the training curriculum was tryout with 30 Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students who were not part of the sample. The reliability of the training curriculum was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α), and the analysis results showed that the reliability was equal to 9.86. The training curriculum was then improved and finalized based on the Language Teaching for Communication approach before collecting data.

2. The assessment of basic Chinese speaking was conducted using a rubric scoring method, following these steps: first, relevant curriculum, theories, and assessment concepts were reviewed. The initial assessment design for Basic Chinese Speaking was then developed and presented to an advisor and five experts. These experts evaluated the assessment's appropriateness, and their ratings were analyzed. The assessment was refined based on the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) index, with an analysis revealing an IOC value of 0.80-1.00. Subsequently, the assessment was piloted with 30 students outside the main sample, further refined, and finalized for publication before data collection.

3. Satisfaction questionnaire: The satisfaction questionnaire was developed using a 5-level Likert scale, following these steps: initially, the questionnaire was drafted and presented to an advisor and five experts for evaluation. The experts assessed the appropriateness of the questionnaire, and their feedback was analyzed. The questionnaire was subsequently refined based on the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) index, with results indicating an IOC value of 1.00. The reliability of the satisfaction assessment questionnaire was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α), and the analysis results showed that the reliability was equal to 9.82. After further refinement, the questionnaire was finalized and published before data collection.

4. Data Analysis
The data analysis encompassed an examination of experimental results, including the calculation of fundamental statistics for test scores and learning achievements. Each analysis, along with an overarching summary, was presented in a comprehensive table that accompanied the lecture. Additionally, a customized training curriculum was developed, grounded in the communicative approach to language teaching, to enhance the basic Chinese speaking skills of the Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students to meet the 75/75 efficacy criteria. This process involved the analysis of data using mean, standard deviation, and the application of E1/E2 measures. A comparative analysis was also conducted to assess the students' basic Chinese speaking abilities before and after completing the curriculum, employing mean, standard deviation, and a dependent sample t-test. Finally, the satisfaction level of students who completed the curriculum was evaluated, with the analysis incorporating mean, standard deviation, and interpretation according to specific criteria.

Findings and Discussions
1. The analysis of the effectiveness of the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach to develop basic Chinese speaking for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students.

The analysis involved calculating the E1/E2 ratio according to the effectiveness criteria of 75/75. An analysis of the Language Teaching for Communication (LTC) approach's efficacy in developing basic Chinese speaking skills among Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students was also presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The result of determining the effectiveness of the training curriculum according to the 75/75 criterion.

n	The process measurement			Posttest			E₁/ E₂
	$\sum X_2$	A	E₁	$\sum X_2$	B	E₂	
26	651	16.76	83.46	209.90	24.29	80.73	83.46/80.73

From Table 1, it was observed that the average score for basic Chinese speaking in the post-training tests across all six units was 16.76 out of 20, equivalent to 83.82%. Additionally, the score from the assessments measuring basic Chinese speaking after the training was 24.29 out of a possible 30, equivalent to 80.73%. Therefore, the developed training program demonstrated effectiveness (E1/E2) with scores of 83.46/80.73, surpassing the established criteria of 75/75.

Table 2. Effectiveness Index (E.I.)

The analysis result	Effectiveness Index (E.I.)	Percentage of Effectiveness Index
	0.6766	67.66
Interpreting the results	After training using the training curriculum, there was an increase in scores by percentage 67.66	

From Table 2, it was found that the Effectiveness Index (E.I.) was 0.6766, or 67.66%. In summary, after completing the training curriculum, the scores increased by 67.66%. It could be observed that the obtained efficiency index value exceeded 0.5, which aligned with the acceptance criteria requiring the efficiency index value to be at least 0.5. Therefore, the developed course or innovation was deemed effective.

The training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach to develop basic Chinese speaking for Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students was effective according to the 83.46/80.73, which was higher than the set criterion of 75/75. This outcome was attributed to a systematic training curriculum design and development process, which involved four steps: Step 1 studying and analyzing the foundational information. Step 2: The training curriculum was designed and developed. Step 3: A trial of the training curriculum was conducted. Step 4: The training curriculum was evaluated and improved (Saylor and Alexander, 1974 cited in Chaiwat Suttharirak, 2014). This process aligned with the approach described by Chuchai Smitthikrai (2007), where curriculum development began with the determination of curriculum goals, followed by the design and creation of the curriculum. Afterward, the curriculum was implemented and evaluated in sequence. Additionally, the drafted training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach, aimed at developing basic Chinese speaking skills, underwent a quality evaluation process before being implemented. The experts' evaluation of the curriculum indicated that it was of good quality, demonstrating that the developed training curriculum could be used effectively in training.

According to the findings of Dai Yunli (2020), the training course on Basic Chinese Communication included five learning units: Welcome to China, Let's Learn Chinese, Self-Introduction, My Family, and Chinese Culture. The effectiveness of the training course met the E1/E2 criteria at 81.49/81.53. Additionally, Caijun Lin and Nisareen Wangtakwadeen (2017) found that the developed training curriculum, using the Chinese communicative approach for the private sector tourism business of entrepreneurs, achieved an efficiency (E1/E2) of 83.50/87.00, which met the established requirement of 80/80 and had an effectiveness index (E.I) of 0.68.

2. The analysis compared basic Chinese speaking before and after training through the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach of the Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students.

Comparing basic Chinese speaking before and after training through the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach of the Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students was also presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation, dependent samples t-test, and the level of statistical significance to compare basic Chinese speaking before and after the training curriculum.

Testing	n	x̄	S.D.	df	t-test	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test	26	4.04	0.649	16.246*	25	0.000
Posttest	26	8.07	0.924			

*$p < .05$

Table 3. It was found that the students' basic Chinese speaking had a mean score of 4.04 ($\bar{x} = 4.04$, S.D. = 0.649) before the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach and a mean score of 8.07 ($\bar{x} = 8.07$, S.D. = 0.924) after the training. When comparing the t-scores, it was also found that the students' basic Chinese speaking ability after training was higher than before at a statistical significance level of .05. The basic Chinese speaking skills after completing the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach were significantly higher than before, with a statistical significance level of .05. This improvement occurred because the training curriculum was designed following the steps of the language teaching for communication approach, a teaching model that centered on students. The core principle of the Communicative Language Teaching approach focused on learning how to use the language effectively in real-life communication rather than merely acquiring knowledge about the language itself (Savignon, 2002). Consistent with Sumitra Angwattanakun (1997), the language teaching for communication approach was a form of teaching that did not merely instruct learners in language forms or structures, but rather emphasized enabling learners to apply their knowledge in real-life situations. This approach represented a significant pedagogical method, emphasizing the development of students' language skills within authentic communicative contexts. It also demonstrated the teacher's mastery of the method and their ability to embody educational principles in actual teaching. In practice, it was crucial to strike a balance between communication and grammatical accuracy, prioritize cultural distinctions, provide personalized instruction, and align with the educational system (Jiang Jie, 2022).

According to the findings of Pittayarat Yamprayoon and Rossarin Jermtaisong (2021), there *was* a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 in Chinese communication skills for everyday use before and after students *studied* the language for communication instruction combined with grouping techniques.

3. Analysis of assessing the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach.

The assessment of the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach *was also presented* in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean, Standard Deviation, and meaning of the students' satisfaction with the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach.

Item of the assessment the satisfaction	x̄	S.D.	Meaning
1. Curriculum Content	4.56	0.64	Highest agree
2. Training Activities	4.56	0.64	Highest agree
3. Training Materials	4.44	0.75	Highest agree
4. Audiovisual Equipment	4.57	0.75	Highest agree
5. Training Venue	4.42	0.75	Highest agree
6. Training Duration	4.48	0.78	Highest agree
7. Training Evaluation	4.42	0.81	Highest agree
8. Trainer	4.52	0.78	Highest agree
Total	**4.48**	**0.75**	**Highest agree**

Table 4. It was found that the satisfaction level of the Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students who underwent the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach was at the highest level of agreement ($\bar{x} = 4.48$, S.D. = 0.75).

When considering the various aspects, it was found that the satisfaction level of graduate diploma teaching professional students who underwent the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach was at the highest level of agreement across all aspects. The aspects, sorted by the highest mean, were as follows: Audiovisual Equipment ($\bar{x}$ = 4.57, S.D. = 0.75), Curriculum Content ($\bar{x}$ = 4.56, S.D. = 0.64), Trainer ($\bar{x}$ = 4.52, S.D. = 0.78), Training Activities ($\bar{x}$ = 4.48, S.D. = 0.80), Training Duration ($\bar{x}$ = 4.48, S.D. = 0.78), Training Materials ($\bar{x}$ = 4.44, S.D. = 0.75), Training Venue ($\bar{x}$ = 4.42, S.D. = 0.75), and Training Evaluation ($\bar{x}$ = 4.42, S.D. = 0.81).

The satisfaction level of graduate diploma teaching professional students who completed the training curriculum based on the Language Teaching for Communication Approach was high. This result was due to the systematic implementation of the training course according to the planned and prepared steps. Various factors, including the budget, materials, equipment, course documents, and locations that served as sources of knowledge and experience, were all well-prepared and ready to support the training. This thorough preparation contributed to the overall satisfaction with the course. Based on the findings of Dai Yunli (2020), Chakkaphan Prasomsup et al. (2024), and Xiang Yonghong et al. (2024), student satisfaction with the training curriculum was at a high level. This was consistent across the studies.

Conclusions
As language education continued to evolve, the Language Teaching for Communication (LTC) approach, emphasizing communicative competence, has emerged as a promising framework for developing effective language training curricula. By prioritizing meaningful communication, LTC aims to equip learners with the skills necessary to use language effectively in real-world contexts. While challenges in implementation exist, careful planning, resource management, and ongoing feedback are essential for ensuring the curriculum's relevance and effectiveness. Moreover, training teachers in the LTC approach is crucial to fostering a shift from traditional knowledge transmission to facilitation and promotion of autonomous learning.

The findings of this study highlight the limitations that can impede the successful acquisition of Chinese as a foreign language. A strong foundation in Chinese words, Pinyin, and cultural context is essential for effective communication. Given the visual nature of Chinese characters, mastering reading and pronunciation presents unique challenges for non-native speakers. The research sample, consisting of Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession students with limited prior exposure to Chinese, underscores the difficulties faced by learners without a strong linguistic and cultural background. Additionally, the lack of opportunities for daily Chinese language use in a Chinese-speaking environment significantly hinders language acquisition. Creating immersive learning experiences that simulate real-world communication can greatly enhance language proficiency and increase the likelihood of successful Chinese language learning. Future research should explore the potential of this approach in conjunction with other language skills, such as listening, writing, and reading, as well as investigate the impact of factors like learning persistence on language acquisition.

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