

Certificate Program in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (TCSOL)

The TCSOL Certificate Program at CIFLTE is a one-year fast-track program. The program is grounded in the latest research in Chinese educational linguistics, second language learning, and second language pedagogy. Specifically, the TCSOL Certificate Program helps integrate an enhanced conceptual understanding of these domains of study with hands-on teaching experience.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program consists of the following courses: (1) Chinese Educational Linguistics, (2) Acquisition, Pedagogy, and Assessment (APA), and (3) Practicum. Each course component is subdivided into two levels: The Level I courses—completed in the Fall semester—cover the fundamentals, while the Level II courses—completed in the Spring semester—focus on more advanced topics and issues.

COURSE COMPONENTS

Chinese Educational Linguistics addresses such questions as: What are the basic structures of Mandarin Chinese and what are their functions? Both Levels I and II of the course draw on error analysis and contrastive study. Special attention is given to structures that English speakers find the most challenging to understand and use.

The APA course is at the heart of the TCSOL Certificate Program, and contributes to a cogent understanding of second language acquisition, Chinese language pedagogy, and dynamic assessment. The initial A stands for “Acquisition.” The underlying philosophy of the course is that to become a competent Chinese teacher, one must first understand how second or foreign language students learn. Having such an understanding in place helps anchor instructional decisions in the interests and needs of the students, as opposed to the teacher’s arbitrary preferences or speculations.



The P in APA, which stands for “Pedagogy”, concerns the integration of language teaching and learning. After gaining insights into how learners of various native languages, ages, proficiency levels, etc. learn differently and the kinds of challenges that they face throughout the developmental process in Level I, students are ready to apply this understanding in Level II. At this stage, they learn to organize teaching in a way that facilitates acquisition. In particular, the APA course equips students with the know-how to plan, sequence, and implement Task-Based Language Teaching—a cutting-edge pedagogical approach proven by robust research to be the most effective in evoking learners’ use of authentic language to complete meaningful, goal-oriented tasks.



The final A refers to “Assessment,” and looks into various types of assessment to evaluate learning outcomes. The APA course unpacks how summative and dynamic assessments can be used continually to evaluate learners’ progress throughout second language development. Particular attention is paid to dynamic assessment, whereby the teacher masters how to attend to learners’ responses during acquisitional activities and provide feedback and evaluation accordingly.

The Practicum brings everything full circle; it enables students to consolidate everything learned in the Program into their own principled, coherent language teaching philosophy and day-to-day practice, informed by state-of-the-art research findings and a deep understanding of how languages are learned.

THE CIFLTE EDGE

It is this unique approach to interconnecting language learning, pedagogy, assessment, and research that sets CIFLTE’s TCSOL Certificate Program apart from the rest.

CIFLTE

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