

The Center in Action Fall 2006

Book Publication

The book edited by the US-China Center was published by East China Normal University Press in September 2006. This newly published book entitled *Good School and Good Education* (*Hao Xuesheng, Hao Xuexiao* in Chinese) was edited by Yong Zhao, David Lustick, and Wenzhong (Eric) Yang. It looks across western research and scholarly literature associated with “best practice” to identify over-arching principles that can inform an audience of Chinese teachers, administrators, and families. Each chapter includes a self-assessment rubric to aid educators in evaluating how their own practices may compare with a western concept of excellence.

Selected Readings of American Education Research

Selected Readings of American Education Research, edited by Dr. Yong Zhao and Dr. Wenzhong (Eric) Yang, is ready for press by East China Normal University Press. This is an annual publication, which selects influential and representative articles from major educational journals in the United States. The articles appear in English but a Chinese introduction is added. Translated abstracts are also provided for Chinese readers' convenience. This book is designed to help Chinese educational researchers become well informed of the current U.S. educational policies, practices, system, issues, and challenges.



Welcomes at the US-China Center

This fall, we welcomed three new visiting scholars from China. They each bring unique expertise and experiences that will greatly contribute to our future endeavors. Mr. Haisen Zhang came from the University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China. He has been teaching for over 10 years. He is an honest, outspoken, hardworking and result-oriented person with a strong team spirit. Mr. Zhang's research centers primarily on Language Learning and Technology, more specifically on computer-mediated second/foreign language instruction (online language learning), teacher/faculty development as well as literacy and school reform through integrating ICT in schools and districts. The purpose of his trip to MSU is threefold. The first is to continue his research project on English listening comprehension in learning-centered environments. The second is to contribute his wisdom and vision to the Center where he is hosted. The third is to broaden his vision by sitting in classes, attending





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lectures and seminars, exchanging ideas with peers as well as diving into the huge resources in the university library.

Dr. Anlin Wang is a professor from Beijing Normal University Press. Through her many years of working experiences in editing and publishing educational technology textbooks, she has gotten to know Dr. Yong Zhao from Michigan State University and was inspired by his vision and passion. With efforts and under invitation from Dr. Zhao, Dr. Wang came to the U.S.-China Center as a visiting scholar. One of the missions of the center is to develop a new, effective educational model drawing on the strengths of both eastern and western educational principles and excellent practices. In the era of globalization, such a mission gets more and more significant. As a visiting scholar, Dr. Wang hopes to understand U.S. education in general and contribute to the Center by working on some projects and introducing some research products to China.

Mr. Tienjun Bu's visit is sponsored by the China Scholarship Council (CSC). Mr. Bu, a 34-year-old Instructor (also a Ph. D Candidate) from College of Foreign Language Education at Jilin University, is visiting the US-China Center as a research scholar for a 10-month duration. His academic pursuits aim to study and learn the advanced language teaching approaches and methodology especially the application of the Internet and multimedia in language teaching classroom so as to help establish modern foreign language teaching system, improve the foreign language teaching at Jilin University as well as contribute to foreign language teaching in China, and receive training and collect training materials and acquire training /methods procedures on language teaching based on the Internet and multimedia to benefit language teachers at home. His academic activities here involves: 1) Interviewing professionals and experts at MSU on various topics concerning teaching foreign language based on the Internet and multimedia and exchange teaching experiences; 2) Visiting language classrooms at MSU to observe and take notes; 3) Receive training on teaching a foreign language by means of the Internet and multimedia; and 4) Visiting the libraries.

Literature Review

A review of the literature involving immersion-learning environments is in process. This review examines what research has been conducted in the field, languages involved, teaching and learning strategies employed, and results.

Chinese Immersion Language Camps

The US-China Center will host several Chinese immersion experiences for Kindergarteners through 12 graders. In the spring, the US-China Center will participate in the MSU Grandparents University which hosts pairs of grandchildren and grandparents as they have a chance to explore the Chinese language and culture. Over the summer, the Center will host 2 weeks of half-day immersion camps for Kindergarteners through eight graders as well as a one-week long overnight camp for children in grades 7-12. These immersion camps will focus on having children learn the Chinese language and culture through hands-on immersion activities.

Trip to Beijing Normal University



北京師範大學
BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY



Drs. Yong Zhao, Bill Schmidt, Sharif Shakrani, and Richard Houang visited the Beijing Normal University (BNU) at the invitation of Professor Dong, Vice President of Beijing Normal University. The purpose of this visit was manifold. While the primary objective was to review the progress of the collaborative project between BNU and the two MSU centers – the US-China Center and the Center for Mathematics and Science Education, both Bill and Richard also presented three seminars on PROM/SE and TIMSS 1995 to the students and faculty. During the week of meetings, Professor Sharif Shakrani was also invited to BNU to speak about his work with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Bill also participated in discussion with BNU faculty on their plan to establish a national education assessment center.

The collaborative project was to pilot in China the curriculum evaluation methodology developed for PROM/SE. The curriculum evaluation methodology was outgrown from the Curriculum Study of TIMSS 1995 based on the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement's (IEA) Tripartite Curriculum Model [for further information visit <http://timss.msu.edu>.] The Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience and Learning in BNU, under the direction of Professor Dong, translated the PROM/SE instrument and administered to teachers and students in Grades 3 to 6 in 49 primary schools between December 2005 and January 2006. Students were assessed in Mathematics and teachers completed background survey as well as content coverage of their Mathematics classes. The schools were selected randomly from 111 elementary schools in one district (Xicheng District) in the Beijing Metropolitan Area. The participation of teachers and students were tremendous. Over 98% of the teachers and almost 12,000 students participated. With the success of the pilot study, a boarder study is planned for spring 2007 which will include more districts and the lower secondary grades (7 to 9). To facilitate future collaboration, agreement was made to create a joint MSU-BNU Center.

Teacher Certification Program

Nicole Ellefson is working with MSU College of Education faculty to craft a professional program for teachers from China to attain the necessary credentials to teach in the United States. The program will draw on the strengths of MSU's Teacher Education department and start participants on the road to a master's degree in curriculum and teaching.

Confucius Institute



The Confucius Institute at Michigan State University (CI/ MSU) has planned many new activities in the last 3 months. Besides continuing designing the online courses and conducting research on the innovative approach to teaching Chinese, the CI-MSU team is working on creating teaching resources and archives, developing multimedia Chinese learning materials, online learning materials, and professional resources for administrators and teachers. CI-MSU also plans to organize outreach activities, such as sponsoring Chinese cultural events in the community, hosting summer camps, and providing tutoring services. CI-MSU's Alliance of Chinese Language and Culture will be a major vehicle for promoting such outreach activities.

The CI-MSU team from Central China Radio and TV University (CCRTVU) is visiting CI-MSU in East Lansing, Michigan, as co-researchers and co-designers, their visit will further our previous design of the innovative online Chinese courses. The team will visit public schools in Michigan and Michigan Virtual High School to gain understanding of American public schools, and the trend of Chinese language education in the U.S. The team also visited the Little Planet in Nashville, Tennessee, where many popular learning programs are created, and established new understanding of designing multimedia products geared toward American students.

The CI-MSU team also attended the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Conference in Nashville Tennessee. Major activities and demo products are presented at the exhibition, which have attracted attention from many colleagues who are professionals in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language.

Federal Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) Grant

With grant writing assistance of the US-China Center, our Lansing School District affiliate was awarded a United States Federal Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant in excess of \$801,000. The grant is designed to expand their Post Oak Elementary preschool immersion program into a full K-2 elementary immersion program over a span of 3 years. The Lansing School District also has committed to continue the program's growth through fifth grade and would like to have a comprehensive Chinese language program that will expand from pre-school through twelfth grade.



Nancy Romig, one of the EGC project Directors of the US-China Center, is the new full time Post Oak Elementary Chinese/English Immersion Specialist in charge of developing the elementary immersion program. She is responsible for implementation of the grant's five goals: 1) create a K-5 self-sustaining immersion program, 2) promote academic achievement and Chinese language acquisition, 3) Provide meaningful, integrated, and authentic Chinese language and cultural learning opportunities, 4) develop and maintain curriculum and



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professional development, and 5) Foster relationships between parents and community members.

Request for Proposals

The US-China Center hosted meetings with 3 Michigan school districts who are interested in starting up an EGC immersion program in their districts. Applications for partnership are due in December and final decisions will be made in January.

The Center in Action is the quarterly newsletter of the **US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence**. The newsletter is designed to document and disseminate information on the Center's Activities.