



Center for International Foreign Language Teacher Education

Teachers College, Columbia University

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Ashley Beccia
Newsletter Editor

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Ashley Beccia

Change is inherent to language education. New technologies emerge, educational landscapes evolve, and research offers new insights into how languages are learned. CIFLTE's work has long been grounded in helping educators respond to those changes through strong teacher preparation and classroom-based inquiry.

These commitments were especially visible this summer. The 2026 TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program engaged participants from several countries in the intensive study of language and pedagogy. In Osaka, CIFLTE also launched the Summer Institute on Integration of Generative AI in Foreign Language Instruction, giving educators a space to examine how AI can be thoughtfully integrated into their practice.

The impact of earlier CIFLTE initiatives continues to expand. Members of the TC-NTNU EMI cohort are developing classroom-based studies for a forthcoming edited volume, and conversations from CIFLTE's Annual Unconference have grown into new teaching practices and creative collaborations. The alumni reflections and accomplishments featured in this issue further show how CIFLTE participants are applying their learning across diverse professional settings.

On behalf of the CIFLTE team, thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue and to all those who remain engaged in our community. We hope you enjoy reading about the work and accomplishments shared here. ■

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

SUMMER 2026 TCSOL/TESOL DUAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Ashley Beccia

This summer, CIFLTE welcomed 20 educators and students to the 2026 TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program, offered in partnership with Osaka Gakuin University. Participants joined from the United States, mainland China, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Japan to receive rigorous, cutting-edge training in teaching Chinese, English, or both.

Although participants followed different pathways through the program, their coursework shared a common focus: understanding how language and language learning work and using that knowledge to guide classroom practice. The curriculum included courses in Educational Linguistics and Foreign Language Pedagogy, allowing participants to move from a close examination of Chinese and English to research-informed instructional decision-making.



Professor Liu gives a lesson on the current state and historical background of the Chinese language.

Chinese Educational Linguistics

In Chinese Educational Linguistics, taught online by Professor Lening Liu, participants examined features of Chinese grammar that often present challenges for second language learners. For their final projects, participants investigated a topic of their choice concerning Chinese grammar, either through linguistic analysis or the design of an instructional approach for a particular structure.

Watch a clip of the Chinese Educational Linguistics course [here](#).

English Educational Linguistics

In English Educational Linguistics, taught online by Dr. Vivian Lindhardsen, participants explored fundamental principles of English linguistics, with a focus on grammar.



Dr. Lindhardsen (top left) discussing modal verbs with participants in English Educational Linguistics.

Continued on next page

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Throughout the course, they designed communicative activities intended to raise learners' awareness of specific features of English and give them meaningful opportunities to use those features.

The activity shown to the right, created by Kyunghee Yoon, focuses on tense and aspect in English.

For the final project, participants found an authentic English passage containing examples of a target grammatical feature. They analyzed the form, meaning, and use of selected examples and designed a communicative activity guided by clear learning objectives. Participants completed the assignment independently or in small groups.

For example, Ruobing (Robin) Qian and Jessica Engle worked together for their final project, focusing on the passive voice in English. First, they explained how the passive voice is formed, what it means, and how it is used by speakers of English. Next, they presented an authentic news article about a police hunt in Melbourne, Australia, identified three instances of the passive voice in the article and analyzed their form, meaning and use. Finally, they suggested a communicative task on reporting crimes that targets the passive voice: students take on the roles of police officers and witnesses, engaging in interviews with one another to reconstruct a crime scene; the task concludes with students writing a brief incident report.

View Robin and Jessica's final project [here](#).

Continued on next page

Y

Kyunghee Yoon

2 months ago

One student stands at the front of the class facing away from the screen so they cannot see the information being displayed. The rest of the class sees a series of images and timeline prompts related to a historical figure, including key events, achievements, and important dates.

Students collaboratively describe information related to the person, using a range of verb tenses and aspects. They are encouraged to use the past simple for major events, the past continuous for background situations, the past perfect for earlier experiences, the present simple for general facts, and the present perfect for the person's ongoing influence or significance.

For example, students might say:

- I was born in 1809. (Past Simple)
- I was working on the farm while I was growing up. (Past Continuous)
- I had worked in several jobs before becoming president. (Past Perfect)
- I have been remembered for ending slavery in the United States. (Present Perfect)

The student at the front asks questions to gather additional information and listens to these descriptions carefully in order to guess the historical figure. They may ask clarification questions such as "Did you become president before this event?" or "Were you born in America?"

Kyunghee Yoon designed this communicative activity to help learners notice and practice tense and aspect in English.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

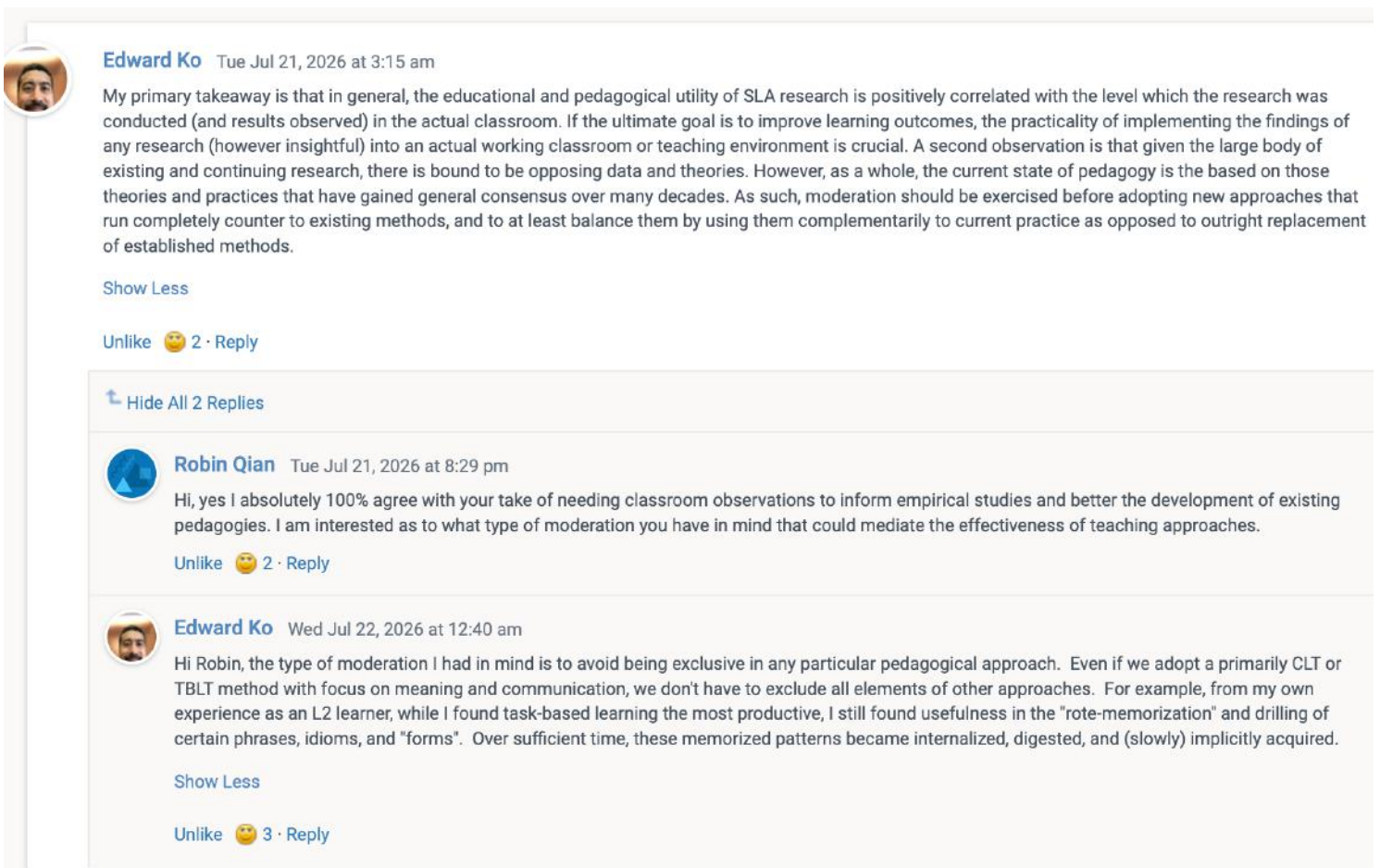
Foreign Language Pedagogy

The program concluded with Foreign Language Pedagogy, taught by Professor ZhaoHong Han at Osaka Gakuin University, with the option to attend online. The course introduced key concepts and strategies in second and foreign language teaching, with an emphasis on task-based language teaching and the relationship between second language acquisition research and instructional practice.

In addition to the live sessions facilitated by Professor Han, participants engaged with academic readings through asynchronous

discussions that connected the online and in-person participants. Below is an example of a post by Edward Ko, an online participant, on a text about second language acquisition *in* and *for* the classroom (Lightbown, 2003). Robin Qian, an in-person participant, replies to the post, stimulating a further post from Edward. This excerpt demonstrates the participants' thoughtful engagement with the texts and discussions, as well as how the asynchronous discussions brought together members of the cohort who participated through different modes.

Continued on next page



Edward Ko Tue Jul 21, 2026 at 3:15 am

My primary takeaway is that in general, the educational and pedagogical utility of SLA research is positively correlated with the level which the research was conducted (and results observed) in the actual classroom. If the ultimate goal is to improve learning outcomes, the practicality of implementing the findings of any research (however insightful) into an actual working classroom or teaching environment is crucial. A second observation is that given the large body of existing and continuing research, there is bound to be opposing data and theories. However, as a whole, the current state of pedagogy is the based on those theories and practices that have gained general consensus over many decades. As such, moderation should be exercised before adopting new approaches that run completely counter to existing methods, and to at least balance them by using them complementarily to current practice as opposed to outright replacement of established methods.

Show Less

Unlike 😊 2 · Reply

Hide All 2 Replies

Robin Qian Tue Jul 21, 2026 at 8:29 pm

Hi, yes I absolutely 100% agree with your take of needing classroom observations to inform empirical studies and better the development of existing pedagogies. I am interested as to what type of moderation you have in mind that could mediate the effectiveness of teaching approaches.

Unlike 😊 2 · Reply

Edward Ko Wed Jul 22, 2026 at 12:40 am

Hi Robin, the type of moderation I had in mind is to avoid being exclusive in any particular pedagogical approach. Even if we adopt a primarily CLT or TBLT method with focus on meaning and communication, we don't have to exclude all elements of other approaches. For example, from my own experience as an L2 learner, while I found task-based learning the most productive, I still found usefulness in the "rote-memorization" and drilling of certain phrases, idioms, and "forms". Over sufficient time, these memorized patterns became internalized, digested, and (slowly) implicitly acquired.

Show Less

Unlike 😊 3 · Reply

Edward Ko and Robin Qian exchange perspectives on how SLA research can inform classroom practice and pedagogical choices. Click [here](#) to enlarge the screenshot.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Several participants described Foreign Language Pedagogy as an opportunity to reconsider assumptions about language teaching. Lina Ito reflected:

Before this course, I used to teach in a very grammar-based way. Through these sessions, I learned that just teaching grammar isn't enough to acquire a language. We also have to create an environment where students have meaningful input and output and opportunities to communicate in real-world settings.

Sojeung Park noted that the course helped her connect strategies she had already been using with the theories underlying them:

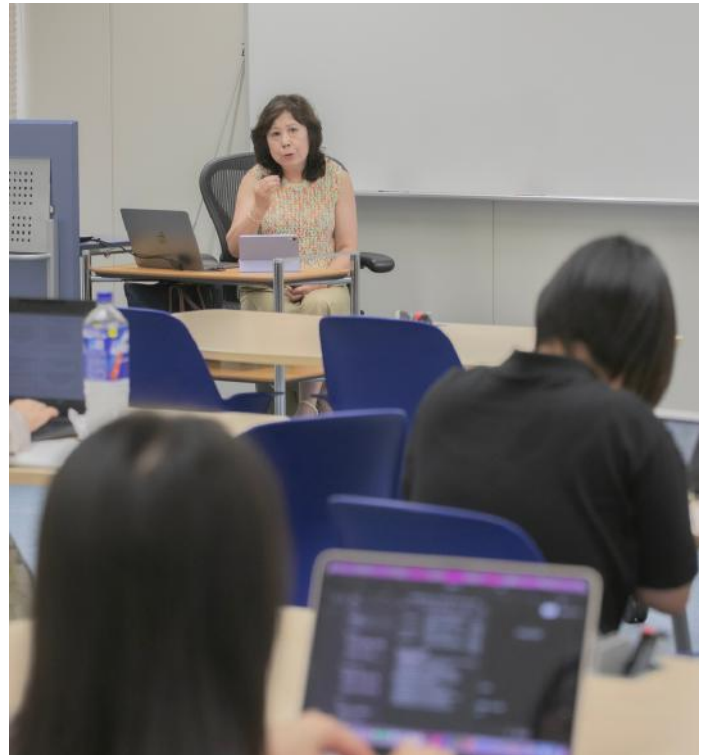
I was using some of the techniques that Dr. Han mentioned, such as elicitation and recasting, but I didn't realize that these techniques were based on actual linguistic theories. Dr. Han's lessons gave me confidence as a teacher.

Participants valued learning why particular instructional approaches may be effective. As Lina explained:

A lot of professional development gives practical strategies. This program taught us why we teach in a certain way and the research behind it.

Capstone Project

The program's capstone project was on human-AI hybrid lesson planning.



Professor Han during a session of Foreign Language Pedagogy at Osaka Gakuin University.

Participants first collaborated with AI to create a lesson plan for a one-hour session and then revised it as their understanding of foreign language pedagogy developed. In an accompanying report, they documented their interactions with AI, summarized the lesson, and explained the pedagogical reasoning behind their final decisions.

The project challenged some participants' expectations about the role of AI in teachers' work. Sojeung reflected:

As long as teachers are in the driver's seat, and we control, negotiate, or reject what generative AI has suggested, then generative AI can be a really helpful teacher's partner.

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Participant Spotlight: Edward Ko



For his capstone project, Edward Ko, a participant in the TESOL track, co-designed a lesson plan with Gemini, Google's AI assistant, for adult native speakers of Japanese. His project illustrates how participants used generative AI as a planning partner while retaining responsibility for evaluating, revising, and justifying the final lesson.

Phase	Duration	Teacher Action	Student Action	Pedagogical Purpose
Pre-Task	10 mins	Introduces the VIP crisis scenario: A client is lost in Tokyo with no phone battery. Distributes blank paper.	Listens to the scenario, asks clarifying questions regarding the parameters of the task.	Establishes the real-world problem and ensures task comprehension without pre-teaching form.
Task Cycle	25 mins	Actively monitors the room in silence. Transcribes specific student errors regarding prepositional forms on a notepad.	Collaborates in pairs to draw a neighborhood map and draft step-by-step written directions to the office.	Prioritizes meaning and fluency. Students utilize their current interlanguage to negotiate meaning.
Planning & Report	15 mins	Facilitates the exchange of maps and directions between pairs. Observes communication breakdowns.	Reads the directions drafted by another pair and attempts to trace the route on the provided map to reach the destination.	Acts as a real-world stress test for the language, creating a noticeable "gap" in the students' knowledge.
Language Focus	10 mins	Writes the observed preposition errors on the board anonymously. Explicitly teaches the correct target forms.	Takes notes and asks questions regarding the specific mechanics of the newly introduced prepositions.	Delivers explicit "Focus on Form" only after the students have recognized their communicative need for it.
Wrap-up	5 mins	Closes the lesson, praises fluency efforts, and collects materials.	Returns to original drafted directions and independently corrects errors using the new forms.	Solidifies acquisition by immediately applying the correct forms to their own authentic work.

Screenshot of Edward's human-AI hybrid lesson plan developed for his capstone project.

Edward's full capstone project can be viewed [here](#).

Edward's Reflection on the Program

I was very impressed with many facets of my experience at the CIFLTE Summer 2026 TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program. First was the level of expertise and instruction from Professor Lindhardsen and Professor Han, who were able to communicate their deep subject knowledge in an engaging manner that was both intellectually stimulating and entertaining. As a newcomer to linguistics and pedagogy, I was limited by my lack of foundational knowledge in either discipline; however, I was able to obtain meaningful and inspired learning in both courses of the program, due to the accessibility of the curriculum design. At the same time, I noticed that my much more experienced classmates (many with graduate-level degrees and advanced professional experience in relevant educational fields) were able to dive deeper into the same curriculum, which resulted in an enriching and rewarding experience for all students.

The flexibility offered by the intensive, modular program design (with in-person, synchronous, and asynchronous options) allowed me to complete the coursework around my normal work schedule and commitments. This flexibility should not be confused with effortlessness; to the contrary, the program was quite intense, including 60 contact hours over only two weeks, which roughly translates to a full academic semester in just half a month.

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The intensity of the course required much focus but allowed for significant learning and acquisition of knowledge in a very short time. In closing, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to broaden my horizons and gain a foothold in a new area, interact with supportive and positive classmates, and engage with renowned professors who are experts in their fields and at the cutting edge of their respective disciplines.

—Edward Ko

Learning with an International Cohort

Participants have highlighted the value of learning alongside educators from different linguistic, cultural, and professional backgrounds. Jessica Engle described her in-person experience as especially meaningful:

Being with the same cohort for a week has been such an amazing and different experience because you get to learn about their experiences as teachers and the different contexts they teach in.

Robin Qian also valued the small cohort and the time it provided for discussion:

The sessions could be more personalized. What you didn't understand, there was time to process, and I think that was really helpful. It was all the more motivating to share our experiences and ideas.

For Sojeung, exchanging perspectives with participants who taught different learners

in different contexts was one of the program's strongest features:

Their first languages were different and their learners were different, so it was really interesting to exchange ideas and talk about our lesson plans.

The Big Picture

The program encouraged participants to recognize the complexity of language teaching. Lina entered the program expecting research to identify a single best method, but came away with a different understanding:

I originally thought I would find out, "This is the best way to teach English." But a lot of the readings showed that it actually depends on who you're teaching, how old the learners are, where they are developmentally, and what their goals are.

Robin compared the experience to assembling a jigsaw puzzle:

When you are teaching, you see facets and little pieces. When you come to workshops like this, you see the bigger picture and suddenly realize, "Oh, this piece goes here."

Ultimately, participants walked away from the TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program with a deeper understanding of not only what to teach, but why particular approaches support language learning and how they can be adapted to diverse learners and contexts. ■

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

SUMMER INSTITUTE ON INTEGRATION OF GENERATIVE AI IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Ashley Beccia

This summer, CIFLTE piloted the Summer Institute on Integration of Generative AI in Foreign Language Instruction (AIFLI).



A group shot of participants of AIFLI along with Professor Han and staff at Osaka Gakuin University.

From July 27–29, Professor ZhaoHong Han met with educators at Osaka Gakuin University to discuss pedagogical, ethical, and practical issues involved in AI integration and to explore applications of generative AI across language teaching, learning, and assessment.

The inaugural institute provided a collaborative forum for educators to critically engage with the rapidly evolving role of generative AI in language education while considering how emerging technologies can be integrated in research-informed ways.

WORDS OF GRATITUDE

The CIFLTE team extends its deepest gratitude to our partners at Osaka Gakuin University (OGU) who have provided unwavering support for our summer programs. We would like to give a special shout-out to Vincent Phinouwong, CIFLTE's local director at OGU. The photo shown to the right is a testament to his exceptional care and thoughtfulness. Taken spontaneously during AIFLI, it captures Vincent waiting outside the classroom with umbrellas for participants ahead of forecasted rain. This snapshot speaks volumes about the dedication and hospitality of our OGU colleagues in making our joint programs such a success.



Vincent waiting with umbrellas for AIFLI participants.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

CIFLTE ALUMNA TESTIMONIAL

Pui Shan (Fiona) Hui

The certificate program has shaped my teaching and professional development. It deepened my understanding of second-language acquisition, pedagogy, curriculum design, and language assessment. It also encouraged me to bridge theory and classroom practice more intentionally. During the program, I was introduced to Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which has become a cornerstone of my teaching philosophy. The emphasis on meaningful communication, strategic task design, and learner-centered instruction continues to shape how I design my Cantonese courses at New York University.

The knowledge and perspectives I gained through the TCSOL program and as an ACTFL-certified rater have strengthened my work in language assessment. I have been actively involved in the Cantonese Oral Proficiency Exam (COPE), a new Cantonese oral assessment initiative, supporting the training of Cantonese oral proficiency testers and raters worldwide. Collaborating with educators passionate about advancing Cantonese language education has been inspiring and rewarding. Through my teaching and assessment work, I hope to promote Cantonese as a less commonly taught language (LCTL) and contribute to the growth of high-quality Cantonese language education internationally.

Participating in the Summer Institute on Integration of Generative AI in Osaka in July 2026 has inspired me to think more

deeply about the role of artificial intelligence in language education. Rather than viewing AI as a replacement for language teachers, I see it as a powerful tool that can amplify human expertise. Effective AI integration begins with sound pedagogy, thoughtful instructional design, and educators' professional judgment. When guided by teachers, AI can support the creation of meaningful learning tasks, provide timely, personalized feedback, streamline lesson preparation, and enhance assessment practices, all while preserving authentic communication and human interaction. As language educators, our role is not only to learn to use AI alongside our language expertise but also to lead its responsible and ethical application, keeping learners, culture, and human connection at the center.

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Fiona (center) receives a certificate for attending the CIFLTE Summer Institute on the Integration of Generative AI in Foreign Language Instruction.

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I am deeply grateful to the TCSOL program and the Teachers College community for providing me with the knowledge, mentorship, and professional network that continue to shape and nurture my career. From teaching Cantonese at NYU to supporting COPE initiatives with educators worldwide and exploring human-driven AI in language education, I look forward to continuing to bridge theory, pedagogy, assessment, and innovation to serve my acquaintances and learners. ■



Fiona (top right) among colleagues and CIFE staff at the TCSOL Certificate Program graduation ceremony in May 2023.



Pui Shan (Fiona) Hui was born and raised in Hong Kong. She earned her B.A. from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, an M.A. in Vocal Performance from New York University's Steinhardt School, and a certificate in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language from Columbia University. She is a full-time faculty member in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University, where she teaches Cantonese language and culture.

INTERESTED IN EARNING A CERTIFICATE FROM CIFE?

Earn a certificate in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (TCSOL), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), or both, through CIFE's TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program, offered online in Summer 2027.

Applications now accepted.

Learn more at www.tc.columbia.edu/cife.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

EMPOWERING EMI EDUCATORS: THE CONTINUING LEGACY OF TC-NTNU EMI

Ashley Beccia

While the [TC-NTNU Professional Development Program in English-Medium Instruction](#) (TC-NTNU EMI) concluded in October 2025, its impact continues to ripple across higher education in Taiwan and beyond.

During the program, 21 university faculty members from across Taiwan took part in intensive training at Teachers College and then returned to their home institutions to complete capstone projects. Each participant began with a question, or “puzzle,” drawn from their own classrooms. These inquiries explored practical concerns such as why students hesitate to participate, how cooperative learning can be made more motivating, how flipped instruction functions in EMI courses, and how students use generative AI to support their academic work.

Participants presented their projects at the TC-NTNU EMI 2025 Symposium in Taipei, sharing what they had learned from examining their classrooms and testing new teaching strategies.



Dr. Li-Dan Shang presents her project at the TC-NTNU EMI 2025 Symposium.



Prof. Han interacting with professors from Taiwan during their intensive training at Teachers College.

Several of these studies are now being developed for *Exploratory Practice in English-Medium Instruction: A Collection of Studies*, an edited volume under contract with Cambridge Scholars Publishing and co-edited by Professor ZhaoHong Han, Professor Yeu-Ting (Tony) Liu, Ashley Beccia, and Liza Ostolaza. For example, Dr. Li-Dan Shang of Feng Chia University examines how collaborative reading can support students’ engagement with complex interdisciplinary texts in an EMI business course. The volume will also include an introductory chapter and a concluding synthesis.

The book marks an exciting milestone for the TC-NTNU community. By publishing research grounded in their own teaching contexts, members of the cohort are adding practitioner voices to wider EMI discussions. ■

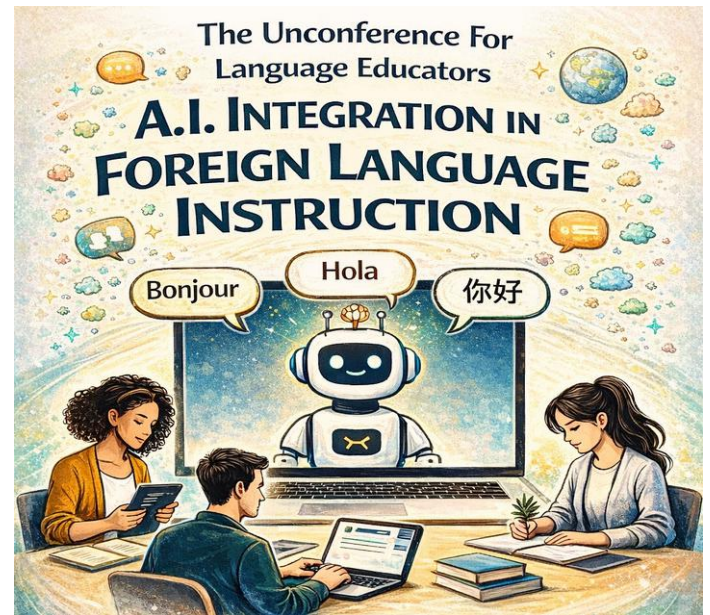
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SPROUTING IDEAS AT CIFLTE'S ANNUAL UNCONFERENCE FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

Zhizi (ZZ) Chen

Ideas shared at CIFLTE's annual event have taken root in classrooms and projects around the world.

At the 2nd Annual Unconference in April 2026, educators from more than 30 countries and regions gathered online to explore AI integration in foreign language instruction. Instead of listening to a fixed series of presentations, participants brought questions from their own teaching and worked through them in small groups. Conversations touched on how AI can support lesson planning, materials development, assessment, learner participation, and responsible classroom use.



Snippet of the flyer for the 2nd Annual Unconference.



Educators from around the world join the conversation at the 2nd Annual Unconference.

The contributions that follow show how participants have applied these ideas in their own contexts. Fenghua Zhao reflects on using AI-generated pictures in her

Chinese language teaching. Aicha Zammouri discusses ChatGPT as a support for Business English writing in Tunisian higher education. Rania Dachraoui describes how AI has helped her create more engaging, interactive lessons.

The Unconference has also planted the seeds for longer-term collaboration. At CIFLTE's inaugural Unconference in 2025, Xinyi Meng, Sansan Hu, and Silas Meredith met during a breakout discussion on storytelling. Their conversation continued after the event and eventually led to the publication of a children's book.

Keep reading to further explore how ideas exchanged at the Unconference have grown into new classroom practices and creative initiatives. ■

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REFLECTIONS ON USING AI-GENERATED PICTURES IN CHINESE CLASSES

Fenghua Zhao

I have been working with AI to design my course plans, especially in choosing course themes and topics, and I have found it very effective and efficient. Recently, I have also started using AI to generate pictures for my Chinese teaching materials and integrate them into my classes, especially in class activities.

I have two main reflections on using AI-generated pictures and applying them in my classes.

First, AI-generated pictures can help visualize teaching content in the classroom. They can support students' understanding of language input in a direct and effective way. These pictures not only help make language input more comprehensible, but also help students internalize more complex language input and produce more effective language output. This is especially helpful in classroom activities. AI-generated pictures can present a realistic communicative situation, helping students understand the purpose of the task and the language structures more quickly and accurately. As a result, students can complete authentic social communication tasks more smoothly, as well as acquire the language through dialogue.

Second, AI is not simply a teaching tool; it feels more like a partner working with me to complete a project. At the beginning of this process, I need to provide AI with clear goals for the picture, the language support students need, the setting of the

characters, and the visual style of the image. Once these key elements are clear, the picture generated by AI usually meets my basic requirements. However, I still need to check the text carefully, because there may be mistakes. I also need to observe whether the details of the picture are logical. Sometimes the direction of an action or other small details may not match common sense or natural habits. I also need to consider whether the overall image looks harmonious. During the revision process, I have found that giving clear and direct instructions helps AI produce more accurate results and saves time.



Fenghua attends the 2nd Annual Unconference.

I will use the pictures I designed for classroom activities in a task-based Chinese class for beginning-level adult learners as an example to show the process of generating and revising AI pictures at the end of this article. This example also shows how I gradually learned to give AI clearer instructions. At the beginning, because my instructions were not complete enough, I had to revise the pictures several times.

Continued on next page

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Through this experience, I learned how to communicate with AI more effectively. Later, when I created new pictures, the process became much smoother and more efficient, which saved me a lot of time. Although AI can be a great partner, mistakes are still unavoidable. Therefore, carefully reviewing the final product remains one of the teacher's most important responsibilities. For me, working with AI feels like playing a four-hand piano piece. When the music ends, people may not remember the two pairs of hands, but they will remember the beautiful melody that continues to echo in their ears. In language teaching, that melody is the learning experience we create for our students. ■



A picture Fenghua generated with AI to use in her Chinese language teaching. View the steps she followed to create the image [here](#).



Fenghua Zhao is a Chinese language instructor at CIFLTE, Teachers College, Columbia University. She focuses on helping learners naturally acquire real-world Chinese through TBLT and comprehensible input. She completed CIFLTE's TCSOL Certificate Program in 2024–25.

FROM ASSISTANCE TO AUTONOMY: INTEGRATING CHATGPT IN BUSINESS ENGLISH WRITING FOR L2 STUDENTS IN TUNISIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Aicha Zammouri

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence is reshaping higher education worldwide, particularly in language learning. In Tunisian universities, where English is increasingly linked to academic mobility, employability, and international communication, incorporating digital tools

into English language teaching has become both relevant and necessary. Among these tools, ChatGPT offers meaningful opportunities for enhancing Business English writing instruction for L2 learners.

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As an ESL teacher and researcher in Tunis, my work centers on integrating ChatGPT into the teaching and learning of Business English writing. Rather than viewing AI as a replacement for teachers, I approach it as an intelligent guide that supports learners throughout the writing process while fostering autonomy, confidence, and engagement.

In Business English courses, many students struggle with idea generation, organization, academic tone, vocabulary selection, and grammatical accuracy. ChatGPT can address these challenges through brainstorming activities, drafting support, vocabulary enrichment, reformulation, and personalized feedback. When used critically and ethically, the tool encourages students to shift from passive learners to active participants in their own learning journey.

Classroom experience shows that ChatGPT can significantly boost student motivation and participation, especially among learners who hesitate to write in English for fear of making mistakes. Through guided interaction with AI, students become more willing to experiment with language, revise their drafts, and develop professional communication skills aligned with real-world business contexts.

Integrating AI into language education, however, requires thoughtful pedagogical guidance. Students must learn to evaluate AI-generated content critically, avoid overreliance, and uphold academic integrity. The teacher's role therefore remains central not only as an instructor, but as a facilitator of digital literacy, critical thinking, and responsible AI use.

In the Tunisian higher education context, ChatGPT integration represents an opportunity to modernize language teaching and bridge the gap between traditional instruction and the evolving demands of the digital era. It supports a more interactive, learner-centered approach while preparing students for professional environments where AI-assisted communication is becoming the norm.

The question is no longer whether AI should enter the classroom, but how educators can integrate it meaningfully, ethically, and effectively to enrich learning outcomes. By combining human pedagogy with AI-supported guidance, Business English instruction can become more accessible, dynamic, and empowering for second language learners in Tunisia. ■



Aicha Zammouri is an ESL teacher and researcher specializing in the integration of Artificial Intelligence in language education. Her research focuses on the use of ChatGPT in teaching Business English writing for L2 students in Tunisian higher education. She is particularly interested in learner autonomy, digital pedagogy, academic writing, and AI-assisted language learning.

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LEVERAGING AI TO ENHANCE STUDENT INTERACTION IN THE CLASSROOM

Rania Dachraoui

Since attending CIFLTE's Unconference with teachers and teacher-trainers from different parts of the world, I have noticed an improvement in my teaching practice. I now have a clearer understanding of how to integrate artificial intelligence into my teaching practice and how to build a more interactive classroom environment. I have already begun applying these ideas in my lessons, and I can see a positive change. My students are becoming more motivated, more engaged, and they genuinely enjoy the sessions. ■



Rania Dachraoui is an English language teacher in Tunisia with several years of experience working with learners at various educational levels.

A COLLABORATION SPROUTED AT THE UNCONFERENCE 2025

Xinyi Meng, Sansan Hu & Silas Meredith

The three of us met each other last year at the CIFLTE Unconference during a group conversation about stories. We enjoyed talking to each other so much that we decided to embark on a project together. Silas and his wife Gemma had written a bilingual children's book about Dracula to help kids and parents practice Spanish and English. The new project was to make a bilingual version of the book in English and Mandarin. Since Mandarin is so different from English and Spanish, the translation posed some new challenges. We're very proud of the book!

You can check it out [here](#). ■

Xinyi Meng is a multilingual program specialist and Mandarin teacher based in Columbia, South Carolina. She loves to connect with language learners and educators around the world.

Sansan Hu is a Chinese language educator in New York. She is an alumna of CIFLTE's TCSOL Certificate Program (2023–24).

Silas Meredith and his wife Dr. Gemma Moya Galé created THIS-MEANS-THAT books because of their love for learning languages, and because they want to pass that love on to their son Thomas.

CIFLTE COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MIKIE NISHIYAMA



Mikie (center) receives her TESOL certificate from CIFLTE in Osaka.

Mikie Nishiyama is an alumna of CIFLTE's TESOL Certificate Program in Osaka (2024). She is currently an associate professor in the Postgraduate School of Tokyo Healthcare University and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Tokyo. She has an M.A. in Linguistics from the University of London, an M.A. from Kyoto University, and an M.A. from the University of Tokyo. She is in charge of the graduate-level English for academic purposes course and undergraduate-level English courses at Tokyo Healthcare University. Her current research focuses on the appropriate use of AI translation and generative AI tools in the writing of foreign language learners and the assessment of their written output.

Mikie's Reflection on the Impact of CIFLTE's Summer Certificate Program

Participating in the TESOL Certificate Program gave me valuable opportunities to engage in academic discussions in English with peers from diverse international backgrounds. For our final project, my classmates and I developed and presented a proposal on integrating AI into English language teaching. This experience strengthened my confidence in presenting my research at international conferences and broadened my perspective as both an educator and a scholar. The high-quality instruction I received from the faculty at Teachers College, Columbia University, also deepened my understanding of the importance of conducting research that contributes to the broader field of English language education. These experiences continue to shape my teaching and research in AI-assisted English language education.

Select Publications & Presentations

Nishiyama, M. (2026). 「生成AIによる英語ライティング自動評価と人手評価の観点別一致度の検証」 [Criterion-level alignment between generative AI and human assessment in English writing]. In Y. Matsuoka (Supervisor) & S. Yoshida (Ed.), *AIと大学英語教育：次のステージへ* [AI and university English education: Toward the next stage] (pp. 41–60). Kinseido.

Nishiyama, M., & Matsuda, N. (2025). Insights into the appropriate use of machine translation in foreign language learning. *JACET Journal*, 69, 113–129.

Nishiyama, M. (2025, November). A comparative analysis of human and AI-based assessment in EFL writing [Conference presentation]. GenAI Conference, The Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom. ■

CIFLTE COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: YAN (WENCY) ZHANG



Wency introduces her Chinese language learning channel on YouTube.

Yan (Wency) Zhang is an alumna of CIFLTE's TCSOL Certificate Program in Osaka (2021). She is the founder of InnoMandarin, a Chinese language learning channel on YouTube. On the channel, she posts two types of videos. In the first type, she offers comprehensible input to learners by providing contextualized, multimodal input. For example, in one video, she conducts a cooking demonstration, explaining each step aloud alongside subtitles in Chinese or pinyin. In the second type, she introduces learners to Chinese characters, using pictorial enhancements to support the retention of the characters in their memory.

Find Wency on YouTube at [@InnoMandarin](https://www.youtube.com/@InnoMandarin).

Wency's Reflection on the Impact of CIFLTE's Summer Certificate Program

CIFLTE introduced a non-traditional approach to language teaching, similar to my prior English learning, which has enabled me to communicate effectively from zero within two years. I applied it to teach Mandarin, but lacked the theoretical grounding until I underwent CIFLTE's training. The TCSOL Certificate Program inspired me to incorporate cutting-edge pedagogical methods into my Chinese instruction, such as teaching through scenarios rather than grammar, and to create practical materials. ■



Watch a sample [video](#) from Wency's InnoMandarin series.

CIFLTE COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SELECT PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS



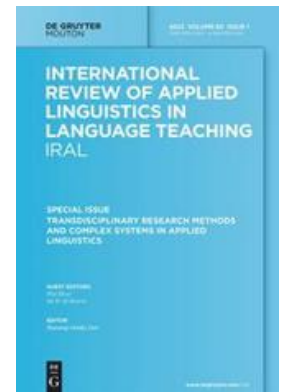
Quasi-experimental research in digital language learning
ZhaoHong Han* et al.



Foreign language instruction at a crossroads: Human instruction alone or AI integration?
ZhaoHong Han*



L2 Chinese Grammatical Acquisition and Processing: A Substantive and Methodological Review
Shaohua Fang* et al.



How frequency and L2 proficiency moderate the congruency effect in collocational processing? Evidence from L2 Chinese learners in an acceptability judgment task
Xiaolong Lu, Shaohua Fang*, & Xiaoyu Liu



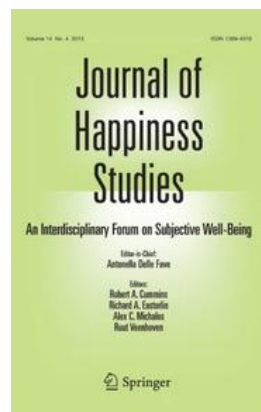
Task complexity, motivation and young learner agency
Ashley Beccia*

On the nascency of ChatGPT in foreign language teaching and learning (colloquium presentation)
Shaohua Fang* & ZhaoHong Han*



An interview with APPLE Lecture speaker Dr. Steven Thorne
Ashley Beccia* et al.

It takes two to tango: A longitudinal mixed-methods investigation of human-AI co-adaptation across iterative dialogues
Zhizi Chen* & Liza Melanie Ostolaza



Gendered language and female subjective well-being: An inquiry into the socio-psychological outcomes of linguistic structure
Shi Cheng & Weiguo Zhang*



Meet the Authors

- * **Prof. ZhaoHong Han**, CIFLTE Director
- * **Dr. Shaohua Fang**, Former CIFLTE Fellow
- * **Dr. Weiguo Zhang**, Former CIFLTE Research Associate
- * **Ashley Beccia**, CIFLTE Academic Coordinator
- * **Zhizi (ZZ) Chen**, CIFLTE Academic Coordinator

LOOKING AHEAD

SUMMER 2027 OFFERINGS

Next summer, CIFLTE will offer two intensive, cutting-edge professional development programs for current and aspiring language educators worldwide. Through the **Online TCSOL/TESOL Dual Certificate Program**, running from May 24 to June 11, participants may pursue a certificate in TCSOL, TESOL, or both.

The **TESOL Certificate Program**, held from July 26 to August 6 at Osaka Gakuin University, will engage participants in research-informed, project-based learning.

Applications now open. Learn more by visiting tc.columbia.edu/ciflte or scanning the QR code below. ■



Professor Lening Liu teaches in CIFLTE's Summer Certificate Program in Osaka, Japan.

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- Sign up for the CIFLTE Community Listserv: tinyurl.com/CIFLTE-listserv
- Visit our website: tc.columbia.edu/ciflte



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