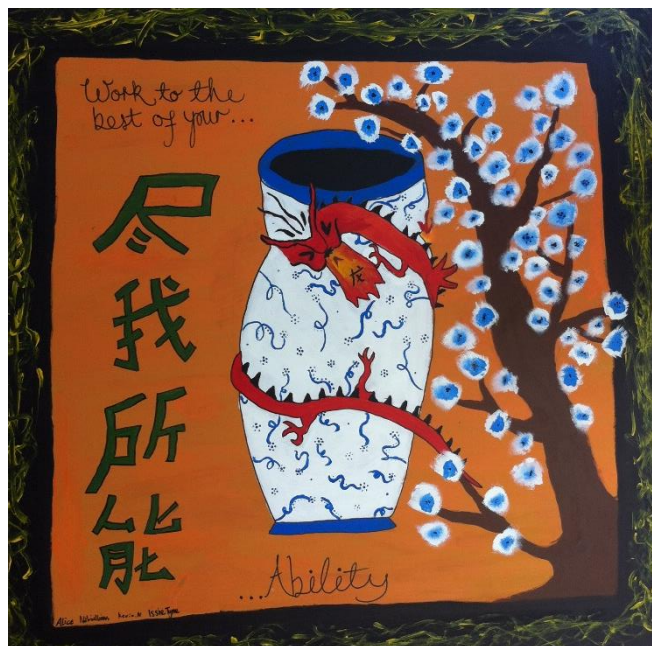




The teaching of Chinese in the UK

Research report



Teresa Tinsley and Kathryn Board

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Any errors or omissions in the research or in this report are entirely the authors' responsibility.

Note on terminology

Following the practice of the commissioning organisations, the term 'Chinese' rather than 'Mandarin' is used throughout this report. All acronyms used are also given in full in the first instance and all specialist educational terminology is also provided in full the first time it appears in the text.

'We should respect the history and the fruits of other peoples' intellect in order to build a true foundation for friendship'

Tim Clissold, Peony Capital

'Chinese is different, but in a good way'

Young learner

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Executive summary

In order to support the broader goal of deepening and strengthening the cultural and economic links between the UK and China, it is the ambition of the UK Government to double the number of Chinese learners, particularly in schools and among young people, by 2020. This component of the report researched the teaching of Chinese at school level in the four nations of the UK. It is designed to provide a picture of current provision for Chinese to serve as a baseline for future developments and to set out the opportunities for Chinese within developing educational policies. It looks at the issues faced by teachers, head teachers and pupils and analyses the factors which enable Chinese teaching to be successfully embedded within the school curriculum as well as the barriers to future expansion.

The report is intended to provide rich data and evidence to support policymaking in both the UK and China, and to enable educators to have access to information and insights on what is working and what is not working in schools across the UK.

The report is based on extensive desk and field research undertaken during the period April to June 2014 and collected via pupil questionnaires, lesson observations and interviews with teachers, head teachers and a large number of other key informants. The report also analyses examination statistics and provides an overview of the latest relevant psycholinguistic and neuro-linguistic research in relation to Chinese. It notes the ongoing expansion of the Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms and sets out the support available for the expansion of Chinese from Hanban and the British Council, teacher training institutions, and voluntary organisations and the commercial sector.

Key findings and recommendations

The report's key overall finding is that there is currently a very fertile context for the development of Chinese in the UK, but that a more strategic approach is required in order to ensure that the opportunities are fully exploited and that investment leads to effective and sustainable development. Only Scotland has a strategy in place which is able to channel investment and resources into activities which are likely to deliver sustainable growth in the number of schools able to offer Chinese teaching.

Teacher supply is identified as the most pressing issue and a key recommendation is the development of a permanent UK-based teaching force: there is over-reliance currently on temporary teachers from China who are unable to fulfil all schools' needs if Chinese is to have a full place in the curriculum. The report recommends that action should be taken to ensure that more training places are available for those who wish to train as teachers of Chinese.

In order to increase numbers of learners throughout the UK and so derive the benefits of increased cultural and economic contacts with China, action should be taken to ensure that Chinese can be a realistic choice for head teachers as one of the foreign languages their schools can offer. This will require that the supply of qualified teachers, training opportunities, resources, assessment systems, and progression for learners - match in quality and suitability – if not yet in quantity – those available for the most widely taught languages.

The report puts forward a framework of seven key objectives with recommendations within each mapped to different groups of stakeholders. These are:

Policy-focused recommendations:

1. Align high level aspirations with appropriately-targeted and resourced action on the ground
2. Build a UK-based teaching force for Chinese in UK school systems
3. Coordinate efforts and monitor the success of the strategy

Recommendations relating to teaching and learning:

4. Provide a coherent 'learning journey' for pupils starting in primary school or in the first years of secondary school through to higher education
5. Develop capacity in the management of Chinese in UK school systems
6. Develop a body of expertise and shared professional understanding in the teaching of Chinese language and culture in a UK context

And:

7. Provide advocacy for Chinese to enhance appreciation of the benefits of a knowledge of Chinese language and culture amongst pupils, parents, teachers, school leaders and the general public.

The policy context for the development of Chinese

The report notes that in English speaking countries the position of English as a global lingua franca gives rise to particular challenges for the learning other languages. This is partly because there is no obvious single language which everyone should learn. Previous research into the development of Chinese teaching in the UK has highlighted the challenges in moving from an 'enrichment' to a 'mainstream' subject and the lack of a centrally-directed vision. Previous studies both in the UK and in Australia have highlighted the importance of adequate curriculum time, appropriate teacher training and smooth transition between educational phases. The motivations of pupils and the attitudes of their parents are also identified as important considerations.

The policy contexts for the development of Chinese are different across the four nations of the UK:

In England, the introduction of compulsory language teaching at Key Stage 2 from September 2014 presents a real opportunity for a sustained language learning experience for all English pupils, however England has a poor record of language learning compared to other European countries. Issues in relation to public examinations such as GCSE and A level are among the factors deterring young people from opting to study a language and Chinese ranks 8th in terms of the numbers of pupils entering for a GCSE in a language. However, there is a thriving supplementary sector in England which ensures that many pupils from Chinese speaking homes are literate in Chinese and gain qualifications in the language. Radical reforms to the system of initial teacher training (ITT) and a lack of training places for those wishing to become teachers of Chinese present serious challenges in increasing the numbers of qualified teachers able to teach Chinese.

In Northern Ireland pupils are only required to learn a language between the ages of 11 and 14 though as many as 57% of primary schools in Northern Ireland also give pupils an experience of language learning (usually as extra-curricular activity). The number of pupils taking a language at Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16) has declined significantly since languages were made optional at this Key Stage. Any non-European language being offered in secondary schools must be offered in addition to one of the main European languages and this limits likely take up. It is not possible to train to be a teacher of Chinese in Northern Ireland.

Scotland's education system differs significantly from that of the other UK countries. Its long term strategic China Plan and the adoption of the European '1+2' approach to the teaching of languages means that it has the systems in place to develop its capacity in Chinese. Languages have been a part of upper primary education in Scotland for many years and teacher education in Chinese is available at a number of universities in Scotland. The numbers of places are set to increase over the next few years.

Wales is a bilingual nation (Welsh/English) but performs the least well in terms of take up of other languages of any of the four UK countries. Like Northern Ireland, the study of a foreign language is only compulsory between the ages of 11 and 14. Lack of compulsion, severe grading and a considerable increase in the number of subjects of study available to pupils are cited as some of the reasons for the very low take up of languages at Key Stage 4. It is not possible to train to become a teacher of Chinese in Wales.

Strategic action to develop the teaching of Chinese in UK schools

Hanban and the British Council are leading efforts to raise the profile of Chinese in UK schools and to increase the numbers of pupils in primary and secondary schools learning Chinese. There is increasing interest in Chinese language and culture from a wide range of voluntary and commercial organisations including publishers, educational trusts and professional associations. However, efforts lack coordination and there is some duplication lack of clarity for end-users. A single source of coordination, support and training for the teaching of Chinese would improve the effectiveness of investments made. Efforts from China and Chinese institutions in the UK need to be matched by a coherent response from the UK authorities, led by a UK institution.

In view of its experience in receiving and training incoming teachers, in organising educational visits to China, in developing materials for schools and in providing advocacy for languages, and its UK-wide remit, the British Council is best placed to provide the co-ordination that is needed and to drive the strategy for Chinese on behalf of UK authorities. It should be tasked with establishing a coordinating group and with providing the UK-based leadership which is crucial if efforts to expand and improve the teaching of Chinese are to be most effective. Its role should include ensuring that effective practice and lessons learned in each of the UK nations can be shared and developed further.

Baseline data on the teaching of Chinese in UK schools

Only a very few primary schools are teaching Chinese in a systematic and structured way. However an increasing number are incorporating elements of Chinese language and culture into their curricula as part of topic work, language days or celebrations such as Chinese New Year. The presence of Confucius Classrooms is having an impact on the number of primary schools able to offer their pupils some experience of Chinese.

There are indications that both the number of schools teaching Chinese and the number of learners studying it are increasing - albeit very gradually from a low base. The rate of increase is faster in Scotland than in England. In Wales and Northern Ireland Chinese teaching is in the very early stages. In England there is a very mixed picture of provision and the subject is much more likely to be offered as an extra-curricular subject than as a mainstream option.

Over 10,000 learners in UK schools sat examinations in Chinese in 2013. A disproportionate number of these come from the English independent sector, which accounts for 44% of English GCSE entries (from end of Key Stage 4 pupils) and 71% of English A level entries (16-18 year olds). Entry figures for A level are anomalous and believed to be skewed by the large number of native speaker Chinese pupils taking the exam in the independent sector. Exam entries for Chinese tend not to show the exceptional skew towards female candidates seen in entries for other languages. In England, more boys than girls take GCSE Chinese.

Academic perspectives

Psycholinguistic studies of native speakers of Chinese support the view that the learning of Chinese by non-native speakers will be more successful if teaching starts early and includes the learning of characters from the start.

Neuroimaging research shows that reading Chinese activates different parts of the brain from those involved in reading English.

Despite widely-held views that the grammar and structure of Chinese present few problems to those learning it as a foreign language, a number of complex features of the language have been identified as likely to cause consistent difficulties to learners. This suggests that the subject knowledge needed by teachers of Chinese goes beyond simple native speaker competence.

Research suggests that some explicit teaching of tones is needed in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

Learner perceptions

Pupils learning Chinese are more likely say they enjoy their lessons than pupils learning other languages, and particularly so in the case of boys.

Although the vast majority of all pupils think that Chinese is hard compared to other languages, there is some evidence that this perception may be exaggerated – the perception of Chinese as a difficult subject is less marked in learners who are actually studying the subject than those who are not. Where pupils are well-taught and there is sufficient curriculum time available, they derive considerable satisfaction from ‘cracking the code’.

Teaching and learning

Most informants felt strongly that characters (both recognition and writing) should be introduced from the beginning, in order to give pupils time to assimilate a sufficient number to progress beyond the early stages. When taken at an appropriate pace, pupils enjoy learning and writing characters. Similarly, most felt that pinyin are a necessary part of the skill set as well as useful support, but should not predominate or be a substitute for the learning of characters.

Whilst all teachers want to instil good pronunciation and provide learners with correct models of tones as part of this, many believe that tones are not crucial to understanding and should not be over-emphasised at the expense of progression in other areas.

Many of the methods successfully used to teach Chinese are similar to those used by UK teachers of other languages; however, there is some evidence that in the case of Chinese, teachers may provide more explicit discussion of the distinctive features of the language in English. Active learning methods used for other languages work equally effectively with Chinese and are appreciated by learners.

All teachers thought that English was necessary to explain features of the language and culture to pupils, and in some cases to translate words. There is some evidence that this practice is more widespread in the teaching of Chinese than in the teaching other languages. However, greater use of the target language could perhaps be made for classroom routines and standard interaction, as was witnessed in a number of schools by the researchers.

Despite some useful framework documentation in Scotland, there is not yet a clear shared understanding of progression – how to describe different levels of competence, how to enable learners to reach them and find out whether they have.

The teaching of the culture is sometimes dealt with very superficially, particularly in ‘taster’ and ‘enrichment’ activities. There is insufficient development of the potential for Chinese to contribute to developing generic intercultural competences.

The presence of native speaker teachers or assistants from China could be more effectively exploited to support classroom teachers. The research observed little team teaching. Training focussing on techniques for using the native speaker within the classroom could help to ensure that Chinese

native speakers from China and UK-trained and experienced practitioners are effectively deployed to benefit learners.

There are rich opportunities for further research on methods and approaches which are effective in different UK contexts and other variables affecting UK learners.

System-level barriers and enabling factors

Head teachers of schools where Chinese is taught are convinced that it makes an important contribution to pupils' broader educational attainment and to their understanding of the world. This vision is key to developing and sustaining the subject in schools.

Teacher supply is a major barrier preventing the language becoming more strongly embedded within the school system. UK-trained and experienced teachers of Chinese are vital for enabling Chinese to become fully embedded in the school curriculum and facilitating the best use of temporary staff coming from China. UK teachers who are not specialists in Chinese require considerable support and training in order to be able to teach the language successfully. Problems with visas and adaptation to the UK context are among factors currently limiting the effectiveness of temporary staff from China.

For Chinese to be successfully embedded in a school, sufficient curriculum time must be allocated over a sustained period – there are schools already providing innovative models of how this can be achieved.

The current rapidly-developing status of language teaching within the primary curriculum in England and Scotland constitutes an important opportunity and enabling factor for developing Chinese.

Most English secondary schools teaching Chinese apply some sort of selection by ability; this may limit expansion by reinforcing the perception that learning Chinese is only suitable for a small number of pupils with special talents. In schools where the language is well-established, Chinese has found a place alongside other languages taught. However, there can be tensions with teachers of other languages when Chinese is introduced in a high profile way which is perceived to sideline other languages.

The potential for Chinese to appeal to different types of learner may provide opportunities for more pupils to derive success and satisfaction from language learning.

There is a shortage of accreditation for the early stages of learning Chinese (Scotland excluded) and a widespread view that the current A level Chinese is skewed towards native speakers and therefore not suitable for those learning the language from scratch in school.

Pupils' 'learning journeys' are at risk of being disrupted at a number of points within the system, notably when they move from primary to secondary school or into the Sixth Form from a school which caters only for pupils up to the age of 16. Access to degree courses for those who have studied Chinese at school, which was identified as a problem in the past, has now been resolved.

Parental attitudes can also be a crucial enabling factor. Parents are most strongly supportive of their children learning Chinese in those schools working in more privileged circumstances and where there are high aspirations overall for their children's success.

The outreach work to other schools undertaken by Confucius Classrooms, while valuable in its own right, does not always provide the best opportunities for sustained expansion.

Links with business, with partner schools in China or with Chinese communities in the UK are under-developed and could provide valuable support Chinese teaching in schools.

Factors which contribute to the effective development of Chinese in schools

I. Systems

- Chinese is fully embedded alongside other languages being taught in the school
- The school has a long term strategic commitment to developing the teaching of Chinese and all staff and parents have bought into the benefits of Chinese
- The school makes full and effective use of collaboration with partners
- The school works to ensure effective transition between educational phases through outreach work and supports learners' journeys from primary through to university
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities
- There is sufficient curriculum time to enable pupils to make good progress in their study of Chinese

II. Teachers

- The teacher(s) of Chinese is/are able to provide an excellent linguistic model as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for pupils studying in the context of the UK
- The school provides training placements for the new teachers of Chinese
- The school ensures that all teachers teaching Chinese are well networked with others in the same situation and that they have appropriate professional development (CPD)
- The teacher of Chinese is able to stimulate pupils' interest in Chinese culture and to develop their ability to appreciate and think critically about different cultures.

III. Innovative Approaches

- The use of an immersion (CLIL) approach ensures that a large amount of curriculum time is given over to Chinese so that pupils can make good progress with the language
- The IDL (interdisciplinary learning) approach allows pupils to learn Chinese through cross curricular projects which extends the curriculum time available and encourages learning in realistic contexts
- The use of team teaching and IT can be invaluable in providing access to good linguistic models.
- A short but daily lesson in Chinese can be highly effective where curriculum time is under pressure. Regular exposure to the language helps learning
- A whole school approach in which many different departments contribute to the pupils' knowledge of China and Chinese can be particularly effective when curriculum time is under pressure

- Providing pupils of Chinese heritage with the opportunity to gain qualifications in Chinese ensures a steady supply of bilingual/bi-literate and bicultural young people who can use their language skills for higher education and work

IV. *Pupil Motivation*

- There is a recognition that commitment to the language must also involve an exploration and appreciation of the culture which goes beyond superficial images and descriptions
- Early success with language learning demonstrated through success in examinations like YCT can be a motivating factor
- Creative use of a wide range of resources including traditional “rewards” from China, IT, age appropriate textbooks and self-made materials/activities drawing on resources both from China and the UK can be stimulating to pupils
- Where parents are actively engaged by the school in the value of their children learning Chinese, the levels of pupil motivation are generally higher

Recommendations

The recommendations are targeted at a relatively small group of stakeholders who have the remit and the expertise to act strategically. They do not presuppose a large investment of additional resources, but the implementation of a more strategic approach in order to make better use of those currently available. They are directed in particular at UK central government and the four education departments, at the Confucius network of institutes and classrooms and at Hanban and British Council, who commissioned this report. There are also specific recommendations for examining bodies, teacher training providers, university Chinese departments and schools teaching Chinese.

Three key recommendations need to be put in place as a pre-condition for success. These are:

- Adopt a strategic and collaborative approach to the development of Chinese and ensure that investment and resources are focused on achieving shared aims. Establish a coordinating group to guide and develop the strategy.
- Provide an increasing number of teacher training places for teachers of Chinese, with incentives to schools and other providers if necessary.
- Develop a body of expertise and shared professional understanding in the teaching of Chinese language and culture in a UK context

Introduction

Aims

This report has been jointly commissioned by the British Council, China and the Confucius Institute Headquarters/Hanban who are working together on an initiative to develop Chinese language capacity in the UK as a means of supporting deeper and broader cultural, educational and economic links between the UK and China.

The British Council's report 'Languages for the Future', published in November 2013, identified Chinese as one of the ten most important languages to the UK over the next 20 years. The report revealed that the UK has a shortage of people able to speak those languages which are so important for the country's future prosperity and global standing. The ten languages were chosen based on a number of economic, geopolitical, cultural and educational factors including the needs of UK businesses, the UK's overseas trade targets, diplomatic and security priorities and presence on the internet.

It is the ambition of the UK Government to double the number of Chinese learners, particularly in schools and among young people by 2020.

The research exercise was divided into 2 components. The first component looked at why the UK needs Chinese speakers, what is the nature of the need and to what extent the UK is able to meet that need given the current structures and education provision. This report from the second component focuses specifically on education and analyses educational policy in the four nations of the UK; effective learning environments and obstacles as well enablers to effective learning. It seeks to set out the current extent of Chinese teaching in primary and secondary schools in each of the four nations and the opportunities for development within the current policy context. It looks at the issues faced by teachers head teachers and pupils and analyses the factors which enable Chinese to be successfully embedded within the school curriculum. This component also makes a set of recommendations aimed at policymakers and providers and includes a number of case studies to illustrate the learning of Chinese in practice in different contexts throughout the UK.

There are a number of target audiences for whom this research will prove useful. Policy makers both in the UK and China will have rich data available to them to inform future strategic decisions and policies affecting the bilateral relationship between China and the UK, the development of trade between our two countries and the way in which we educate young people in the UK to participate fully in future collaboration and to support the cultural understanding between us.

Educators will have access to a detailed picture of policy and practice and be able to make informed decisions about the teaching of Chinese to young people across the UK. They will be able to see clearly what is working and what is not working in schools and to understand how to overcome obstacles which might occur as they work to develop sustainable and outstanding teaching of Chinese in a school environment.

Methodology

Approach

The research for the 2nd component covered three major strands:

1. Learning – focus on pupil attitudes
2. Teaching – focus on teaching methodology and resources
3. Enabling factors and obstacles – focus on system level factors and the wider policy environment.

These three strands corresponded to three main target groups for the collection of data: pupils, teachers and schools, to provide a 360° perspective on the key issues related to this research.

Research methods

The following research methods were employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data for this report:

Desk research:

- Desk research into educational policy, educational systems and academic research into effective learning of Chinese
- Compilation of data from the British Council, Hanban and other sources on primary and schools thought to be teaching Chinese
- Analysis of national statistics (e.g. examination data) and surveys to produce quantitative and qualitative data on the teaching of languages in the four UK nations and on Chinese in particular

Field research:

- Semi-structured interviews with teachers of Chinese, head teachers and Heads of Language Departments
- Focus groups of pupils learning Chinese
- Lesson observations
- Questionnaires for pupils studying Chinese and for those studying other languages
- In-depth face to face and telephone interviews with a wide range of key stakeholders and influencers (see list as Appendix 1)

Other:

- Feedback from key stakeholders who attended a workshop at which preliminary findings were shared and discussed.

Process

The research took place during the period April to June 2014.

In order to interview teachers and head teachers, to observe lessons and to gather data from pupils, the research set up visits with eight schools teaching Chinese representing different contexts

throughout the UK. Criteria for the selection of schools included having provided Chinese teaching for at least two full academic years, having a longer term commitment to the teaching of Chinese, and having a reasonable sample of pupils learning the language as a curriculum subject (rather than as an ‘enrichment’ subject or as a lunchtime or afterschool club.)

The list of schools to visit was drawn up by the project team to include both primary and secondary schools, to represent the state, the independent and the voluntary (supplementary) sectors, and with coverage across the four nations of the UK. Advice was taken from Confucius Institutes in the four nations as to which schools to visit. Three schools in England, three in Scotland and one each in Northern Ireland and Wales were selected for visits, all of which agreed to take part in the research. Subsequently, a ninth school was visited in England, in order to provide further evidence of Chinese teaching in primary schools. All visits took place during May and June 2014.

Research instruments were developed by the project team including semi-structured interview questions, questionnaires for pupils learning and not learning Chinese, and lesson observation sheets. The pupil questionnaires were supplied in advance to schools, with the request for them to be completed by at least two classes of pupils in each school. Two researchers visited undertook a day’s visit to each school (except for two of the schools in Scotland which were visited on the same day.)

A list of individuals and representatives of key organisations was drawn up to act as a ‘reference group’ for the research and these were interviewed face to face or by telephone at various points during the research period. As the research developed, other individuals and organisations were identified as important sources of evidence and opinion and these too were interviewed. A workshop was held at the British Council on 20 June 2014 at which preliminary findings were presented and discussed. Researchers also participated in two national conferences on the teaching of Chinese held during the project period.

The project team were in close contact with the commissioning organisations throughout the research period and provided weekly updates on progress.

Response

As a result of the research process, the research team was able to draw on formally-collected and documented evidence from the following, on which the present report is based:

- 440 pupil questionnaires
- 9 school visits
- 7 Head teacher interviews
- 5 interviews with Heads of Languages
- 7 learner focus groups
- 10 structured interviews with teachers of Chinese
- 17 lesson observations
- 28 interviews with other key informants including Confucius Institute directors, civil servants, publishers, teacher trainers and others as listed in Appendix 1.
- exam statistics from the UK and China
- secondary sources including published academic literature and previous research reports
- a specially-constructed data base of nearly 500 schools

Structure of the report

The report is divided into three parts which cover:

Part 1: The context for the development of Chinese in the UK

Part 2: Research findings

Part 3: Effective practice in the teaching of Chinese in UK schools.

Part 1 starts by looking at previous studies into Chinese teaching in English-speaking countries including those commissioned by the English Department for Education. It reviews the work of Jane Orton at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education on the Australian experience of developing the teaching of Chinese. It then looks at the educational policy environment in each of the four UK nations and how this impacts on the teaching of languages. It provides an overview of the current situation of Chinese in relation to other languages taught in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It sets out the support available for the teaching of Chinese, including programmes and resources provided by Hanban and the British Council and the role of voluntary and commercial organisations. It also looks at the availability of initial teacher training and resources for the teaching of Chinese.

Part 2 examines data from surveys of schools and examination statistics on the situation of Chinese in the UK. It seeks to establish baseline figures on the number of primary and secondary schools thought to be teaching the language, and looks at trends in pupil numbers taking public examinations. It also provides a review of some relevant academic literature in relation to the teaching of Chinese including psycholinguistic and neuro-linguistic research into how Chinese is learned. It then focusses on the three major strands of research undertaken: learners, teachers, and system-level issues in relation to the teaching of Chinese. It looks at pupil and parental attitudes towards Chinese, the profile of teachers of Chinese and methods and approaches observed. It also covers the perceptions of head teachers and teachers of other languages as well as wider issues such as teacher supply and the 'learner journey' from primary to university.

Part 3 presents analysis of what constitutes effective practice in the teaching of Chinese in UK schools. It identifies factors which contribute to the effective development of Chinese teaching and presents ten case studies of schools including primary, secondary, independent and state schools working in different contexts across the UK.

Conclusions from the research are presented as issues emerging which are helping or hindering the expansion of the Chinese to greater numbers of learners, and recommendations for different groups of stakeholders lead on from these.

Part 1 – The context for the development of Chinese in the UK

1. English speaking countries and Chinese

Key Points

- In English speaking countries the position of English as a global lingua franca gives rise to particular challenges for the learning other languages. This is partly because there is no obvious single language which everyone should learn.
- Previous research into the development of Chinese teaching in the UK has highlighted the challenges in moving Chinese from an ‘enrichment’ to a ‘mainstream’ subject as well as the lack of a centrally-directed vision.

All English speaking countries face challenges with regard to the learning of languages. The wide acceptance of English as a global language and lingua franca for politics, business and trade, means that it can be difficult to convince native English speaking citizens of the need to learn other languages whether for employment or leisure. Policy makers face complex decisions about which languages should be learned and why as well as how to distribute resources effectively across a number of languages. One disadvantage of providing opportunities for school age children to study a wide range of languages for learning is the difficulty of developing a unified and coherent approach across the different phases of education which can assure continuity for learners¹. However, it would also be a difficult task for the government of any English-speaking nation to prescribe a language which all schools should teach because there is no overwhelming case for a focus on a single language.

Economic growth is a key priority for the current UK government. Its route map to ‘strong, sustainable and balanced growth’ published in late 2010, identified international trade, export promotion and attracting investment into the UK as priorities for action² and its 2011 ‘Plan for Growth’ highlighted the English language as ‘an intrinsic strength’ in achieving this³. However, the value and benefits of a workforce skilled to work in other languages receives no mention and it is perhaps the reason behind this omission which is at the heart of the issues affecting commitment to the learning of languages in the UK.

To a greater or lesser extent the challenges described above resonate in all 4 of the UK countries and affect not only the national capability in languages but also limit economic competitiveness at a time when global trade and investment have never been more important.

¹ Teresa Tinsley and Therese Comfort, *Lessons from Abroad* (CfBT, 2012)

<http://www.cfbt.com/evidenceforeducation/our_research/evidence_for_government/international_policy_reforms/published_research_reports/lessons_from_abroad.aspx> [accessed 17 October 2012].

² HM Treasury/BIS, *The Plan for Growth*, 2011.

³HM Treasury/BIS. Ibid.

A number of research studies have focussed on particular issues in relation to the teaching of Chinese in the UK⁴. These included teacher supply, coordinated vision and strategy, qualifications and assessment, progression, the lack of classroom based research. A report by CILT, the National Centre for Languages which was commissioned and published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, now DfE) in 2007, identified the following issues:

- 40% of schools offering Chinese did so as an extra-curricular option only and there were significant barriers for schools in moving to providing Chinese teaching as a mainstream subject
- Concerns about the availability and suitability of qualifications, including the need for a lower level qualification than GCSE
- Teaching materials were regarded as poor
- Teacher supply of qualified teachers of Chinese: only 31% of schools offering Chinese had access to one
- Problems reported in sustaining pupil interest and motivation, in a context where languages were generally regarded as a hard subject.

The report, which surveyed local authorities as well as schools thought to be teaching Chinese, found that attitudes towards the teaching of Chinese were generally positive, except where the subject was seen to be in competition with other languages.

A further valuable piece of research into the teaching of Chinese in England was that led by the Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) consultancy firm in 2009, also commissioned by the DCSF⁵. The PWC team was charged with mapping activities taking place in primary and secondary schools for learning Chinese and about China, consulting with stakeholders and outlining a 'roadmap for delivery of an agreed option'. The report concluded that there was a need for a centrally directed vision, clear ownership of the agenda and coordination of activities that were currently being funded on a project-by-project basis. It noted especially that 'Appropriately skilled teachers are difficult to source and it requires considerable investment to build a languages department.' As a result of the PWC report the DCSF issued an invitation to tender for a coordinating body for Chinese, but the change of government in 2011 meant that the contract was never awarded.

⁴ Wang, L. & Higgins, L.T. (2008) Mandarin teaching in the UK in 2007: a brief report of teachers' and learners' views, *The Language Learning Journal*, 36:1, p.91-96. Zhang G. X. & Li, L. M. (2010). Chinese language teaching in the UK: present and future, *The Language Learning Journal*, 38:1, p.87-97. CILT, the National Centre for Languages (2007). Mandarin language learning, research report No. DCSF-RW019.

[Http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/research/cilt_activities/linguistic_diversity.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/research/cilt_activities/linguistic_diversity.aspx).

⁵ DCSF (2009). Mapping of resources and support for the teaching of Chinese culture, history, language and current affairs.

2. The Australian experience

Key Points

- Research into some of the barriers preventing more successful teaching of Chinese in Australia provides useful pointers for the United Kingdom.
- Recommendations from the Australian research highlight the importance of adequate curriculum time, appropriate teacher training and smooth transition between educational phases.
- The motivations of pupils and the attitudes of their parents are identified as important considerations.

The last decade has seen a number of researchers explore the development of Chinese learning in English speaking countries and the particular challenges faced by English speakers in learning Chinese. One of the leaders in this field is Jane Orton of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, whose research focusses on the development of Chinese in Australia and the United States⁶. She describes, for example, how the number of schools offering Chinese in the United States tripled between 2005 and 2008 with generous government funding and drive from the top although the sustainability of the developments was still uncertain. She also describes Australia's development of separate assessment systems for English speakers and those of Chinese heritage in Australia and the establishment of a major national programme, The National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP). Orton and her colleagues at the Chinese Teacher Training Centre at the University of Melbourne have published widely on many aspects of Chinese learning, from the need for strategic vision and drive to the development of effective resources for the teaching of Chinese to native English speakers and support for the professional development of teachers.

Chinese has been one of the six most frequently taught languages in Australia for more than 20 years (although the smallest of the six) and the Australian Government has placed a high priority on Australians becoming 'Asia literate'.⁷ National curricula for primary and secondary levels have been developed along with a large body of resources for teaching the language. Separate assessment systems for English speakers of Chinese and Chinese heritage speakers have also been put in place.

Orton's 2008 research provides a detailed picture of the Australian experience in developing the learning of Chinese which is extremely useful to the nations of the UK which are still in the relatively early stages of developing their capability in Chinese, since it highlights both the high pupil dropout rates as well as the limited levels of linguistic proficiency reached by those who continue to learn

⁶ Orton, J. (2010). Chinese Language Teaching in Schools - Australia, USA and UK, On Line Opinion: Australia's e-journal of social and political debate. <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=10295&page=0>

⁷ Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Young Affairs (2008). Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians. http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf

Chinese.⁸ The report shows that 94% of those learning Chinese as an additional language drop out before Year 12 (17-18 years old), usually once the language is no longer compulsory with the result that by senior secondary school, the teaching and learning of Chinese in Australia is overwhelmingly a matter of Chinese teachers teaching Chinese to native speakers of Chinese.

According to Orton, one of the reasons why learners of Chinese as a foreign language abandon their study of the language is their lack of success in developing proficiency due to:

- the intrinsic difficulties of Chinese for an English speaking learner
- insufficient teaching of particular aspects of the language
- inadequate time for learning (according to Orton the Foreign Service Institute in Washington estimates that a native English speaker takes approximately 2200 hours to become proficient in Chinese compared to 600 hours in French).

Orton points to studies with learners of Chinese as a foreign language which show that the principal motivating factor which keeps learners engaged with the language is not that which may be described as 'Chinese is important for my future career' but rather the possibility of success and the fact that learning Chinese is something that they enjoy doing with classmates and teachers.

Orton reports that while English speaking teachers who can teach Chinese are highly sought after, many of them have limited proficiency in the language (in terms of phonological and grammatical accuracy as well as breadth of vocabulary and characters). Native speaker Chinese teachers, on the other hand, often have difficulties in relating well to Australian children and have difficulties in managing classes as a result of language, pedagogical and cultural barriers.

Orton's recommendations for improving the teaching of Chinese in Australia include:

- an increase in the number of hours available for the learning of the language
- a greater use of digital resources
- an increase in the number of opportunities to hear and use the language in real situations such as on language camps, visits to China etc.
- the opportunity for learners to continue learning Chinese at university
- ensuring that known difficulties are addressed in both pre-service and in-service teacher training
- effective transition between primary and secondary schools so that progression of learning is not interrupted
- tailoring solutions and initiatives to meet the need of the learners in question rather than seeking a 'one size fits all' solution.

An important aspect of Orton's research is her recognition of the importance that perceptions of the family and community have in motivating learners. She notes that parents often need help to ensure that their expectations about their children's learning are realistic and sustained.

⁸ Orton, J. (2008). Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools.
http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/verve/_resources/chinese_language_education_in_australian_schools_file.pdf

3. The policy environment

In the United Kingdom education policy is devolved to the administration of each of the four countries with some notable differences in the approaches to languages education. The sections which follow set out the situation for languages education in each of the four UK countries and show how the teaching of Chinese is being developed within each unique policy framework.

4. England

Key Points

- The introduction of compulsory language teaching at Key Stage 2 from September 2014 presents a real opportunity for a sustained language learning experience for all English pupils.
- England has a poor record of language learning compared to other European countries.
- Issues in relation to public examinations such as GCSE and A level are among the factors deterring young people from opting to study a language.
- Chinese ranks 8th in terms of the numbers of pupils entering for a GCSE in a language
- There is a thriving supplementary sector in England which ensures that many pupils from Chinese speaking homes are literate in Chinese and gain qualifications in the language.
- Radical reforms to the system of initial teacher training (ITT) and a lack of training places for those wishing to become teachers of Chinese present serious challenges in increasing the numbers of qualified teachers able to teach Chinese.

Background

England is the largest of the four countries which together make up the United Kingdom and has a population of just over 56 million, making it the 4th most populous country in the EU. England is an ethnically diverse country with one in every six schoolchildren speaking English as an Additional Language⁹.

⁹ DfE (2014). Schools, pupils and their characteristics. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014>. 18.7% of primary schoolchildren and 14.3% of secondary pupils are reported as having a first language other than English.

Given its rich ethnic diversity and the multilingualism of many of its cities (research shows that in both London and Manchester over 200 languages are spoken)¹⁰, one would expect England to be acutely aware of the advantages of foreign language learning. However, quite the reverse is the case as was recently noted in a report by the Confederation for British Industry (CBI) and Ernst & Young 'Our perceived ambivalence towards foreign languages is seen increasingly as a limitation in a global market place where knowledge and customs count.'¹¹

The perception of the country as a nation with poor language skills persists in both national discourse and in views expressed overseas. This picture is supported by the recent European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) survey which placed England second from the bottom out of 14 countries¹².

Since the current Coalition Government came into power in 2011, the field of education has been marked by a series of radical reforms aimed at raising standards in all phases of education and giving already outstanding schools much greater autonomy in developing and sharing their good practice. Other reforms in the education sector include a complete overhaul of initial teacher training, a significant increase in the level of tuition fees paid by students for their university level education and a vigorous expansion of schools with academy status which can operate independently of local authorities. The concept of free schools was also introduced and consortia encouraged to apply to the Department of Education to establish new schools which would also operate independently of local authorities. A number of the free schools established or awaiting approval have a strong language element and some are bilingual primary schools designed to provide young pupils with immersion in a language other than English (see below).

Languages in secondary schools

Until 2004, languages were compulsory in English schools throughout Key Stages 3 (ages 11 – 14) and 4 (14-16 years of age) but this was changed to Key Stage 3 only by the government of the day in a move to free up the curriculum in order to introduce a wider range of qualifications that pupils would find motivating and relevant. As a result, the number of pupils studying a language to GCSE started to fall dramatically - from 78% of the cohort sitting a GCSE in languages in 2001, to just 43% in 2011. The coalition government which came into power in 2010 has introduced some major policy changes in the area of education including fundamental changes to examinations for school age children, the introduction of a new National Curriculum, and, through the withdrawal of funding and the rapid expansion of academies and free schools (which depend directly on central government), a diminution of the role of local authorities. Another major initiative, the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), introduced as an accountability measure for schools in January 2011, aimed to strengthen the status of academic subjects including the humanities and languages, both ancient

¹⁰ John Eversley and others, *Language Capital. Mapping the Languages of London's Schoolchildren*. (London: CILT/Institute of Education, 2010). Natalie Edden and others, *Multilingual Manchester*, 2010. Alex Robertson and others, *Mapping Community Language Skills: the school language survey in Manchester*, Multilingual Manchester, 2013.

¹¹ CBI/Ernst and Young, "Winning Overseas : Boosting Business Export Performance", 2011.

¹² European Commission, *First European Survey on Language Competences. Final Report*, 2012 <<http://ec.europa.eu/languages/eslc/index.html>>.

and modern. This has had a positive effect in boosting the number of pupils taking language subjects in Key Stage 4 with as many as 50% of state schools reporting an increase over the past 3 years in the numbers of pupils taking a language at Key Stage 4 and 33% of schools reporting an increase of 10% or more¹³. However, the status of the English Baccalaureate has been reduced by the introduction of an alternative measure – known as ‘Progress 8’ which measures the progress of pupils in eight subjects which may or may not include a language¹⁴. At the same time, new, more rigorous GCSE courses are being introduced and it remains to be seen what impact these reforms will have on take up for languages. Although there are calls in some quarters for languages to be made compulsory again up to 16, no political party seems keen to espouse this policy.

Within schools, languages face a number of specific obstacles, most importantly the perception – and, increasingly, hard evidence of, harsh and inconsistent grading of public language examinations which has had a negative impact on the take up of languages by students preparing for GCSE and A level examinations. Students aspiring for university places, encouraged by teachers and school leaders, prefer to study for A levels in those subjects in which the highest grades are more achievable¹⁵. At the same time, the promotion of other subjects such as Maths and Science deemed important for the economy, has attracted students away from languages.

Languages in independent schools

Alongside its publicly funded state schools, England also has a long established system of independent (fee-paying) schools covering both primary and secondary phases. Although only about 7% of pupils attend fee-paying schools, the independent sector is very important both because it employs a number of different approaches and practices to the teaching of languages and because it has traditionally been a rich provider of linguists, both in the main European languages (French, German and Spanish) as well as lesser taught languages and those with different writing systems. The Language Trends survey 2013/14 shows that 32% of A level entries come from independent schools even though post 16 students at independent schools only represent 18% of the total cohort for A levels¹⁶. It is of great concern, therefore, that the numbers of students studying a language to A level in the independent sector has begun to decline very sharply.¹⁷

Languages in primary schools

¹³ Kathryn Board and Teresa Tinsley, *Language Trends 2013/14. The State of Language Learning in Primary and Secondary Schools in England* (CfBT Education Trust/British Council, 2014).

¹⁴ DfE, *Progress 8 school performance measure. Information for schools*, 2014.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

¹⁵ Joint Council for Qualifications, *A review of Modern Languages at A level: A* Grade and low take up*. 2014 <http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases/mfl-review-press-notice>

¹⁶ Board and Tinsley. *Language Trends* as above

¹⁷ Ibid.

In England learning a foreign language has recently become compulsory for pupils aged 7 – 14 years of age (compulsory language teaching for 7 – 11 year olds was introduced in September 2014). In February 2013 the government published its expectations for what should be covered by the end of Year 6 (age 11). There is a strong emphasis on high standards of communication using both spoken and written language. Schools are free to choose any modern or ancient language and should enable pupils to make substantial progress in one language.¹⁸ While 95% of English primary schools report that they are already teaching a language to pupils at Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11), the quality and quantity of provision is very inconsistent and many primary schools acknowledge that they will find it very challenging to meet the Government's expectations in the short to mid-term¹⁹. One serious issue to be tackled if primary phase languages are to be a success is teachers' own linguistic competence. The other is the severe disjuncture between secondary and primary schools. Recent research has found evidence that as many as 46% of primary schools have no contact at all with secondary schools and that only 27% of secondary schools say that they are able to offer pupils the opportunity to continue with the same language they were learning at primary school²⁰. This lack of collaboration between phases could have implications for the development of the teaching of Chinese, as the introduction of a wider range of languages in primary schools may exacerbate transition problems.

Languages in the supplementary sector

In England most teaching for the languages of ethnic minorities is provided by the voluntary sector.²¹ Classes are usually organised by the community itself with or without support from local authorities or schools and are often poorly resourced due to precarious – or non-existent - external funding. According to the DfE school census²² there are approximately 16,500 Chinese speakers amongst English schoolchildren.

There have been a number of initiatives aimed at supporting the teaching and learning of languages other than the main European languages taught in schools. These have included work by the Teacher Development Agency (now part of the Department for Education (DfE)) to look at ways of improving teacher training and access to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) for teachers of community languages and also the development of a new suite of examinations known as 'Asset Languages' which were introduced in 25 languages, including Chinese. These and other initiatives in this sector have been halted by the current Government and considerable barriers to professional training in community languages remain, not only for teaching but also for translation and interpreting.

¹⁸ DfE, *Languages programmes of study: key stage 2*. 2013

¹⁹ Board and Tinsley. *Language Trends*, as above

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ CILT, SCILT and CILT Cymru, *Community Language Learning in England, Wales and Scotland*, 2005.

²² NALDIC, "School Census January 2011 Language Data. Number of Compulsory School Aged Pupils in Primary, Secondary and Special Schools by Declared First Language", 2011 <<http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/lang>>.

Languages in higher education (HE)

Since 2005 the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has designated languages as ‘strategically important and vulnerable subjects’ (SIVS) in universities and additional public funding has been made available in England and Wales to address declining national capacity and stimulate demand for courses²³. The 2005 HEFCE report also highlighted the relevance of languages to universities’ internationalisation agendas, calling into question the growing trend to call degrees ‘international’ when they contain no language component.

In 2009, a report commissioned by HEFCE to investigate the status of languages in English universities, commented on the lack of government ‘joined up thinking’ on developing a national strategy for languages²⁴. Its author, Professor Worton, also recommended that universities should work collaboratively to demonstrate the value of languages in the internationalisation agenda to Vice Chancellors and university managers, and to develop more degree programmes with a study abroad element. Since then the squeeze on university finances has resulted in actual or threatened closures of language departments and a continued trend for provision to be concentrated within the prestigious ‘Russell Group’ of universities offering ‘traditional’ degree courses for highly academic learners. Whereas there has been a growth in the number of students taking language courses as an adjunct to their main degree subjects, applications for specialist language degrees have been falling and were recently reported to be at an all-time low²⁵.

Languages in further (FE) and adult education (AE)

There has been very little recent policy development in the area of languages in vocational courses. A UK-wide survey of FE colleges has shown that very few attempts are being made in the sector to offer language courses to those studying for vocational qualifications²⁶.

The coalition government supported the development of a new type of institution in England called University Technical Colleges (UTCs). These provide integrated technical and academic education for 14-19 year olds, teaching technical subjects alongside GCSEs which may include a foreign language. The UTCs are supported by a local university and closely involve employers. Seventeen such colleges have already been approved and a further 33 are in development and likely to be opened by the end of 2014/early 2015 providing the country with 50 UTCs in total. These new institutions and their supporting universities have the potential to develop new models of excellence in language learning linked to vocational subjects.

²³ The Routes into Languages initiative, and the creation of 5 collaborative area studies research centres.

²⁴ Michael Worton, *Review of Modern Foreign Languages Provision in Higher Education in England*, 2009 <<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2009/200941/>> [accessed 1 January 2013].

²⁵ Teresa Tinsley, *Languages: The State of the Nation. Demand and Supply of Language Skills in the UK*. British Academy., 2013 <http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/State_of_the_Nation_2013.cfm>. See also <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/apr/10/students-taking-languages-record-low>

²⁶ CfBT and others, *Language Learning in the FE Sector. A Survey with FE Colleges in 2011*, 2011.

There are also many part-time language courses for adults being offered by Colleges of Further Education, universities and other providers, but these are not organised collectively or registered centrally so it is very difficult to assess their contribution to language learning.

Initial teacher training (ITT)

The past two years have seen major reforms to the system of initial teacher training in England with the Government putting individual schools at the heart of all initial training for new teachers rather than universities and other higher education institutions (HEI) who previously provided one year specialist postgraduate teacher training courses leading to the awarding of the PGCE (postgraduate certificate of education). Schools Direct has been created to match individual trainees directly with schools offering training places in particular subjects. Training via School Direct leads to QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) which can only be awarded by an accrediting body or in some cases to a PGCE. In most cases lead schools hold the Schools Direct training places and then nominate their preferred HEI or training provider to validate the QTS or award the PGCE. Where the training provider is not an HEI - a small number of institutions run SCITTs (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) - a partnership with an HEI is required as only they can award the PGCE. The implementation of the School Direct initiative is still in its infancy and we do not yet know what impact this school based, demand led system of teacher training has on subjects which would generally attract very small cohorts of candidates, as is the case with lesser taught languages.

There are very few UK institutions in England offering accredited specialist teacher training courses for Chinese. Those that exist are in England and Scotland (none in Northern Ireland or Wales) and provide a qualification in teaching in secondary schools. There are no initial training courses for primary school teachers including Chinese as a specialist subject.

In England, the DfE has recently announced a highly ambitious aspiration on the part of Hanban and the IOE Confucius Institute to increase the number of graduate teacher training places for Chinese to 160 per year by 2019²⁷. Until now, English teacher training institutions have between them offered around 30-35 places per year, with the main providers being London's Institute of Education and Goldsmith's College, with smaller fluctuating numbers of places in universities such as Sheffield, Edgehill and Exeter. For a number of years now CILT/CfBT have been running a school-based programme (SCITT) specifically aimed at native speaker teachers of Chinese who wish to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The recent changes to the structure of teacher training in England mean, however, that Goldsmiths College has had its numbers cut and is no longer able to offer training for Chinese and other lesser taught languages. The University of Sheffield has also seen its trainee numbers much reduced as a result of the reform of the ITT system in England.

A search of the UCAS website for teacher training opportunities starting in England in September 2014 shows that four providers are offering initial teacher training programmes in 'secondary Mandarin'. Of these, two are schools working with the CfBT and the others are Edgehill University and the Institute of Education. One of the schools working with CfBT is also offering training in

²⁷ Elizabeth Truss on increasing the number of pupils studying Mandarin. 6 June 2014.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/elizabeth-truss-on-increasing-the-number-of-pupils-studying-mandarin>

partnership with the University of Portsmouth. There are no teacher training courses offered for Chinese in the East, East Midlands, North East, South West or West Midlands. It seems unlikely, therefore that the aspiration to increase the number of specialist teacher training places five-fold can be met without significant strategic intervention.

For a number of years, Goldsmiths College has also been running a lower level training course for teachers of Chinese, in conjunction with the UK Federation of Chinese Schools. This has offered 20 places per year to those working in supplementary schools or as volunteer teachers elsewhere and is a potential bridge to PGCE other courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status. It is unclear whether this course will continue to run.

Teacher training providers say there is no shortage of Chinese speakers wishing to train as teachers – though some would need some preparatory training or an upgrading of their qualifications to enable them to access it. The barrier to increasing the number of places is the lack of schools offering training placements.

In addition to increasing the number of specialist teacher training places, the Hanban, once again working through the Institute of Education Confucius Institute also aspires to achieve a similar five-fold increase in the number of non-specialist teachers trained in Chinese. The provision here is short in-service sources aimed at existing teachers and trainee teachers – for example the ‘Experience China’ programme described below. As part of developing this provision, the Institute of Education Confucius Institute has set up a training course for serving primary and secondary teachers in London who wish to learn to teach beginners Chinese. The course includes support and resources and is funded by the Mayor of London’s London Schools Excellence Fund until 2015.

Assessment systems

The core school based examination for pupils in English schools at Key Stage 4 is the GCSE (General Certificate of Education) which is available as a separate examination for each school subject studied. Pupils are expected to achieve grades between A* (at the upper end of the scale) to C in order for the qualification to be taken into account for academic progression. Individual school performance is measured by the numbers of pupils achieving A* - C grades in any of 8 academic subjects including a language. Key Stage 4 pupils generally need to achieve 5 GCSEs at grades A* – C in order to progress. At post 16 the majority of pupils study for two years before taking A level examinations in a small number of subjects (usually between 2 and 4) which they have chosen based on their interests, aptitude and plans for higher education. However, there is an increasing trend for independent schools especially to offer the IGCSE (International General Certificate of Education) at Key Stage 4 because of dissatisfaction with the GCSE exam. At Key Stage 5, schools can opt to offer the IB (International Baccalaureate) or Pre-U (Pre-University) examinations as alternatives to A levels in languages, which teachers increasingly see as unfairly harsh in its grading compared to other subjects.

Until recently there was an increasing trend for pupils to study towards NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) in languages. These examinations were based on a practical, task based approach to language learning and some teachers and pupils found them more suitable for pupils’ needs than GCSE. However, since the Coalition Government has prevented schools from using passes in NVQ

qualifications towards their performance data, the number of schools offering NVQs has declined rapidly. The wide range of language examinations available under the Asset Languages scheme has suffered the same fate and have now been withdrawn by the OCR exam board which developed and marketed them. Asset Languages were available in 25 languages and provided pupils with the opportunity to study and gain awards in smaller steps and starting at a lower level than GCSEs. The exams also gave pupils with the possibility of achieving separate accreditation for the individual skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Main languages taught

The new National Curriculum for England (September 2014) states that, for Key Stage 2: 'Teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language.'²⁸ When pupils move to secondary school, teaching may be of any modern language, but it should 'build on the foundations of language learning laid at Key Stage 2, whether pupils continue with the same language or take up a new one'.

The most widely taught languages in English secondary schools (both state and independent sectors) are the principal European languages of French (95% of schools), Spanish (69%) and German (50%)²⁹. Few state schools offer pupils the opportunity to learn languages other than these but the range of languages on offer in the independent sector is more varied. The vast majority of both independent and state secondary schools make provision for some pupils to learn more than one foreign language in both Key Stages 3 and 4 (91 per cent and 78 per cent respectively). The second foreign language on offer is most commonly another of the three main European languages³⁰.

Three quarters of English primary schools teach French at Key Stage 2 and very few offer Chinese - see Part 2 below. The reason for the choice of language taught is very often based on the language skills of current teaching staff. It remains to be seen whether the requirement of the new national curriculum for England for schools to ensure that pupils at Key Stage 2 make substantial progress in one language with a focus on both written and oral communication, will have any impact on the teaching of lesser taught languages, including Chinese. The new national curriculum in England distinguishes requirements for modern and ancient languages but does not make specific reference to languages with different writing systems.

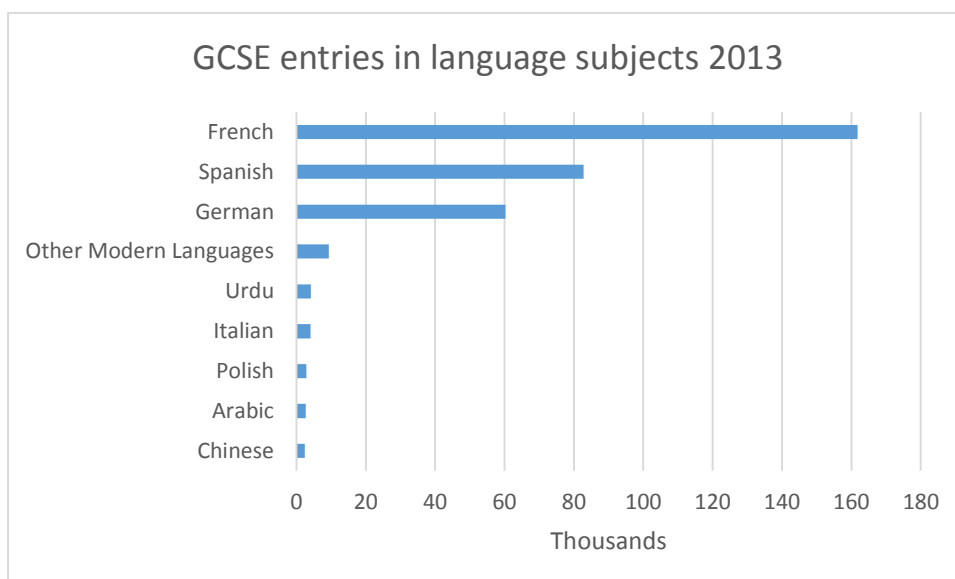
The teaching of Chinese

Chinese ranks eighth in terms of the number of entries for modern language subjects at GCSE, accounting for 0.7% of entries from English pupils at the end of Key Stage 4:

²⁸ DfE. *Languages programmes of study: key stage 2*, 2013

²⁹ Board and Tinsley. As above.

³⁰ *ibid*



Numbers of entries for language subjects at GCSE, Key Stage 4 pupils, England, 2013

See section 2 for further analysis of GCSE and A level entries.

Studies of languages in the English school system have highlighted the greater prevalence of Chinese in independent as opposed to state schools, and the vulnerability of the subject in a context where the lesser taught languages struggle to find a place in the school system.³¹ However, the latest Language Trends survey noted that, among the lesser-taught languages, the number of schools offering Chinese did appear to be growing slowly.

A very recent survey of Chinese teaching in Greater Manchester³² found provision to be 'patchy' and demand from schools to provide Chinese teaching 'relatively modest'. It reported that schools were nervous and conservative about introducing a new foreign language and saw Chinese as a risk. It also noted the insufficiency of teacher supply.

There are at least two groups developing plans for free schools involving a strong element of Chinese. One is the Marco Polo free school in north London which proposed a bilingual (Chinese/English) primary school for the ethnically-diverse constituency of pupils in its local area. The other is the Dragonheart Primary School project being developed by the Manchester Chinese Centre. This again is not aimed at pupils of Chinese heritage but intended to serve all pupils in the local area. The group proposes a strong element of Chinese with daily lessons, but not immersion in the first instance. Neither proposal has so far been successful.

At least two other free schools, Tiger primary school in Maidstone which opened in 2012, and Abacus Belsize Park primary which opened in 2013, offer some Chinese teaching as part of their distinctive offer. Tiger primary school is linked to the New Line Learning Academy Confucius Institute, and Abacus Belsize Park comes under the auspices of CfBT.

There is also believed to be privately-sponsored proposal for an independent Chinese/English bilingual school in London.

³¹ Ibid.

³² New Economy, *Mandarin in Schools. Provision, Appetite and Barriers in Greater Manchester*, 2014.

5. Northern Ireland

Key Points

- Pupils in Northern Ireland are only required to learn a language between the ages of 11 and 14 though as many as 57% of primary schools in Northern Ireland also give pupils an experience of language learning (usually as extra-curricular activity).
- The number of pupils taking a language at Key Stage 4 has declined significantly since languages were made optional at this Key Stage.
- Any non-European language being offered in secondary schools must be offered *in addition* to one of the main European languages and this limits likely take up.
- It is not possible to train to be a teacher of Chinese in Northern Ireland.

Background

Northern Ireland is the smallest of the four UK nations, with a population of 1.8 million. The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy³³, the objective of which was shared by the Department of Education (DENI), was developed by Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions. It notes that Northern Ireland, conscious of its location 'on the edge of Europe', is increasingly positioning itself as a strategic location for European and US companies wishing to access a high quality workforce at a competitive cost. The authors of the Strategy state that UK wide concerns about declines in the level of language learning in schools and the consequent impact on the skills base apply to an even greater extent in Northern Ireland. Languages are described as vital for achieving the objectives of the NI Executive's Economic Strategy, its Tourism Strategy and its Foreign Direct Investment Strategy.

Apart from the economic and educational arguments for languages, the Strategy also recognises that languages are important for wider social and community reasons.

The key objectives of the Northern Ireland Languages Strategy are to:

- Promote languages as a skill for life
- Promote languages in education
- Broaden the range of appropriate language qualifications
- Encourage greater global awareness
- Improve language skills, particularly among children and young people

³³ John H Gillespie, David Johnston and Ailbhe O Corráin, *Languages for the Future. Northern Ireland Languages Strategy*, 2012.

- Encourage communication and mutual understanding between members of different cultural backgrounds.

Northern Ireland (as Wales) has traditionally shared a curriculum structure with England although this is increasingly diverging following devolution in 1998. Pupil numbers are around 335,000 of which a tiny percentage (less than 700) is enrolled in independent (non-state funded) schools. In 2013/14 10,697 were classed as ‘newcomer pupils’ – a definition based on the ability to communicate in English or Irish and a figure which has grown rapidly in recent years.³⁴

Languages in secondary (post primary) schools

There are 210 post primary schools in Northern Ireland of which 68 are grammar schools³⁵.

Languages are currently compulsory in Northern Ireland for all pupils aged 11-14. Following the example of England, languages were removed from the statutory Key Stage 4 curriculum in 2007. This resulted in a 19% drop in the numbers of pupils taking French, German and Spanish in the following four years. The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy refrained from recommending a return to compulsory status for languages for pupils up to the age of 16, but recommended that provision should be reviewed as the effects of a Primary Languages initiative (see below) began to be felt. With the implementation of a policy for 14-19 learning involving an entitlement offer of 27 different subjects, a School Collaborative Programme was established to promote partnership working and the Northern Ireland Languages Strategy saw this as an ideal vehicle for developing the offer of a wider range of languages, taught as both general and applied subjects.

Between 2006 and 2007, three schools were established in Northern Ireland as Specialist Language Schools³⁶ and although the additional funding for specialist schools has now ceased, this initiative has led to collaboration with partner schools and primary feeder schools. One of the three Specialist Language Schools, Grosvenor Grammar School, is a Confucius Classroom. The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy called for an increased number of Specialist Language Schools spread across Northern Ireland, offering a wider range of languages ‘including Arabic, Chinese and Italian’³⁷. The Strategy also called for these schools to pioneer the use of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) at secondary level, and suggested that extra resources could be targeted towards Specialist Language Schools by bringing languages into the same classification as STEM subjects.

Schools in Northern Ireland are either Selective (grammar schools) or Non-Selective (secondary schools). With the recent removal of the 11+ examination, many grammar schools have developed their own selection process for pupils wishing to join the school.

³⁴ A newcomer pupil is one who has enrolled in a school but who does not have the satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum, and the wider environment, and does not have a language in common with the teacher, whether that is English or Irish. This has previously been referred to as English an Additional Language. It does not refer to indigenous pupils who choose to attend an Irish medium school.

³⁵ http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/facts-and-figures-new/education-statistics/32_statistics_and_research-numbersofschoolsandpupils_pg/32_statistics_and_research-northernirelandsummarydata_pg.htm

³⁶ These are Shimna High School, Grosvenor Grammar School and Belfast High School

³⁷ Gillespie, Johnston and O Corr  in. p 24

Languages in primary schools

The requirement to learn another language is not part of the Northern Ireland primary curriculum, which was revised in 2007, despite the positive evaluation of a number of pilot projects which took place between 2005 and 2007. These involved 21 primary schools (out of more than 800 across Northern Ireland) teaching mainly French but also some Spanish. In spite of the lack of curricular requirement, a survey carried out in 2007 found that 57% of responding primary schools were making some provision for the teaching of a second language, although in over half of cases this was in the form of extra-curricular activity. The current curriculum encourages the teaching of modern languages within a multidisciplinary framework and guidance has been published to help teachers develop and integrate this. The guidance includes online resources for French, German, Irish and Spanish.

From 2008 DENI funded a Primary Languages Programme which provided peripatetic teachers in Spanish or Irish to work alongside existing Key Stage 1 primary school classroom teachers (Polish was also included from 2009). The scheme was, however, criticised for excluding French, which is the most widely taught language in secondary education. By 2009, 247 schools had participated in Spanish and 76 in Irish³⁸. The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy recommended that the Primary Modern Languages Programme be consolidated and extended and that the teaching of languages at primary level be strongly encouraged in all schools at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Languages in the supplementary sector

As in the rest of the UK, the supplementary sector performs an important role in developing children's skills in the languages of the backgrounds and families. Northern Ireland is less ethnically diverse than other parts of the UK, and very little information is available on the extent and nature of its supplementary sector. However Chinese languages are believed to be among the most widely supported by the supplementary schools which exist.

Languages in higher education

The Higher Education system in Northern Ireland is integrated with that in the rest of the UK with the exception that students studying at Northern Irish universities pay only up to £3,465 in course fees (compared to a maximum of £9,000 for English universities).

³⁸ Primary languages in Northern Ireland: too little, too late? Purdy et al, Language Learning Journal vol 38, 2, 2010

The main languages taught in Northern Irish universities are French, Spanish and Irish. The University of Ulster also offers degrees in German (Queens University Belfast has recently withdrawn its German provision) and Queens University Belfast also offers Portuguese in combination with Spanish. Chinese can be studied as part of a wider languages degree at the University of Ulster and from September 2015, Queens University Belfast will be offering a first degree in International Business with Mandarin (alongside its current offer of this degree with French, Spanish, German or Portuguese). The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy recommended that university-wide language programmes be established to enable all graduates to leave Northern Irish universities with some language competence. It suggested that such non-specialist provision would provide an opportunity to introduce and develop lesser-taught languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Hindi and Russian.

Languages in further education/vocational training

The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy authors described languages provision at Further Education establishments in Northern Ireland as weak. However, two colleges (Belfast Metropolitan College and South-Eastern Regional College) were singled out as strong providers of languages. NVQ courses and qualifications are not offered in schools in Northern Ireland.

Initial teacher training

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in Northern Ireland is provided by 4 university institutions: Stranmillis College (Queens University, Belfast); St Mary's University College, Belfast; Queen's University, Belfast and the University of Ulster. Trainees can opt to do a four year undergraduate degree aimed specifically at primary level or post-primary level teaching or they can choose to take a one year PGCE (postgraduate certificate in education) after they complete their first degree. University providers of ITT differ in the range of subjects they offer for teacher training purposes, but none offers Chinese.

Assessment systems

The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland has the dual role of setting examinations and advising the Government on what should be taught in Northern Ireland. Following the recent reforms affecting the national curriculum, GCSEs and A levels in England, Northern Ireland has decided to retain GCSEs and also the modular structure of A levels with AS level still counting towards the final A level grade.

Main languages taught

The foreign languages most commonly taught in schools in Northern Ireland are French, Spanish, German and Italian. Schools which offer other languages (e.g. Japanese or Russian) must do so as an additional subject. A recent (2014) survey of language provision in secondary schools by the Northern Ireland Centre for Information on Language Teaching (NICILT) did not find any evidence of secondary schools teaching Chinese³⁹, although some are known to be starting to offer some Chinese teaching through the Confucius Institute⁴⁰.

In Northern Ireland, as in Wales and Scotland, some pupils are educated through the medium of the indigenous language. Pupils in Northern Ireland pupils who receive their education through the medium of Irish take different exams from those learning the language as a curriculum subject. Since 2006, Irish, along with French, German, Spanish and Italian, has been recognised as fulfilling the compulsory language requirement offered by schools under the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Teacher training in languages in Northern Ireland is available only in French, Irish, Spanish and German though there are supply issues particularly for German and particularly in the primary phase. To tackle this, the Northern Ireland Languages Strategy suggested that language and language pedagogy be made part of every primary school teacher's initial training and that specialist training be provided for current teachers and classroom assistants to allow them to include language teaching within their repertoire.

The teaching of Chinese

According to the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), Chinese is the most widespread minority-ethnic language in Northern Ireland, with 4,200 speakers⁴¹. The Northern Ireland Languages Strategy recognises the importance of languages beyond the traditionally taught European languages: 'The economic potential for every child in Northern Ireland to gain access to other languages cannot be underestimated in a globalised economy, in particular with reference to the emerging economies of China and India' (p. 32)

In summer 2010, there were 12 candidates for GCSE Mandarin from 9 schools in Northern Ireland. This distribution suggests that these were children of Chinese heritage. Schools draft in part time tutors and examiners to enable such pupils to prepare for and take the exams.

The main foreign languages taught in Northern Irish schools are French, Spanish, Irish and German. In 2013, there were 13,194 entries for GCSE language subjects in Northern Ireland, broken down as follows:

³⁹ Unpublished data provided to researchers by NICILT

⁴⁰ The discrepancy may be due to the marginal nature of Chinese at a very early stage of its development in Northern Ireland. Heads of Languages answering the survey may not have thought it was relevant to a survey about curriculum languages. If so, this highlights the gap to be bridged in Northern Ireland if Chinese is to take its place alongside the main languages taught.

⁴¹ Gillespie, Johnston and O Corr  in. p. 31

French	6,250
Spanish	3,568
German	1,017
Irish	2,078
Other languages	281

GCSE entries for language subjects. Northern Ireland. 2013

The number of entries for Chinese from Wales and Northern Ireland combined was 51. GCSE entries in language subjects in Northern Ireland represented 7% of entries across all subjects in Northern Ireland, a higher percentage than in the rest of the UK (Excluding Irish, 6%). Entries for German declined by 11% between 2012 and 2013, which is believed to be the result of Queens University Belfast closing its German department⁴². Entries for Irish rose by 11% and entries for Spanish rose by 9% between 2012 and 2013, while entries for French and for other languages suffered little change⁴³.

At A level, there were 1,162 entries for language subjects in 2013, broken down as follows:

French	550
Spanish	513
Irish	309
German	99
Other modern languages	121

A level entries for language subjects. Northern Ireland. 2013

There were 140 A level entries in Chinese from Northern Ireland and Wales combined in 2013. A level entries in language subjects in Northern Ireland represented 5% of entries in all subjects (4% excluding Irish). Entries for German dropped by 21% between 2012 and 2013, whereas entries for Spanish rose by 5%, taking numbers for Spanish very close to those for French which saw a corresponding decline of 8%.

The Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland was established at the University of Ulster in 2012. It has eight classroom hubs – one primary and seven secondary and is seen as a major opportunity to develop the teaching of Chinese Language and Culture at all levels. However, developments are still in the early stages.

⁴² From discussion with Queen's University languages staff and post-graduate students

⁴³ Data supplied for this report by JCQ

6. Scotland

Key Points

- Scotland's education system differs significantly from that of the other UK countries.
- Scotland's long term strategic China Plan and the adoption of the European '1+2' approach to the teaching of languages means that it has the systems in place to develop its capacity in Chinese.
- Languages have been a part of upper primary education in Scotland for many years.
- Teacher education in Chinese is available at a number of universities in Scotland and this is set to increase over the next few years.
- There is no hierarchy of languages for the purposes of education.

Background

With a population of over 5,295,000, Scotland is the second largest country of the United Kingdom. It has three official languages: English, Scots and Scottish Gaelic though the 2011 census showed that 63% of the population reports having no skills in Scots and nationally, only 1% of the population speak Gaelic (predominantly in the Western Highlands).

Scotland has always retained legal, educational and religious institutions which are different from the rest of the UK, a fact which has helped Scotland to retain its distinct culture and identity. Policy relating to international relations, trade development and education are no exception and have resulted in the development of an approach to the teaching of languages which is quite different from that of the other nations of the UK.

Until recently the vast majority of schools in Scotland have required pupils to study towards a qualification in a language. The introduction of the new suite of qualifications as part of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence means that no subject is 'compulsory' – including Maths and English. However, unlike the other countries of the UK, Scotland has taken steps to implement the commitment made at the Barcelona meeting of the European Council in 2002 to improve the mastery of basic skills 'in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age'.⁴⁴ The Barcelona Agreement laid the foundation stone for what was to become Scotland's policy on the 1+2 Approach to Language Learning.

Published in 2009, the Modern Languages Principles and Practice paper stated 'It is important for the nation's prosperity that young people are attracted to learning a modern language and that they become confident users of a modern language, well equipped with the skills and knowledge needed

⁴⁴ "Presidency Conclusions. Barcelona European Council," 35 (2002), 0–72.

in the new Europe and in the global marketplace. This framework is intended to help address this national need.’

In 2006 the Scottish Government published an ambitious 5 year strategy for engaging with China which recognised that increasing Scotland's knowledge and understanding of Chinese language and culture was key to the strategy's success.⁴⁵ The strategy was first refreshed in 2008 (on the change of government) and again in 2012. This latest version of The China Plan is divided into four priority areas, the second of which is ‘to expand and deepen Scotland's education links with China.’ The updated strategy recognises that links between Scottish and Chinese educational institutions, and the teaching of Chinese in Scottish schools through programmes offered by the Confucius Institutes, are of increasing importance to Scotland. Importantly, the Scottish Government co-funds CISS (Confucius Institute for Schools in Scotland) and the Confucius Classroom hubs. One of the targets in the latest version of the China Plan is to double the number of students gaining qualifications in Chinese language by 2017 (from the 2011/12 level)⁴⁶. There is a recognition that the achievement of this target will require a more ‘focused strategic direction from the Scottish Government’ and that ‘the continued involvement and support of Scottish Government both in China and fostering greater understanding in Scotland is greatly welcomed. We would therefore like to see this not only maintained but increased, as setting the strategic context and direction facilitates the practical activities that will ensure the successful implementation of the China Plan’⁴⁷

The ‘1 + 2 Approach’ in practice in primary and secondary Schools

The 2011 Scottish Government manifesto commitment stated: ‘We will introduce a norm for language learning based on the European Union 1+2 model - that is we will create the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue. This will be rolled out over two Parliaments and will create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland.’⁴⁸ A report entitled ‘Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach’⁴⁹ was then published in May 2012 and following the Government's acceptance of the recommendations in the report, three secondary schools, seven primary schools and one cluster of schools (focussing on transition) were identified/established as pilots. Although languages are an established part of the secondary curriculum and have also been taught in Scottish primary schools for the last twenty years (though usually only in the final two years of the primary phase), the 1+ 2 approach to languages which is now beginning to be rolled out across all Scottish schools, represents a radically different approach. The ambition is that the new approach will be fully embedded in primary and secondary schools across Scotland by 2020.

⁴⁵ The Scottish Government (2012). A Five Year Strategy for Engagement between Scotland and the People's Republic of China. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00409256.pdf>

⁴⁶ There were 309 entries for Scottish examinations in Chinese in summer 2012. See Part 2 and Appendix 3 for further details.

⁴⁷ European and External Relations Committee, 4th Report, 2013 (Session 4).(15)

⁴⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk> Scottish Government Manifesto Commitment 2011

⁴⁹ Scottish Government, *Languages in Scotland: a 1+2 Approach. Languages Working Group Report*. May 2012 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/05/3670/downloads>

In the 1 + 2 approach all pupils in P1 (the first year of primary school, age 5) begin to learn an additional language (L2) in addition to their mother tongue and continue studying this language until at least the end of the broad general education (BGE) i.e. S3 (the third year of secondary school). The Scottish Government's 'Building the Curriculum' clearly states that 'every child is entitled to a broad general education to the end of S3 which includes English, Maths, RME (Religious and Moral Education) and a language.'⁵⁰ From P5 (the fifth year of primary school) at the latest, a second additional language is introduced (L3).

From S1 to S3 (the first to the third years of secondary school) all pupils have the opportunity to continue with the second language (L2) and also to study a further language (L3), which may or may not be the same L3 language they had been studying in primary school. It is important that language skills already acquired in the learning of L2 can be applied to the L3. The L3 may be offered in a variety of ways e.g. as an elective, as a master class or as a full option.

The document 'Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach'⁵¹ recommended that primary and secondary schools work together to ensure a more effective transfer from upper primary to secondary in terms of content, skills and approaches to learning. This is particularly important to ensure progression in the L2 language which spans both primary and secondary phases.

Languages in primary schools

Language teaching in primary schools is moving away from an approach based purely on defined 'drop in' sessions or 'language slots' of approximately one hour per week to one in which language learning is fully embedded with the curriculum. While there will still be some discrete teaching sessions of the language, to ensure the necessary depth of learning and skills progression particularly for pupils in the upper years of primary phase education, teachers in primary schools will increasingly include use of the language as part of the daily routine and lessons. Education Scotland has developed a framework for each year of primary education including detailed examples of progression and content and sound files in six different languages, including Chinese.

Languages in secondary schools

The majority of decision-making about what happens in Scottish schools is devolved to the local authorities who, in turn, work closely with the individual schools in their area. There is no specific time allocation for any subject in the Scottish curriculum. National guidelines outline the experiences and outcomes to which all children and young people are entitled and advice is given on national standards and expectations of what pupils ought to be able to do at different stages of their

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<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/languages/index.asp>

⁵¹ Scottish Government Languages Working Group, *Language Learning in Scotland A 1 + 2 Approach Scottish Government Languages Working Group Report and Recommendations*, 2012.

learning journey. It is the responsibility of teachers to work collegiately to come to an agreed understanding of what this will look like in their own establishments, taking into account their local circumstances. The study of a language is already an entitlement throughout primary education and up to the end of S3 (age 14/15). However, with introduction of the 1 + 2 approach pupils will now have the opportunity to experience two modern languages during the broad, general education (BGE). There is no standardised testing of pupils in any curriculum area until they reach the age of 15/16 and take their National Qualification examinations.

Languages in independent schools

Scotland has 102 independent schools, the majority located in or near the cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow or Aberdeen and only 5% of Scottish children are educated through the independent sector. Independent schools in Scotland follow either the Scottish or English curriculum and work towards a range of public examinations including GCSEs/A levels, the International Baccalaureate and Scottish National Qualifications, all of which are recognised by universities across the UK. Scottish independent schools pride themselves on academic excellence.

Languages in the supplementary sector

A study of community language learning in Scotland in 2005 found nearly 100 complementary schools making provision for children to learn languages after school hours or at weekends. In some cases these complementary schools were receiving some funding or other support from the local authority; in others there were entirely independent. Together, they catered for as many as 18 community languages as well as Gaelic and British Sign Language. The most widespread provision was for Urdu, which had supplementary schools in nine local authorities, followed by Chinese in seven⁵².

Languages in higher education

The numbers of undergraduates studying languages at Scottish universities has remained fairly steady in recent years but the range of languages offered for degree level study has been reduced eg. Strathclyde University no longer offer a degree in German. However, conversely, Edinburgh University has seen a dramatic increase in the number of undergraduates choosing to study German as an elective - from 60 in 2010 to 200 in 2014. Chinese is currently offered as a degree subject at

⁵² Joanna McPake, *Provision for Community Language Learning in Scotland*, 2005. The local authorities where there was complementary provision for Chinese were Edinburgh, Glasgow, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire, Fife and Moray.

the Universities of Edinburgh and, Aberdeen while the University of Glasgow is introducing a degree course in Chinese from the academic year 2014/15. The Open University also offers a first degree course in Chinese and the University of Dundee offers credit bearing module/electives in Chinese. Heriot Watt University offers a postgraduate course in Mandarin for Translation.

Initial teacher education

Initial teacher education is provided by nine universities across Scotland. There are two routes to becoming a primary or secondary teacher in Scotland; a four-year undergraduate degree in education or an appropriate degree plus a one-year Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programme in either primary or secondary teaching. Secondary school student teachers of modern languages must also undertake a period of time living in a country where that language is spoken in order to qualify as teachers. Teachers can only be asked to teach in the sector and subject for which they are registered.

Newly qualified teachers who have been educated in Scotland must undertake a one year probationary period. This provides teachers with a one-year teaching post in a Scottish local authority, with teachers allocated to one of five local authorities of their choosing. Teachers on the programme have a maximum class commitment time equal to 82% to that of a full-time teacher, allowing additional time to be devoted to their professional development. All have access to the services of an experienced teacher as a mentor. By the end of the successful completion of the probationary period, teachers should be ready to gain full GTCS (General Teaching Council Scotland) registration which is mandatory to teach in any local authority school in Scotland.

The first tranche of teachers of Chinese in Scotland were trained at Moray House, Edinburgh in 2007. All six places were funded by Scottish Government. The students were all native speakers of Chinese, mostly newly arrived in the UK via the Fresh Talent scheme. This meant that in order to remain in the country, the majority of those who qualified had to obtain a permanent teaching post.

In Scotland, courses are offered by the Universities of Edinburgh and, from 2014, the University of Aberdeen. The number of students each year depends on how many school placements can be secured to provide students with the practical, work-based element of their course. There are now 29 GTCS (General Teaching Council of Scotland) registered teachers of Chinese in Scotland, a figure which the Scottish Government is monitoring closely as part of its China Strategy.

Assessment Systems

Scotland's qualifications for students in secondary schools and colleges of further education are called National Qualifications (NQ) and are provided by SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority). They are available at a number of levels from National 2-5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Additionally, in the senior secondary phase (S4 – S6), the new award for ‘Languages for Life and Work’⁵³ opens up opportunities for greater flexibility in the range of languages offered and can be an effective way of continuing the study of an L3 into the senior phase. It comprises three units, one of which might be undertaken in English and which focuses on developing practical skills such as interview techniques or presentation skills. The other two units can be studied in one or two languages from a range including Cantonese, French, Gaelic, German, Italian, Mandarin, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Urdu. It is hoped that this new award will help increase the numbers of young people continuing with a language in the Senior Phase (S4-S6).

Main languages taught

There is no hierarchy of languages in Scotland. Primary schools are free to offer any language, including Scots, Doric⁵⁴, sign language or any of the community languages. It is, however, important that the first additional language (L2) learnt in P1 can also be offered in the secondary school as a National Qualification.

Based on pupil numbers studying the language, the main languages taught in Scottish schools are French, Spanish, German, Italian, Gaelic, Urdu and Chinese. Of the lesser studied languages (Italian, Gaelic, Urdu and Chinese), in 2013, Italian had the highest number of Higher entries with 238, Gaelic had 119, Urdu 109 and Chinese 66. The uptake in Chinese has been increasing as has the number of establishments presenting candidates.

French has traditionally been the main language taught in Scotland. German, until recently the second most taught language in Scottish schools has seen a decline. However, this decline in school level study seems to have been counterbalanced by a steady increase in students at university choosing German as an elective – see above. Spanish has seen by far the biggest increase in Scottish schools in recent years. However, to date there are far fewer teachers who have been trained/are qualified to deliver Spanish in primary schools than is the case for German or French. In the past the choice of language in primary schools has often been dependent on the language the classroom teacher studied when she/he was at school themselves although local authorities have provided programmes aimed at developing the language skills of primary phase teachers. The roll out of the 1+ 2 approach means that every local authority is now planning the most appropriate ways to develop the language skills of the primary workforce.

A total of 59 primary schools (2,652 pupils) and 33 secondary schools (1,181) across the country offer Gaelic medium education. Other schools offer pupils the opportunity to learn Gaelic as part of the suite of languages on offer and which lead to SQA qualifications.

⁵³ <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/57034.html>

⁵⁴ The dialect of Scots spoken in the North East of Scotland

The teaching of Chinese

The Government's high level China Plan and the national commitment to the 1 + 2 approach to language learning provide Scotland with a springboard for developing the teaching and learning of Chinese. There are 5 Confucius Institutes (giving Scotland more Confucius Institutes per capita of its population than any other country in the world) and an extensive range of opportunities to visit China, including immersion courses and study opportunities for pupils and teachers which are rapidly improving the level of interest in China and growing the desire to learn more about the language and culture of China.

Scotland has 29 UK registered teachers of Chinese as well as some 22 Hanban teachers working in just over 50% of Local Authorities across the country. The number of Confucius classrooms is still increasing and more teachers will be needed to meet future demand.

Chinese remains vulnerable however, due to the insufficient numbers of qualified teachers available to work in secondary schools and the lack of Chinese language skills amongst primary teachers. Most schools which teach Chinese only have one teacher for the subject and the risk that the teacher might leave or fall sick is a big concern for head teachers. Temporary teachers of Chinese from China cannot resolve the dilemma created by the fact that only GTCS registered teachers are allowed to present candidates for qualifications.

There is no doubt that the teaching of Chinese in Scottish schools benefits greatly from the underpinning of strong support at policy level, the Government's China Plan and its commitment to roll out the 1 + 2 approach to language learning in all Scottish schools.

7. Wales

Key Points

- Wales is a bilingual nation (Welsh/English) but performs the least well in terms of take up of other languages of any of the four UK countries.
- Although England and Wales traditionally shared a curriculum structure and examinations system, this has been diverging since devolution in 2006.
- The study of a foreign language is only compulsory between the ages of 11 and 14.
- Lack of compulsion, severe grading and a considerable increase in the number of subjects of study available to pupils are cited as some of the reasons for the very low take up of languages at Key Stage 4.
- It is not possible to train to become a teacher of Chinese in Wales.

Background

Wales has a population of just over 3 million, two thirds of whom live in South Wales.

In 2008 the Welsh Government published its strategy ‘Economic Renewal: A New Direction’. This sees the improvement of Wales’ international profile as critical and calls for improvements in the skills that lead to economic growth, especially STEM subjects, but without mentioning foreign languages⁵⁵.

As a bilingual nation, Wales should have an advantage in foreign language learning, since research shows that once the grip of monolingualism has been broken, other languages are easier to acquire. However, data published by the British Academy⁵⁶ shows that in terms of foreign languages, Wales performs least well of the four UK nations. The study of Welsh is obligatory for all pupils throughout compulsory education, whether as a first or second language and a growing proportion of pupils receive their education through the medium of Welsh (around 20% in primary education, slightly less in secondary)⁵⁷. This means that although all Welsh pupils are learning another language in addition to their mother tongue, there is a squeeze on curriculum time available for the learning of other languages.

Although Wales has traditionally shared a curriculum structure and examination system with England, this has been diverging increasingly since devolution in 2006 and at the time of writing a

⁵⁵ Welsh Assembly Government, “Economic Renewal : A New Direction”, 2010.

⁵⁶ Tinsley. The State of the Nation. See above.

⁵⁷ British Council, *Language Rich Europe. Trends in Policies and Practices for Multilingualism in Europe*, 2012. The Welsh Government has set a target of 30% by 2020.

major 'General Qualifications Review' is being undertaken. The findings are due to be published around December 2014 and could result in the development of a radically different approach to qualifications.

The 2010 policy document 'Making Languages Count' set out the Welsh Assembly Government's plan to improve the teaching and learning of 'modern foreign languages'⁵⁸. This focussed on improving the quality of the learning experience in Key Stage 3 and on action to develop the 14-19 phase. These included supporting the development of alternative qualifications to GCSE, business-education links focussed on languages, and placing languages within a new qualification known as the Welsh Baccaalaureate. This is a qualification for 14-19 year olds which can be taken at three levels, combining personal development skills with existing qualifications in order to provide a better balance of the skills and knowledge valued by employers. When it was first introduced, all students were required to complete a 20 hour language module within the 'Wales, Europe and the World' strand. To support this module CILT Cymru, the National Centre for Languages in Wales, in partnership with its parent company WJEC, Wales' leading provider of examinations and support for teachers, developed language materials, including for Chinese which were piloted in schools and FE colleges delivering the Welsh Baccaalaureate. However, in 2013 the Welsh Government set out plans to remove this compulsory language element from the Welsh Baccaalaureate on the grounds that 'there were disparities in the quality of delivery between centres and it was questionable whether learners could really benefit from such a short period of study'.⁵⁹

Languages in secondary schools

There are very few independent schools in Wales. In Wales foreign language learning has never been compulsory at Key Stage 4. This means that GCSE entries for foreign languages have always represented a lower proportion of the cohort than in England. However, even against this background they have dropped significantly in recent years. In 1995 as many as 55% of the cohort took a language to GCSE whereas in 2013 the proportion was only 22%. The low take up of languages is seen largely as a social exclusion issue with areas of high deprivation such as Blaenau Gwent achieving little more than 10% participation in GCSE language courses.

Wales does not use a system of league tables as England does but Welsh Schools are subject to a banding system in which GCSE results play a part. However, because the banding system does not differentiate between subjects beyond the 'core indicator' (English/Welsh, Maths, Science), there is no incentive for schools to increase numbers taking languages. The banding system is viewed with scepticism by many teachers and has been heavily criticised by teaching unions.

Schools are currently required to make a teacher assessment of pupil progress in foreign languages at the end of Key Stage 3, though the Welsh Government is proposing to remove this requirement in the near future. The emphasis in schools is on mother tongue literacy, numeracy and science with other subjects are receiving very little attention in school inspections and as a result are becoming increasingly peripheral.

⁵⁸ Welsh Assembly Government and Young Wales, *Making Languages Count*, 2010.

⁵⁹ Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills, Welsh Assembly Government, letter to Baroness Jean Coussins, 21 January 2014.

The reasons why it has proved difficult to halt and reverse the decline in languages education in Wales are broadly similar to those in England and Northern Ireland, namely, lack of compulsion, an increasingly wide range of subjects on offer in Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form, an assessment system which rewards grades rather than subjects and a virtual consensus among pupils, teachers and parents that languages are 'harder' than other subjects. The situation has become exacerbated in Wales since the introduction of 14-19 Learning Pathways which brought a plethora of new subject choices into the Welsh curriculum from Key Stage 4 onwards. The Welsh Assembly was forced to hold an Inquiry into the unintended consequences of the Learning Pathways,⁶⁰ which many educationalists claimed had precipitated the decline in 'traditional subjects' such as languages. However, the Minister's view was that the decline in the numbers of Welsh pupils learning languages was not caused by the introduction of the Learning Pathways but was rather a reflection of the decline in the learning of languages also happening in other parts of the UK. Since schools can decide to remove a subject from the curriculum if it does not run for two consecutive years, there is concern that very small classes for languages study may result in closure, reducing further the numbers of pupils in Wales studying a foreign language.

Languages in primary schools

Languages other than English and Welsh are not part of the primary curriculum in Wales and little attention has been given by policy makers to developing this area. The evaluation of a pilot project worth £1.5 million which looked at developing language learning in Key Stage 2 and which ran between 2002 and 2009,⁶¹ showed advantages for Key Stage 4 take-up in some schools and particular benefits for boys and children with additional learning needs. In the absence of a policy on primary languages Wales, along with Northern Ireland, has the shortest period of compulsory language learning anywhere in Europe. Both the Welsh Conservative party and Plaid Cymru are now committed to introducing languages as a compulsory subject in primary schools in Wales should they come into power in future elections⁶².

Languages in the supplementary sector

⁶⁰ National Assembly for Wales, *Enquiry into the Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*, 2012.

⁶¹ Welsh Assembly Government, *Evaluation of the Key Stage 2 Modern Foreign Languages Pilot Projects Being Delivered in Wales from 2003-2006*, 2006, pp. 1–59.

⁶² <http://www.welshconservatives.com/news/movement-inspire-love-language>
<http://www.english.leannewood.plaidcymru.org/news/2012/08/10/revolutionise-language-teaching-in-schools-plaid-leader/>

According to the Welsh Assembly Government School Census in 2010, 6% of pupils in Welsh schools were believed to speak a language other than English or Welsh at home⁶³. However, no information is available on which languages are spoken. A survey of community languages in Wales in 2005 found that at least 93 languages were in use in Wales and that at least 8,000 children spoke another language in addition to English and Welsh. Chinese speakers were identified in Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and the Vale of Glamorgan and Cantonese speakers also in Blaenau Gwent, Conwy, Flintshire, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen. At the time of the survey local authorities supported provision to learn Cantonese in Cardiff, Denbighshire and Neath Port Talbot and Mandarin in Cardiff. There was also independently-funded provision for both Cantonese and Mandarin in Cardiff. The greatest concentration of speakers of Chinese languages was in Cardiff where the local authority said that 10 students were due to sit Chinese GCSE examinations in summer 2005. Across the country there was provision to learn 16 community languages either during the school day, as an extra-curricular activity or through complementary schools. At the time of the survey a Chinese complementary school was functioning in Bangor, while in Flintshire children travelled to Liverpool, Manchester or Chester for complementary classes in Cantonese⁶⁴.

Languages in higher education

Universities in Wales recognise the important role they have to play in developing strong international links for Wales and the positive impact that such links are likely to have on Welsh culture and the economy. The universities of Cardiff and Bangor have Institution Wide Language Programmes (IWLP) for all students and in three universities in Wales (Cardiff, Bangor and Lampeter) Confucius Institutes have been established to support Chinese language and culture not only in their universities but more broadly in schools in their region. As in other UK countries, many undergraduate students are reluctant to take part in mobility schemes which would give them overseas experience due to a lack of linguistic and intercultural skills. A target for undergraduate student mobility has been set at 17%.

Languages in further education (FE) and vocational training

A UK-wide survey of language learning in the FE sector in 2011 achieved responses from seven of the 23 FE colleges in Wales. All of these reported providing language courses but only one reported linking languages with other subjects or qualifications. Following the main trend of the findings, most language courses offered are GCSE, A level and AS level. Languages including Welsh were also

⁶³ Welsh Assembly Government, 'School Census', 2010
<<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2011/110906/?lang=en>>.

⁶⁴ Community Languages in England, Scotland and Wales, CILT, 2005.

reported as being offered as part of the Welsh Baccaulaureate. Few international links were reported from colleges in Wales, with only one college reporting positively⁶⁵.

The 'Business Language Champions' (BLC) programme first established in 2007 by CILT, the National Centre for Languages and rolled out by its sister organisations in Scotland and Wales, is still active in Wales with 40 business/school partnerships offering pupils a wide range of activities including career talks, work experience and language based projects. With the recent severe cuts to the funding of CILT Cymru, it remains to be seen whether or not the BLC programme is sustainable without the coordination provided to date by CILT staff.

Assessment systems

Although Welsh pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 take GCSE and A level examinations in a range of school subjects, these examinations are beginning to diverge in terms of content from the English examinations of the same name and may change more radically when the findings of the National Qualifications Review publishes its findings at the end of 2014. Current differences reflect the diverging curricula in the two countries. Welsh pupils in Key Stage 4 can also take the Welsh Baccaulaureate (WB) which is a separate qualification in key skills including communication and numeracy. The 20 hour languages module which was a compulsory part of the Welsh Baccaulaureate was removed at the end of the 2013/14 academic year.

Welsh pupils are currently able to take National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in a number of languages since language NVQs have recently been classified as IVETs (Initial Vocational Education Training) and are therefore available to pupils under the age of 16. Most other NVQs have now been classified as CVETs and are only available to pupils who are older than 16 years of age. IVET NVQs are recognised as contributing to school performance tables. In response to the declining market in England (where NVQs cannot be used to contribute to school performance tables) OCR, the awarding body for NVQs has ceased to offer the qualification in Japanese, Chinese, Italian, Irish and English. Only the major European languages are now available as NVQs. The WJEC examination board has developed a new qualification called QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework) which is available at three levels (Entry, Level 1 and Level 2) and in 6 languages including Chinese. The qualification is made up of a number of small units of around 10/20 hours language study each and is organised around 5 themes e.g. Communicating Personal Information and Organising & Planning. The QCF qualification is suitable for primary age children as well as for adults taking vocational courses since it can be tailored to meet the needs of specific groups of students or individuals. The delivery of QCF units in Chinese is currently undertaken by staff of the Confucius Institutes in Wales.

Initial teacher training

⁶⁵ Language Learning in the FE sector, CfBT, 2011

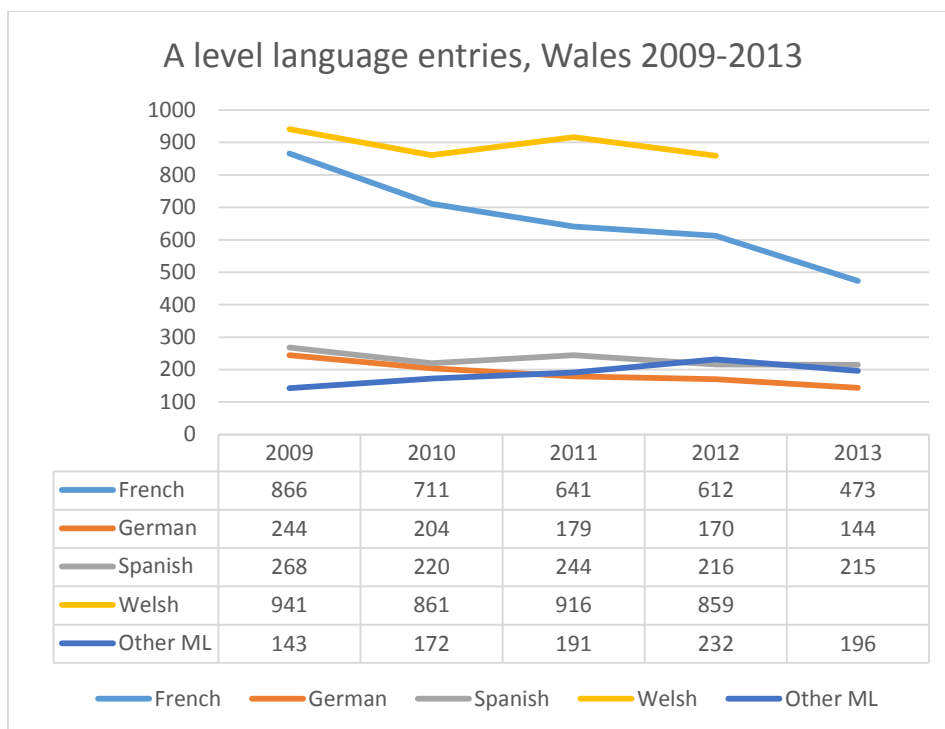
Initial teacher training in Wales is provided by 3 centres created through the collaborative working of Welsh universities. The three centres are i) Bangor and Aberystwyth ii) University of Wales and Trinity St David, Carmarthen and iii) University of South Wales and Cardiff Metropolitan University plus the Open University. Training to become a teacher of languages is offered by all 3 centres but not the Open University. Trainees are offered two routes into teaching. The first is via a one year postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) and the other is an employment based route known as the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) in which the trainee is supported by a school throughout their initial teacher training and spends most of their training in school. There is currently no provision in Welsh universities for graduates to train to be teachers of Chinese.

Main languages taught

The main foreign languages taught in Welsh schools are French, Spanish and German although all children must learn Welsh and English. In 2013 there were 5,911 entries for GCSE language subjects in Wales excluding Welsh and English, accounting for 3% of GCSE entries across all subjects. Of these, 483 were in languages other than French, German and Spanish⁶⁶. Very small numbers of primary and secondary schools in Wales offer pupils the opportunity to learn Chinese and are supported in doing so by the Confucius Institutes at the universities of Cardiff, Bangor and Lampeter.

At A level, there were 1028 entries for language subjects other than Welsh and English in 2013, of which 196 were in languages other than French, German and Spanish. The total number of entries for A level Chinese from Wales and Northern Ireland combined was 140. A level entries for all foreign languages have declined by one third since 2009. The drop out from language study at A level has been particularly severe for French with numbers dropping by 23% between 2012 and 2013 and by almost 50% in the past 4 years.

⁶⁶ A total of 51 candidates from Northern Ireland and Wales took Chinese GCSE in 2013. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) was unable to provide a further breakdown.



A level entries for language subjects, Wales, 2009-2013

The teaching of Chinese

Although the numbers of schools offering pupils the opportunity to learn Chinese is still relatively small, there is growing interest in Chinese, particularly in primary schools. This growth in interest is very largely the result of the promotional work being done by the Confucius Institute and Hanban. Interest in Chinese tends to be more pronounced in those cities such as Cardiff which have Chinese nationals amongst their population. Where Chinese is being offered in schools it is usually an extra-curricular activity.

In spite of the support described above, the fact that all pupils in Wales have to study Welsh or English in addition to their mother tongue means that curriculum time for other languages – particularly languages like Chinese which are likely to be taught as fourth or fifth languages, is at a premium. Some decisive policy measures and innovative thinking would be required for Chinese to be developed successfully in Welsh schools.

There are currently 3 Confucius Institutes in Wales located at the Universities of Cardiff, Lampeter and Bangor. These work with primary and secondary schools throughout Wales, wherever schools wish to introduce or are already teaching Chinese. There is an opportunity for developing closer collaboration with CILT Cymru whose role is the promotion and support of all language teaching in Wales. However, the recent reduction in funding to CILT Cymru by the Welsh Assembly is likely to mean that the capacity of CILT Cymru to develop activities and campaigns with the Confucius Institutes is limited. Given the low take up figures for all languages in Wales, it is also unlikely that the teaching of Chinese will grow rapidly in the foreseeable future.

8. Support for the development of Chinese

Key Points

- Hanban and the British Council are leading efforts to raise the profile of Chinese in UK schools and to increase the numbers of pupils in primary and secondary schools learning Chinese.
- There is increasing interest in Chinese language and culture from a wide range of voluntary and commercial organisations including publishers, educational trusts and professional associations.
- There is some duplication of effort and poor targeting of resources which is confusing to end-users.
- A single source of coordination, support and training for the teaching of Chinese would improve the effectiveness of investments made.

There are a number of organisations and associations across the UK providing programmes, resources and advocacy to support the teaching of Chinese to young people. The following do not constitute an exhaustive list but provides an overview of the many opportunities and resources that are available to schools, teachers and pupils.

Public Organisations

HANBAN

Hanban, based in Beijing, is a public institution affiliated to the Chinese Ministry of Education and also the Headquarters of the Confucius Institutes worldwide. It is committed to promoting the Chinese language internationally and to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide. It works to support learners of Chinese everywhere and to contribute to 'the development of multiculturalism and the building of a harmonious world'. It works closely with a wide range of educational institutions in countries across the world and is responsible for drafting international standards for the teaching of Chinese as well as for developing and promoting Chinese language teaching materials.

Confucius Institutes

In common with the practice of many other countries, China has a worldwide network of centres aimed at promoting its national language and culture abroad. The first Confucius Institutes in the UK were opened in 2005, based in universities in London, Manchester and Edinburgh. Over a ten year

period, the UK based network has expanded to 26 Confucius Institutes⁶⁷, each focussing on different types of activity according to local demand and circumstance, including the teaching of Chinese language and culture at all levels, materials development, teacher training, research, and cultural activities. It is understood that each Confucius Institute develops its own annual programme of activities against a budget provided from China. The first Confucius Classrooms in the UK were opened in 2007 and were closely linked to the Specialist Schools Initiative in England supported by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

Some Confucius Institutes, such as the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools based at the University of Strathclyde, and the Institute of Education Confucius Institute, focus particularly on developing the teaching of Chinese at school level, and support networks of Confucius Classrooms based in schools. These two Confucius Institutes have been identified as key for the development of Chinese teaching in the UK. The long term aim of the IOE Confucius Institute is to produce a sustainable step change in the teaching of Mandarin Chinese in schools in England. It is currently developing its work in the area of teacher training.

In Scotland, expansion of the Confucius Classroom network has focussed on local authorities rather than individual schools, providing a more strategic approach to embedding the teaching of Chinese within clusters of both primary and secondary schools. The 12 Confucius Classrooms in Scotland currently cover 17 out of 32 local authorities and enjoy the support of 22 (this will rise to 28 for the 2014/15 academic year) Hanban teachers to support those trained in the UK itself. By the end of the 2015/16 academic year Scotland will have more Confucius Classrooms per capita than any other country in the world.

With seven Confucius Classrooms recently established (2013) in Northern Ireland and 12 now functioning in Wales, there are a total of 92 Confucius classrooms across the UK. Each one is able to draw on the resources of teachers and volunteer teachers sent by Hanban from China, as well as teaching resources and opportunities to engage in a wide variety of programmes with China. In return, the Confucius classrooms must engage in outreach to other schools as well as developing the teaching of Chinese to their own pupils. Those Confucius Classrooms in England which are part of the network coordinated by the Institute of Education Confucius Institute are required to employ their own locally-based teacher of Chinese and may not simply rely on Hanban teachers. In Scotland, Hanban has agreed to provide local authorities with additional funding (up to 50% of the cost of a teacher) for five years if school hubs take on a full time teacher of Chinese to develop the teaching of Chinese across the schools in the hub. A total of 12 local authorities have taken up the offer to date.

The Confucius Institutes are well-placed to take forward collaborative projects with other institutions. One example is the work of the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools with the Education Department of Edinburgh Zoo to provide a programme for young learners in the upper years of primary education. The programme called 'Beyond the Panda', comprises a workshop provided by the zoo with follow-up activities and sessions offered by the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools for those primary school teachers who are learning Chinese and who are gradually working towards introducing it as the L3 (second additional language) in their schools or cluster of schools by 2020. The Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools works with Hanban to offer a summer immersion programme which enables pupils (64 pupils in 2014) from each Confucius Classroom hub to attend an intensive summer course in Chinese. Pupils completing the language course at the summer camp have the opportunity to take the Hanban's YCT examinations and also

⁶⁷ Data supplied by Hanban

receive a specially designed SQA award. There are also summer immersion courses in Chinese for Scottish teachers (26 teachers, mostly from primary schools participated in 2014), and 10 month scholarships for pupils who have completed secondary education. A total of 12 such scholarships have been awarded in 2014.

The Confucius Institute based at the University Manchester is a hub for Chinese language and culture in the north west of England, where it delivers language tasters and cultural workshops for thousands of pupils. In addition it has made a whole host of resources taken from its language and teacher training courses available on the Guardian Teacher Network (www.theguardian.com/teacher-network). Students can learn how to introduce themselves in Chinese, greet others, talk about who's who in their family and also find out how to talk about clothes, colours, numbers as well as make a start on learning how to write Chinese characters.

The Confucius Institute at London's Institute of Education, where the work in support of Chinese networks formerly carried out by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust has been located since 2012, is the lead institution in England developing training and support for teachers of Chinese at school level. Recent initiatives include a package of training and support for primary school teachers, including two and a half day residential training courses in various locations and a simplified version of the Schemes of Work for Key Stage 2 Chinese. The specialist team based at the CI is also exploring the possibility of linking this to the Hanban's YCT tests.

The Confucius Institute at the Institute of Education also offers a three-week immersive summer course (*Experience China*) for primary or secondary school teachers looking to introduce beginner-level Chinese into their schools. In the current year this has also been open to trainee teachers completing their course. Its partnership with the Institute of Education means it is well placed to advance research in the learning of Chinese by school pupils. It has established collaboration with Peking University to this end and is promoting and supporting a number of action research projects by leading practitioners in schools. This Confucius Institute operates as a national advice centre (in England) for the teaching of Chinese and can help schools find teachers and advise on curriculum models.⁶⁸

- *Hanban teacher programmes*

These programmes send teachers and volunteer teachers from China to work in UK schools (and elsewhere in the world). They are a significant element in the development of the teaching of Chinese, and in the promotion of cultural and educational exchange more generally between the UK and China. Hanban teachers are sent for periods of two years and may be based in primary or secondary schools, Confucius Classrooms, Confucius Institutes or other educational establishments. Hanban teachers are fully qualified in China and receive a 2 month (200 hour) programme of training in the teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language before departure though researchers were unable to ascertain how much of this programme was specific to the UK context. On arrival in the UK, they receive some induction training from their sponsoring institution. Their salaries are paid by Hanban.

Hanban volunteer teachers are generally recent graduates, though some may be post-graduates or qualified teachers. Volunteer teachers are posted initially for one year but this may be extended up to a maximum of three years if all parties agree and if it is possible to renew visas (this has been very difficult in the past). Volunteer teachers receive an allowance for accommodation and also pocket

⁶⁸ <http://ciforschools.wordpress.com/>

money but not a salary. Launched in 2004, by the end of 2012 the volunteer programme had sent over 18,000 volunteers to 101 countries in Asia, Europe, America, Africa and Oceania. Researchers were not able to ascertain what this group of teachers received in the way of pre-departure training or preparation for work in UK educational institutions.

At the time of this research there were 167 Hanban teachers and 112 Hanban volunteer teachers posted to the UK.

- *Chinese language proficiency tests*

To help assess the linguistic competence of non-native Chinese speakers across the world, Hanban has developed three exams, HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi)⁶⁹, YCT (youth learner test) and BCT (business Chinese test). There are 180 testing centres in 60 countries across the world, of which 16 are in the UK. In order to provide learners with incentives to take the exams, the best candidates are offered opportunities to take part in summer or winter camps in China.

The HSK is aimed at non-native speakers of Chinese while the YCT is aimed specifically at young learners of Chinese as an additional language. Both examinations may be taken at a number of different levels and consist of a writing test and a speaking test, which are independent of each other. The different levels of the HSK and the YCT have been mapped against the Chinese Language Proficiency Scales for Speakers of Other Languages (CLPS) and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as follows (vocabulary size is also shown):

HSK	YCT	Vocabulary	CLPS	CEFR
HSK (Level VI)		Over 5,000	Level V	C2
HSK (Level V)		2,500	Level V	C1
HSK (Level IV)		1,200	Level IV	B2
HSK (Level III)	YCT (Level IV)	600	Level III	B1
HSK (Level II)	YCT (Level III)	300	Level II	A2
HSK (Level I)	YCT (Level II)	150	Level I	A1
	YCT (Level I)	80		

Descriptors for the various levels of the YCT examination are as follows:

YCT (Level I)	can understand and use some of the most common Chinese phrases and sentences and possess the ability to further their Chinese language studies.
YCT (Level II)	can understand and use some simple Chinese phrases and sentences and cope with basic level communications.
YCT (Level III)	having reached an excellent level in basic Chinese, can communicate on familiar daily topics in a simple manner.
YCT (Level IV)	can communicate in Chinese at a basic level in their daily, academic and professional lives. When travelling in China, they can manage most forms of communication in Chinese.

- *Chinese Bridge Summer Camp for Secondary School Students*

⁶⁹ There is also an HSKK test of speaking only.

This annual programme aims to enhance international exchange and provide secondary school students with a deeper personal experience of Chinese language and culture, thus stimulating their interest in learning the language. As well as Chinese language classes, students take part in activities such as paper cutting, calligraphy, ink and wash painting, tea ceremony, and martial arts. They have opportunities to meet Chinese students and visit them in their homes as well as taking part in various excursions and cultural visits. According to Hanban figures, over 3,500 students from the UK have so far taken part in the programme.

- *Chinese Bridge of UK schools – head teacher visits to China*

This project has been run in as a partnership between the British Council and Hanban (except in 2012 and 2013), as part of the Memorandum of Understanding on UK-China Partnership in Education. It offers 100 places each to primary and secondary school head teachers and other representatives from across the UK. The UK Departments for Education used to fund participants' international travel but ceased doing so in 2011. The 1-2 week programme aims to enable participants to learn more about China and to encourage the development of Chinese teaching in their schools. Visits to Chinese primary and secondary schools also help establish school partnerships between schools in the UK and China. Since the programme was launched in 2007, over 850 head teachers and other educational leaders have participated. Apart from Scotland where SCILT/CISS is engaged in proactive follow up activities after head teacher visits to China, it is not known to what extent the impact of such visits on the teaching of Chinese in the UK is monitored and evaluated. A significant number of schools, however, have developed partnerships and their collaborative activities have been supported through the British Council 'Connecting Classrooms' programme.

- *Other Hanban supported programmes*

In addition to the major programmes described above, Hanban funds or co-funds many other programmes delivered through individual Confucius Institutes. An example of this is in Scotland where the Hanban is providing additional funding to establish primary "satellite" Confucius classrooms in Scotland in order to help facilitate the 1+ 2 approach. Every local authority that has a hub will be given extra funding to develop a Confucius classroom in a primary school in addition to the Confucius classroom they already have in one of their secondary schools. This initiative will be delivered in 2014/15 by CISS.

- *Teaching resources*

Every school which is part of the Confucius Classroom network receives a generous supply of books and supplementary materials each year from the Hanban. However, feedback from teachers is that they find these resources largely inappropriate for their needs. Schools also comment that they are unable to make best use of what they have been sent by the Hanban because 'everything is in Chinese' and so school librarians and other non-Chinese speaking staff are frequently unable to catalogue them or to deploy them to the right student/teacher groups.

British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. It works in over 100 countries helping people of all ages – but particularly younger people – to learn English, develop new skills, experience life and study in the UK and gain UK qualifications.

The British Council runs a number of programmes aimed at promoting Chinese culture and language within schools across all four nations of the UK.

- *Chinese Language Assistants programme*

The programme enables Chinese teachers to come and work in UK schools for an academic year. In 2014/15 it is expected that 105 Chinese Language Assistants (CLAs) will come to the UK, the highest number since the programme began in 2005. Of these, 3 will go to Northern Ireland, 8 to Scotland and 9 to Wales. CLAs receive six weeks pre-departure training, a short induction course when they arrive in the UK and further training sessions at two points during their stay. In Scotland, SCILT works closely with the CLAs throughout their stay and includes them in professional workshops for the Hanban teachers as well including them in SCILT's Chinese teachers' network. CLAs also have access to online support to help them with their teaching. A selection of schools hosting CLAs are monitored each year to ensure that the placement has been successful and to look at learning that can be used to improve the programme in future years. Unlike other parts of the UK where schools have to contribute a minimum wage for each CLA, the Government in Wales has provided funding for the CLA programme so that schools do not have to pay anything. Scottish schools have been receiving Chinese Language Assistants since 2005 and although the numbers of CLAs grew from 8 in 2010 to 22 in 2013, only 8 are expected in 2014 as the Scottish Confucius Classroom networks grow and bring with them a supply of volunteer native speaker teachers of Chinese from the Hanban. The Chinese Language Assistants programme is supported by the HSBC's Global Education Programme, which funds the induction and training of the CLAs in the UK.

- *Connecting Classrooms*

The British Council's 'Connecting Classrooms' programme helps UK schools establish partnerships with their Chinese counterparts and is designed to stimulate interest in learning Chinese and increased awareness of Chinese culture. Through the platform over 70 Chinese cities or districts are linked with the UK, covering over 1,000 schools. Partnership activities are supported with Connecting Classrooms grants, with which schools develop collaboration which may involve teacher and/or student exchanges as well as joint curriculum activities. These activities may be supported by Chinese Language Assistants recruited directly from the Chinese partner schools.

- *Key Stage 2 immersion courses (primary)*

These are week-long residential courses for primary school pupils. The courses offer both language learning and cultural immersion activities designed to develop pupils' understanding of Chinese language and culture. Schools must apply in clusters of two or three, supported by their local authority. Successful applicants are given ten student places to share amongst the schools in their cluster. Schools in the cluster must commit to introducing or increasing the teaching of Chinese language and culture in their school and also to support nearby schools in doing so. The immersion courses are currently supporting 100 young people per year.

- *Chinese speaking competition (secondary)*

The British Council runs this annual competition in conjunction with HSBC's Global Education Programme. The competition attracts entries from schools across the UK and there are awards for both group and individual performances. The competition covers beginner, intermediate and advanced categories with winners of the competition given the opportunity of travelling to China. In 2012/13 and in 2013/14 around 380 pupils took part in the competition. Some previous winners have gone on to study Chinese at university.

- *Teaching resource packs and published materials*

Since 2012, the British Council has produced a Chinese New Year education pack for primary schools. The resources help pupils and teachers to celebrate the day and to explore Chinese culture and language throughout the year, introducing children to some of the differences and similarities between the lives, languages and cultures of people in China and the UK. As well as being available via British Council Schools Online, the packs were produced in hard copy and sent to 10,000 UK schools in 2012 and in 2013. Welsh versions were also made available.

Voluntary and independent organisations

UK Federation of Chinese Schools

The UK Federation of Chinese Schools was established in 1994 to meet the specific needs of teachers working in the voluntary and community sector. These have been identified as appropriate teaching materials and resources, training – in particular in the use of technology – and access to teaching qualifications. The Federation has been working with Goldsmiths College to run an accredited course at a lower level than PGCE – see section d above. The Federation provides an important means of linking teachers for mutual support, training and networking. Between its members, it caters for up to 10,000 pupils of which 200 sat GCSE in 2013. They regard this as 'an enormous pool of talent' for building links between the UK and China.

Scotland China Education Network

Before the Memorandum of Understanding between China and Scotland was signed in 2008, support for Chinese was driven largely by the Scotland China Education Network (SCEN) under the leadership of Dr Judith McClure. Although many of the programmes and initiatives to develop the learning of Chinese in schools is now delivered by the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS) and the British Council, SCEN remains an important partner for SCILT/CISS and is also important in reaching out to those schools who do not have access to a Confucius Classroom. SCEN

has been instrumental in pushing forward closer collaboration between institutions and bodies such as the Royal Botanical Gardens and Edinburgh Zoo with their Chinese counterparts.

Manchester Chinese Forum

The Manchester Chinese Forum is a business-led initiative aimed at increasing links between Greater Manchester and China. China has been identified as a strategic priority for Greater Manchester, and the city aims to promote inward investment, tourism and education (incoming student numbers) from China. The Forum is aware that the development of Chinese teaching in schools is a way of supporting its aims to help businesses strengthen their ties with China and, although its focus is mainly economic, it has engaged a wide range of stakeholders from universities and schools. It has commissioned a report on 'provision, appetite and barriers' in relation to the teaching of Chinese in Manchester schools and is interested in helping to drive developments in this area across the Greater Manchester region.

Jiangsu Centre

The Jiangsu Centre for Chinese Studies is based in Harlow (Essex) and is a joint initiative between Essex County Council and the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education. It works in close partnership with the Anglo-European School (a Confucius Classroom) in Ingatestone to expand and develop the teaching of Chinese in Essex schools, businesses and the local community. It supports outreach activities which are similar in nature to those run by Confucius Classrooms – China days, assemblies, lunchtime clubs, taster lessons etc. for both primary and secondary pupils. It has also organised cross-curricular days, a sports summer camp, Chinese evenings for parents, a Joint Business Project with a link school in Jiangsu and many other activities throughout Essex.

Commercial Organisations

Dragons in Europe

Dragons in Europe is both a publisher and a provider of teaching, supplying teachers and teaching materials to schools – mainly but not exclusively independent prep schools – in England and Scotland, with a strong bias towards the south of England. Its specialist knowledge and expertise plug a gap by enabling schools to provide Chinese teaching without employing their own teacher.

Bamboo Learning

Bamboo Learning is also both a publisher and provider, focussing on Chinese for young children. It employs tutors to run Chinese clubs and offer private lessons. It has also developed an online Chinese staffroom, a website for teachers of Chinese offering news, resources and information

about jobs and career development. Bamboo Learning worked with CILT, the National Centre for Languages and the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) to make available Key Stage 2 Schemes of work for Chinese.

Bamboo Learning runs a website for teachers of Chinese (www.thechinesestaffroom.com) providing information on textbooks, online resources, free Schemes of Work and other services. The aim is to help teachers develop their teaching of Chinese, helping schools adopt Chinese in a way that works for them and helping people learn about what resources there are that will work for their needs in their classroom.

Publishers

In the past the majority of British publishers have put a great deal of energy into the large and lucrative market of English as a Foreign Language but the growing potential of Chinese as a Foreign Language is of great interest. However, the market for Chinese is currently led by the US with Germany, France and Holland all also ahead of the UK. Germany in particular, has a long history of providing high quality vocational training to the Chinese and now has strong business links with China in a range of different areas.

Some British publishers such as Pearson, already have a school textbook available (Jin bu) for secondary pupils learning Chinese while others, such as Macmillan employ a full time dedicated specialist working on Chinese. Many publishers also provide teachers with invaluable opportunities for professional development (CPD) and networking. Last year, for example, Macmillan ran a number of 1 day workshops for teachers of Chinese. These were held in major cities across the UK (Warwick, Leeds, London, Manchester, Cardiff, Nottingham and Edinburgh) with each attended by between 25 – 50 participants. The events were not marketed to any particular audience but attracted mostly native speaker teachers who have been in the UK for 2/3 years and who have either some basic ITT in China or none at all.

Sponsors

HSBC Education Trust has a long history of supporting the study of Chinese language and culture in the UK and to this end works with both the British Council and the Institute of Education Confucius Institute. Over the past decade, the British Council/HSBC Mandarin Chinese Speaking competition has helped to inspire hundreds of young people to further their Mandarin studies. HSBC also supports conferences and training and is working with the Institute of Education Confucius Institute to provide their new programme of support and training for primary school teachers.

Antonio Simoes, Head of the UK bank, said: 'HSBC first opened for business in Hong Kong and Shanghai in 1865. Our research indicates that China will be the world's biggest economy by 2050. And learning the language is critical to understanding the culture of a country, so important for our bank which operates in 80 countries.'

Other sponsors include the networking company, the Chopsticks club.

In Northern Ireland, the chicken company Moy Park has sponsored clothing for pupils visiting China and Lunns, the Jewellers is also named as a sponsor of Confucius Classrooms.

Other advocates for Chinese

Tim Clissold, Chief Executive of Peony Capital, has started to create an A level in 'Chinese civilization' designed to stimulate interest in the study of China at university. He has set up a group of 12 sinologists, drafted a specification and at the time of writing is in consultation with the DfE and the examination board OCR who hope to develop it to be introduced in schools in 2017. He recruiting schools to act as 'champions' and is commissioning materials and a text book to accompany the new qualification. A wider consultation is planned for a later date.

Associations promoting Chinese

The British Association for Chinese Studies

The British Association for Chinese Studies is a non-political organisation which has a membership of over 200 individuals whose interests relate to greater China, drawn mainly from the academic community but also from industry, the media and government. Its website contains a listing of opportunities to study Chinese at university level in the UK and the organisation is active in building bridges between HE and the schools sector in order to promote the teaching and learning of Chinese. In 2014 it undertook a consultation of its members on the future of Chinese studies (see section 6.3.6).

Association of Speakers of Chinese as a Second Language

Established in 2008 and based at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Leeds, the Association seeks to represent the interests, information and networking needs of people who have learnt Chinese as a second language. It helps members maintain or build their language skills, stay in touch with colleagues, and find out about opportunities for those who speak Chinese. It is an important advocate for the learning of Chinese in the UK.

Language teacher associations

The Association for Language Learning (ALL) is the professional association for teachers of foreign languages. Traditionally catering for teachers and teacher trainers in secondary schools, it is increasingly reaching out to primary schools. It actively promotes the teaching and learning of foreign languages by providing information and training and acting as a public voice on behalf of its members. ALL does not have a network specifically for Chinese teachers, but runs a World Languages e-mail discussion list which caters for the interests of Chinese, Arabic, Urdu, Bengali and

other lesser-taught languages. ALL is an important stakeholder in making the case for the teaching of a more diverse range of languages.

The Scottish Association for Language Teaching is an active association run by and for language teachers in Scotland. It organises events and training and is an important means of dissemination and consultation.

There is also a Modern Languages Association of Northern Ireland.

Part 2: Research findings

1. Baseline data

Key points

- Only a very few primary schools are teaching Chinese in a systematic and structured way. However an increasing number are incorporating elements of Chinese language and culture into their curricula as part of topic work, language days or celebrations such as Chinese New Year. The presence of Confucius Classrooms is having an impact on the number of primary schools able to offer their pupils some experience of Chinese.
- There are indications that both the number of schools teaching Chinese and the number of learners studying it are increasing - albeit very gradually from a low base. The rate of increase is faster in Scotland than in England. In Wales and Northern Ireland Chinese teaching is in the very early stages. In England there is a very mixed picture of provision and the subject is much more likely to be offered as an extra-curricular subject than as a mainstream option.
- Over 10,000 learners in UK schools sat examinations in Chinese in 2013. A disproportionate number of these come from the independent sector, which accounts for 44% of English GCSE entries (from end of Key Stage 4 pupils) and 71% of English A level entries (16-18 year olds).
- Entry figures for A level are anomalous and believed to be skewed by the large number of native speaker Chinese pupils taking the exam in the independent sector.
- Exam entries for Chinese tend not to show the exceptional skew towards female candidates seen in entries for other languages. In England, more boys than girls take GCSE Chinese.

Schools

Primary schools

None of the UK education departments collects data on which languages are taught in primary schools. In England a national survey conducted in 2008 found 1% of primary schools teaching Chinese, a proportion which varied from one region to another⁷⁰. This has been verified by sample surveys in 2012 and 2013 which found between 1% and 3% of English primary schools teaching Chinese⁷¹.

⁷⁰ Pauline Wade, Helen Marshall and Sharon O'Donnell, *Primary Modern Foreign Languages. Longitudinal Survey of Implementation of National Entitlement to Language Learning at Key Stage 2, 2009*. The highest proportion (3%) was in the West Midlands, whereas local authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands and the East of England reported no schools teaching Chinese.

⁷¹ Teresa Tinsley and Youping Han, *Language Learning in Secondary Schools in England. Findings from the 2011 Language Trends Survey*, 14 March 2012

Data-gathering exercise for this research has identified 95 schools in England with primary age pupils which are believed to be teaching Chinese⁷².

‘Pupils also learn languages which are part of topic work e.g. during a topic on China, we learned basic Chinese’

‘Chinese has been taught to Year 1 to 6 as a short term project. This was very well received by the pupils and staff’

‘Whole school language of the term - this term Cantonese’

However, there is a wide variety of practice and in some cases this involves only minimal exposure as opposed to structured teaching – see quotes. Schools which offer languages beyond the standard French, Spanish and German, often do so through multilingual approaches which provide pupils with a taste of a number of different languages rather than a programme of learning in a single language, as now required in the new National Curriculum starting in September 2014. Only a very few primary schools are teaching Chinese in

a systematic and structured way, although many more incorporate some Chinese into their curricula, as part of topic work, Language Days or celebrations such as the Chinese New Year.

However, despite these caveats, the creation of four new Confucius classrooms in English primary schools in May 2013 may already be having an impact on the number of primary schools able to offer pupils at least some experience of Chinese, and with this support we can expect numbers to edge up gradually.

In Wales and Northern Ireland, language learning is not a national curriculum subject but each has a Confucius classroom based in a primary school. The research identified 22 primary schools in Wales where some pupils are thought to be learning Chinese, and 2 in Northern Ireland.

In Scotland there were 119 primary schools teaching Chinese in Confucius hubs in 2013⁷³, whereas a previous survey in 2007 had not found any Scottish primary schools teaching Chinese⁷⁴. The model in Scotland of basing Confucius Classrooms on local authority clusters allows for greater co-ordination of activity involving both primary and secondary schools and this may be one of the reasons for the growth.

<http://www.cfbt.com/evidenceforeducation/our_research/evidence_for_government/national_policy_reforms/language_trends_survey.aspx> [accessed 18 October 2012]. Board and Tinsley. In 2012, just 5 out of a sample of around 700 primary schools said they were teaching Chinese, while in 2013, 18 out of 600 reported doing so. These are very small proportions – approximately 1% and 3% respectively of all English primary schools. Because of the small numbers, the difference between 2012 and 2013 figures may be a result of the particular sample of responding schools, rather than representing an actual increase on the ground.

⁷² Derived from compiling information from British Council and Hanban on participation in their recent programmes, together with intelligence from a range of other sources gathered during the research.

⁷³ SCILT/CISS. Data provided for this report.

⁷⁴ SCILT, “Survey of Modern Language Provision 2011 Part 1: Scottish Primary Schools”, 2012, 1–24.

Secondary schools

Data drawn from the 2013/14 Language Trends survey in England show that around 6% of state schools and 10% of independent schools in England offer Chinese teaching in Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14).⁷⁵ The rich data available from the Language Trends surveys shows that:

1. Chinese is offered in a greater proportion of independent schools than in state-funded schools – about double the proportion. (However, as there are many more state schools than independent schools, this still means that more state schools than independent schools offer Chinese.)
2. Chinese is more often offered as an extra-curricular subject than as a subject on the curriculum. In these cases, it is often taught by outsiders rather than by school staff and may be very marginal to the main curriculum, involving only small groups of pupils who may have to pay for the classes. Where it is a subject on the curriculum, it is almost always as a second or third foreign language and there is no consistency over the starting point, with some schools starting in Year 7 and others not till Year 10.
3. In both independent schools and state-funded schools, there has been a slight growth, over a period of seven years, in the proportions of schools saying they teach Chinese. However, some schools which previously offered it no longer do so. One commented that it had ‘led to fragmentation and unviable classes’ while others, including those who had worked with Confucius programme, had not found it successful.

The research for this report has identified 218 English state schools with secondary-level pupils understood to be teaching Chinese, plus 19 independent schools.

In Scotland, 33 state secondary schools were teaching Chinese in Confucius hubs in 2013 and there are as many as 60 secondary schools where some pupils are thought to be learning Chinese, including at least 8 independent schools, with another two about to start⁷⁶. This represents significant growth since early surveys which suggested that only a handful of Scottish schools were teaching Chinese.

This report has identified 27 state secondary schools in Wales (plus 2 independents) and 13 secondary schools in Northern Ireland, where some pupils are thought to be learning Chinese⁷⁷.

Pupils

Examination data are currently the only regular official source of information on the learning of Chinese. The information made available from different sources⁷⁸ can provide information variously

⁷⁵ See Appendix 3 Tables 1 and 2.

⁷⁶ Data provided by SCILT/CISS

⁷⁷ Based on involvement with Hanban and/or British Council programmes, Head teacher programmes excepted.

⁷⁸ Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), DfE, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

on numbers of learners sitting the different examinations available, where they are across the UK, the types of institution they attend, their gender and the level of achievement in Chinese relation to other subjects. They can also provide an indication, albeit an imperfect one, of whether Chinese or other languages are growing or shrinking in UK education systems.

However, there are also a number of limitations to the information which can be gleaned through examination data. The most obvious of these is that they do not account for learning which does not lead to public examinations. The data do not provide any additional information about the learners – e.g. whether they are native speakers, how long they have been studying the language, or what other subjects they are studying. And for some countries and some examinations, full data is not available.

Exam entries

A total of 9,448 pupils sat public examinations in Chinese in summer 2013. England accounts for 93% of these exam entries, Scotland 4% and Northern Ireland and Wales together 3%.⁷⁹ See Appendix 3 Table 3.

In addition, nearly UK 2,000 students sat Chinese international proficiency tests in 2013, around half of them likely to be of school age – see Appendix 3 Table 4.

Numbers for both the various UK examinations in Chinese and the Chinese proficiency tests have been growing.

GCSE (full course) entries for Chinese have risen from 2,234 in 1995 to 3,042 in 2013⁸⁰.

⁷⁹ The JCQ was not able to provide a breakdown between Wales and NI because they considered the numbers were too small

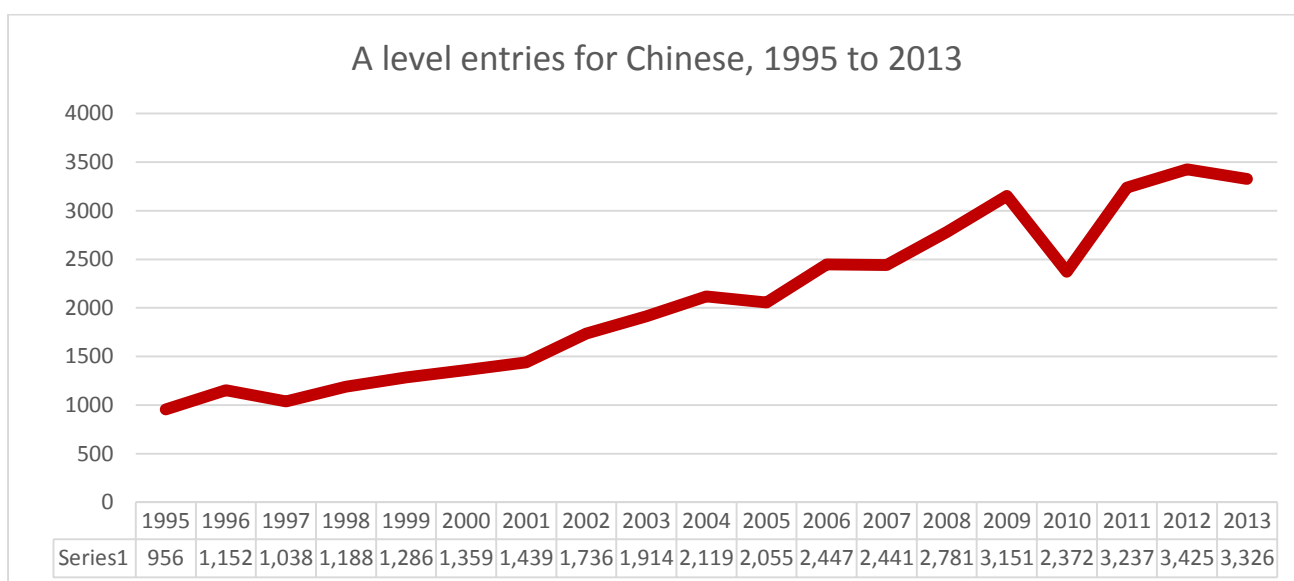
⁸⁰ This is in a context in which the number of entries for all languages has fallen by about one third and confirms findings from school surveys that Chinese is a subject which is growing, albeit from a very small base: Chinese represents less than 1% of all language entries at GCSE. In the past two years, with the introduction of the English Baccalaureate measure for schools in England, entries for GCSE languages have started to rise. In 2013 the number of entries for French rose by 16% compared to the previous year; German rose by 9% and Spanish by 26% (JCQ figures including entries from all age groups and across the UK). Chinese rose by 20%; however there was an unexplained drop in numbers for Chinese in 2011 and the highest number of Chinese entries was recorded in 2010.



GCSE entries for Chinese (UK), 1995-2013

These figures include all entries for Chinese (candidates of all ages, UK wide). Entries for GCSE Chinese from English schools at the end of KS4 have grown by 11% in 6 years – from 2,100 entries in 2008 to 2,346 in 2013 – see Appendix 3 Table 5.

A level entries show stronger growth than those for GCSE, from fewer than one thousand in 1995 to over three thousand in 2013. Like GCSE entries, they show a dip in 2010, the reasons for which are unexplained. During the same period, entries at A level for all languages combined have declined by one third and Chinese now accounts for 10% of all language A level entries which is anomalous given the share of entries at GCSE.



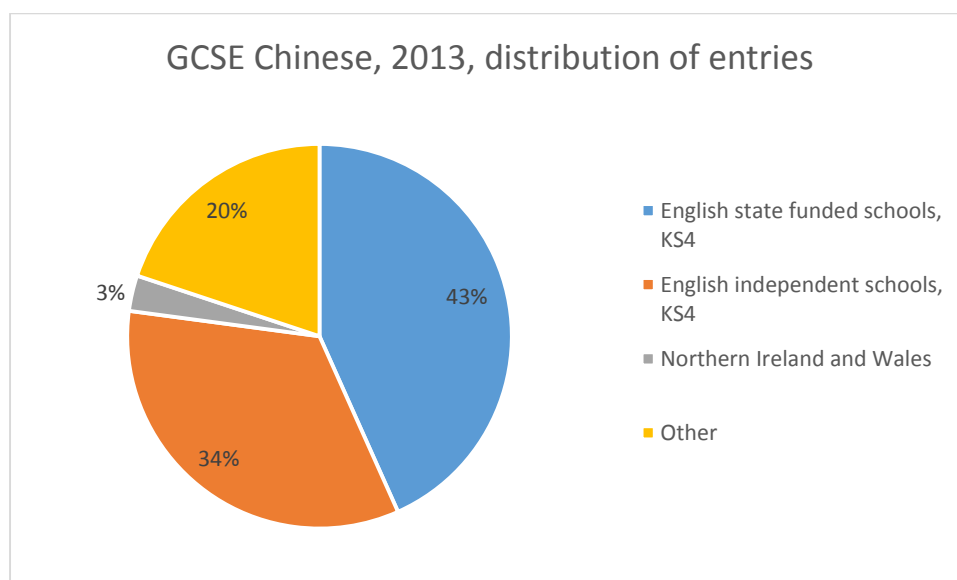
A level entries for Chinese, UK, 1995-2013

The DfE does not publish a time series for Chinese A level entries from English schools, but the figures presented below suggest that this growth has come mainly from the independent sector. This is discussed further in the section below on ‘native speakers’.

In Scotland, the number of entries for Chinese has been growing steadily as new exams introduced in 2008, become established. In 2013, 334 candidates sat the various Scottish examinations available, compared with 82 in 2009 – a four-fold increase – see Appendix 3 Table 6.

Types of institution

GCSE figures published by the Department for Education show that the independent sector supplies a disproportionate number of candidates for Chinese – Key Stage 4 candidates from English independent schools make up just over one third of the total.⁸¹



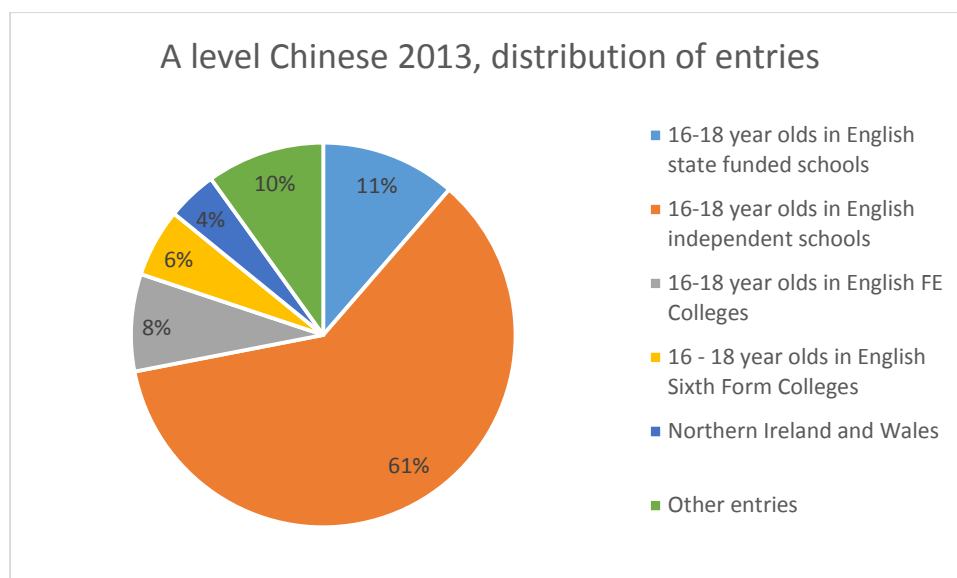
Distribution of entries for GCSE Chinese, 2013

A level entry figures show that the preponderance of entrants from the independent sector is even more marked⁸². Taking the figures for England only, the proportion of candidates for Chinese from

⁸¹ Of the 3,042 learners who sat GCSE Chinese in summer 2013, 2,346 were pupils in English schools sitting the exam at the end of Key Stage 4. Of these, 1,028 (44%) were from independent schools and 1,317 from state funded schools. Based on the proportion of Key Stage 4 pupils in independent rather than state-funded education, this proportion should be around 8.4%. The chart is based on data from both the Department of Education and JCQ and shows the full distribution of GCSE candidates including those from Northern Ireland and Wales plus a further 605 categorised as ‘Other’. These would include pupils in English schools sitting the exam either before the end of KS4 or in the Sixth form, and also learners from adult education or the voluntary sector.

⁸² In 2013 there were 3,326 candidates, of which only 841 (around a quarter) were from 16-18 year olds in the English state-funded sector, including both schools and colleges, and 2,015 (61%) from independent schools. Considering that only 18% of post 16 students are studying in the independent sector, this represents a very significant disproportion, and the reasons for this are discussed below. Only 140 entries (4%) came from Northern Ireland and Wales.

independent schools is 71%, compared with 28% across all languages. A high proportion of entries come from independent schools across all languages, but there is an exceptional skew in the case of Chinese.



Distribution of entries for A level Chinese, 2013

There is a further anomaly in the examination figures for Chinese, not just for 2013 but for preceding years too, in that the number of A level entrants is higher than the number for GCSE. Normally, only a small proportion of learners who sit a GCSE go on to take that subject at A level, and A level numbers are therefore much lower. For example, there are about 11,000-12,000 entries for A level French, compared to around 150,000-170,000 entries at GCSE. However, in the case of Chinese the figures suggest that a large proportion of A level entrants have not previously sat the GCSE, indicating that in all likelihood a large proportion are native speakers.

'Native speakers'

Entry figures for all types of exam include candidates of Chinese heritage; however, it is not possible to say what proportion of the total these represent⁸³. The fact that there are more entries for A level

⁸³ Children with Chinese backgrounds attending UK schools have very varied linguistic repertoires and, rather than a clear-cut distinction between 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, there is a continuum of background knowledge of Chinese ranging from hardly any (or none) to full fluency. Where there are a large number of centres each entering just one or two candidates, this may be indicative that entrants have learnt Chinese in their home or community rather than in school. In Northern Ireland data provided by NICILT for 2010 shows there were 12 candidates from 9 schools and these are thought to be native speakers. However, this research shows that where mainstream schools teach Mandarin as a foreign language, the numbers sitting public examinations may also be very small. In Scotland in 2013 the 68 candidates for Intermediate 1 and the 84 candidates for Intermediate 2 were each spread across 18 centres (an average of 4 or 5 candidates per centre) and the 66 candidates for Higher Grade came from 21 centres (an average of about 3 candidates per school). It is therefore not possible to draw any firm conclusions about the background of candidates from the exam data alone.

than for GCSE, and that such a high proportion comes from the independent sector, suggests that a large number of entries come from Chinese nationals undertaking Sixth Form studies in English independent schools. A proportion of entries for GCSE may also come from Chinese ‘native speakers’ not born and brought up in the UK but attending either independent or state-funded schools. Some also come from children of Chinese heritage (but not necessarily ‘native speakers’) who have been taught in supplementary schools and entered for the exam by their mainstream school. The UK Federation of Chinese Schools estimates that between 7,000 and 10,000 children are enrolled in such schools⁸⁴. These children may well have Cantonese or another Chinese language rather than Mandarin as their ‘home’ language⁸⁵ but this may give them some advantages.

Gender

Data on the gender of Chinese learners nationally from DfE figures for English schools (2013) show that 52% of Key Stage 4 English entrants for GCSE Chinese are boys. Except for Polish, which had equal numbers of entries from boys and girls, all other languages have a higher proportion of entries from girls than boys – entries from boys account for only 44% across all languages and, in the case of Urdu, the most gender-marked language, only 37%.

At A level, girls taking Chinese outnumber boys (data for 16-18 year olds in England) by 54% to 46%. However, this too is a more balanced gender ratio than for all languages combined where the ratio is two thirds (64%) girls to one third (36%) boys. Is not clear to what extent the exceptional nature of A level figures for Chinese (see above) skews this data.

The picture of Chinese as less gender-marked than other languages is confirmed in Scotland. Data from the Scottish Qualifications Authority shows that at Intermediate 1 and 2, girls outnumber boys by a small margin whereas at Higher, boys taking Chinese outnumber girls – see Appendix 3 Table 7.

Achievement

Figures from the DfE for English schools show that achievement at GCSE is higher in Chinese than for other languages. In 2013, 97% of candidates achieved a pass at A*-C compared to 71% of all languages candidates. This may reflect the relative ability (or application) of candidates taking Chinese or the presence of a large number of ‘native speakers’. Alternatively, the exams may contain easier assessment tasks or be more leniently marked than other languages.

At A level, 45% of candidates for Chinese obtained an A or A*⁸⁶. This was higher than for French and German (40%), or Spanish (37%) and for all subjects combined (27%) but lower than for ‘Other Modern Languages’ where more than half achieved A or A*. However, very few A level candidates for Chinese achieved the coveted A* - a finding which is at odds with the suggestion that many of them may be native speakers. Fewer than 5% achieved an A* in Chinese, compared with 40% in Russian, 25% in Polish, and around 7% in French, German and Spanish. There are clearly some

⁸⁴ Discussions with Catalina Brook, 21 May and 20 June

⁸⁵ See discussion in Eversley and others.

⁸⁶ DfE, GCSE A level examination results of students aged 16 to 18 2012/13 (Revised). England.

anomalies surrounding the A level in Chinese which merit investigation by the exam boards and their examiners.

In Scotland, the pass rate for Chinese exams in 2013 was higher than the average for all subjects – see Appendix 3 Table 8.

2. Academic perspectives – the linguistic challenges of Chinese for English speakers

Key points

- Psycholinguistic studies of native speakers of Chinese support the view that the learning of Chinese by non-native speakers will be more successful if teaching starts early and includes the learning of characters from the start.
- Neuroimaging research shows that reading Chinese activates different parts of the brain from those involved in reading English.
- Despite widely-held views that the grammar and structure of Chinese present few problems to those learning it as a foreign language, a number of complex features of the language have been identified as likely to cause consistent difficulties to learners. This suggests that the subject knowledge needed by teachers of Chinese goes beyond simple native speaker competence.
- Research suggests that some explicit teaching of tones is needed in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

Characters

The academic literature shows that teachers and practitioners hold different views as to whether characters should be taught and if taught, when and how. This variety of views leads to some fundamental differences in text books and teaching resources but surprisingly little academic research has been carried out into the acquisition of characters by those learning Chinese as a foreign language.

Psycholinguistic studies into how native speaker Chinese children acquire characters suggest that characters should be learned from an early stage in a child's life as words acquired earlier in life are processed more efficiently than those acquired later in life⁸⁷. This supports the view that the learning of Chinese by non-native speakers will be more successful if teaching starts early and includes the learning characters.

⁸⁷ Chen, B., Dent, K., You, W., Wu, G. (2009). Age of acquisition affects early orthographic processing during Chinese character recognition. *Acta Psychologica* 130, p.196–203.

Using neuroimaging techniques including positron emission tomography (PET) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), a number of researchers⁸⁸ have all studied the brain mechanisms which lead to the recognition of Chinese characters. Tan and Siok gave native speakers of Chinese a range of tasks relating to semantics, homophones and rhyme judgement while carrying out brain imaging and found that in contrast to research findings which show that the area of the brain called Broca's area (located in the left inferior frontal region) and which contributes to alphabetic reading, in Chinese it is the left middle frontal gyrus known as Brodmann's area which plays a central role in character recognition⁸⁹. Researchers have further hypothesized that the extremely strong activation of the left middle frontal gyrus in reading Chinese stems from the unique square configuration of characters since this part of the brain is responsible for visual-spatial processing of objects and spatial working memory. Brodmann's area is also responsible for the coordination of cognitive resources, including phonology and semantics.

The results of this research are significant in three respects for the teaching and learning of Chinese as a second language. Firstly, the findings suggest a cortical segregation of reading centres for Chinese and English which may help to explain why learning characters is a challenge for English speakers. Secondly, they may support anecdotal evidence that a certain type of learners (e.g. visual learners) find it easier to grasp Chinese characters and thirdly, they provide evidence of the interdependence of phonology and orthography in Chinese. This suggests, in turn, that effective teaching and learning of Chinese may require the integration of characters, pinyin and tones.

These findings are potentially very exciting, suggesting that the learning of Chinese may be a qualitatively different sort of mental experience from the learning of European languages. They should be followed up by further comparative research on the learning of Chinese and other languages by different types of students.

Research by Chen et al.⁹⁰ provides further evidence of the greater efficiency with which young brains can process Chinese characters. They carried out a number of experiments including:

⁸⁸ Chee, M.W. L., Hon, N., Lee, H. L., & Soon, C. S. (2001) Relative language proficiency modulates BOLD signal change when bilinguals perform semantic judgments. *NeuroImage*, 13(6), p. 1155–1163. Chen, J. Y., Chen, T.-M., & Dell, G. S. (2002) Word-form encoding in Mandarin Chinese as assessed by the implicit priming task. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 46, p.751–781. Fu, S., Chen, Y., Smith, S., Iversen, S., & Matthews, P. M. (2002). Effects of word form on brain processing of written Chinese. *NeuroImage*, 17(3), p. 1538–1548. Kuo, W. J., Yeh, T. C., Duann, J. R., Wu, Y. T., Ho, L. T., Hung, D., et al. (2001). A left-lateralized network for reading Chinese words: A 3 T fMRI study. *Neuroreport*, 12, p. 3997–4001. Li, P., Jin, Z., & Tan, L. H. (2004). Neural representations of nouns and verbs in Chinese: an fMRI study. *NeuroImage*, 21(4), p. 1533–1541. Liu, Y., & Perfetti, C. A. (2003). The time course of brain activity in reading English and Chinese: an ERP study of Chinese bilinguals. *Human Brain Mapping*, 18, p. 167–75. Tan, L. H., Spinks, J. A., Gao, J. H., Liu, H. L., Perfetti, C. A., Xiong, J., et al. (2000). Brain activation in the processing of Chinese characters and words: a functional MRI study. *Human Brain Mapping*, 10, p. 16–27. Tan, L. H., Liu, H. L., Perfetti, C. A., Spinks, J. A., Fox, P. T., & Gao, J. H. (2001). The neural system underlying Chinese logograph reading. *NeuroImage*, 13(5), p. 836–846. Tan, L. H., Spinks, J. A., Feng, C. M., Siok, W. T., Perfetti, C. A., Xiong, J., et al. (2003). Neural systems of second language reading are shaped by native language. *Human Brain Mapping*, 18(3), p. 158–166. Xiang, H., Li, C., Ma, X., Zhang, Z., Bower, J., Weng, X., et al. (2003). Involvement of the cerebellum in semantic discrimination: an fMRI study. *Human Brain Mapping*, 18, p. 208–214.

⁸⁹ Tan, L. H. & Siok, W. T. (2006). How the brain reads the Chinese language: recent neuroimaging findings. In Li, P., Tan, L.H., Bates, E. & Tzeng, O.J. L. (eds.) *The Handbook of East Asian Psycholinguistics, Volume 1: Chinese*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, p. 358-371.

⁹⁰ Chen B. et al. (2009) Chen. B., Dent. K., You, W., Wu, G. (2009). Age of acquisition affects early orthographic processing during Chinese character recognition. *Acta Psychologica* 130, p.196–203.

- measuring the accuracy of identifying briefly masked characters which revealed that accuracy was higher for characters which had been acquired at an early age rather than those which had been acquired later in life;
- measuring the visual duration threshold (VDT) for Chinese characters acquired early or later in life. This showed that characters acquired at an early age were successfully identified with shorter display durations than those acquired later;
- discriminating real Chinese characters from others which are orthographically ‘illegal’ and unpronounceable.

The conclusions suggest again that an early start in the learning of Chinese as a foreign language is likely to be more successful – though clearly age is not the only variable, the amount and quality of teaching are important too.

A further subject of great debate is the order in which characters should be introduced to learners. The research by Xing et al.⁹¹ creates a model of character acquisition encompassing frequency, regularity and consistency of characters to support children’s learning. This and other studies into the learning of characters by native speakers of Chinese reinforces the claim that more frequent and ‘regular’ characters should be introduced to learners first and that ‘consistent’ and less frequently used characters should only be introduced in groups as learners progress to a higher level of proficiency.

Grammar and structure

Chinese is a ‘meaning-based’ (rather than ‘form-based’) language and has no inflectional morphology, case or gender marking. This can be appealing to many learners and is sometimes considered a welcome change from form-based languages. However, the considerable body of theoretical research particularly into the interfaces between morphology, syntax and semantics in the acquisition of Chinese, reveals that some features of Chinese, which are salient to the learning of Chinese, are likely to cause consistent difficulties to learners. These include the following⁹²:

- classifiers (or measure words) used before nouns⁹³
- topic structure⁹⁴

⁹¹ Xing, H., Shu, H., & Li, P. (2004). The acquisition of Chinese characters: corpus analyses and Connectionist simulations. *Journal of Cognitive Science* 5, p.1-49.

⁹² Zhao, Y. (2011). Review article: A tree in the wood: A review of research on L2 Chinese acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 27 (4), p.559-572.

⁹³ e.g. Liang, G. (2006). Nominal phrase in English and Japanese speakers’ L2 Mandarin grammars. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, UK.

⁹⁴ e.g. Jiang, W. (2006). Acquisition of word order in Chinese as a foreign language: An error taxonomy. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Queensland, Australia. Chen, P.T. (2009). Topic and topic-comment structures in first language acquisition of Mandarin Chinese. In Xiao, Y. (ed.) *Proceedings of the 21st North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics: Volume 1*. Smithfield, RI: Bryant University, p. 165–77.

- temporality represented with aspect markers or through context⁹⁵
- resultative verb compounds used to express achievements or accomplishments⁹⁶
- wh-words remaining in situ⁹⁷
- long-distance binding of the reflexive *ziji*⁹⁸
- some unique constructions like *ba* and *bei* structures⁹⁹

It can be argued that the level of Chinese proficiency achieved by primary and secondary students will not reach a level where the above-listed structures or features are likely to be needed. However, these findings show that the subject knowledge needed by teachers of Chinese goes beyond simple native speaker competence. Very few native speaker teachers of Chinese have undertaken a detailed and systematic study of the Chinese with which to support the sustained development of their learners' competency.

It has been found, for example, that learners of Chinese as a foreign language, particularly those at low proficiency levels, tend to undersupply *le* in their oral narratives, omitting it in certain obligatory contexts.¹⁰⁰ Lower intermediate learners with English as a first language also exhibit a strong influence from their first language, incorrectly accepting the perfective verb-final *le* in all situation types due to their misinterpretation of *le* as a grammatical marker for the past tense.¹⁰¹ This misinterpretation is sometimes reinforced by teachers seeking a 'simplified' way to explain the use of *le* even though Jin¹⁰² makes it clear that drawing up a simplistic order of acquisition for the aspect markers *le*, *guo*, *zai* and *zhe* is not feasible because learners of Chinese as a foreign language experience specific problems with each aspect marker at different stages of their learning. Without a detailed and systematic study and analysis of the language, teachers of Chinese can compound the

⁹⁵ e.g. Huang, C. C. (2003). Mandarin temporality inference in child, maternal and adult speech. *First Language* 23, p. 147–69; Smith, C. S. & Erbaugh, M. (2005). Temporal interpretation in Mandarin Chinese. *Linguistics* 43, p. 713–56.

⁹⁶ e.g. Zhao, Y. (2006). Causativity in L2 Chinese grammars. Beijing: Peking University Press. Yuan, B. & Zhao, Y. (2011). Asymmetric syntactic and thematic reconfigurations in English speakers' L2 Chinese resultative compound constructions. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 15, p. 38–55.

⁹⁷ e.g. Dugarova, E. (2010). *Behaviours of wh-elements in English and Russian learners' L2 Chinese*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, UK. Yuan, B. (2010). Domain-wide or variable-dependent vulnerability of the semantics–syntax interface in L2 acquisition? Evidence from wh-words used as existential polarity words in L2 Chinese grammars. *Second Language Research* 26, p.219–60

⁹⁸ e.g. Chen, D. (1995) Chinese reflexive *ziji* in second language acquisition. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 2, p. 37–52. Yuan, B. (1998). Interpretation of binding and orientation of the Chinese reflexive *ziji* by English and Japanese speakers. *Second Language Research* 14, p. 324–40. Zhao, X. (2008) The syntax and interpretation of overt and null arguments in Chinese and their acquisition by second language learners. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, UK.

⁹⁹ e.g. Huang, Y., Yang, S., Gao, L., Zhang, W and Cui, X. (2007). A study of L2 acquisition of Chinese *bei*-structure (in Chinese). *Shijie Hanyu Jiaoxue [World Chinese Teaching]* 2, p. 76–90. Du, H. (2004) The acquisition of the Chinese *ba*-construction by adult second language learners. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, AZ, USA.

¹⁰⁰ Yang, S., Huang, Y., and Sun, D. (2000). Underuse of temporal markers in Chinese as a second language. *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association* 35, p. 87–116. Duff, P.A. and Li, D. (2002). The acquisition and use of perfective aspect in Mandarin. In Salaberry, R. and Shirai, Y. (eds.) *The L2 acquisition of tense-aspect morphology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 417–53

¹⁰¹ Jin, L. (2009). The development of aspect marking in L2 Chinese by English native speakers. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

misunderstandings and difficulties of their students rather than guiding them towards sustained improvement and higher levels of linguistic competency.

Tones

The tonal nature of the Chinese language has been seen to present particular problems for English speakers and a number of empirical studies have focused on understanding which tone is the most difficult for English speaking learners of Chinese to acquire. Shen¹⁰³ analyses the tonal errors made by American learners who have been studying Chinese for four months, the results indicating an error rate ranging from 55.6 percent for tone 4 to 8.9 percent for tone 2. The error rates for tone 1 and tone 3 are 16.7 percent and 9.4 percent, respectively. These results indicate that American learners of Chinese have difficulty with all tones, but that tone 4 is especially difficult. This differs from Zhang¹⁰⁴ who proposes that English speaking learners of Chinese find the rising tones (Tone 2 and Tone 3) most difficult to produce with the falling tone (Tone 4) and the level tone (Tone 1) the easiest to acquire. In England, Neal's corpus study with five students in his Year 10 class (aged 15 – 16) after they had been studying the language for six months finds that 'anything apart from Tone 1' is problematic for his learners¹⁰⁵. He finds that Tone 4 is the most problematic. However his most recent action research concludes that inaccuracy in the use of tones does not tend to interfere with intelligibility – see section on methods and approaches, below.

A range of factors has been proposed as adversely affecting the process and production of Chinese tones for native speakers of English. Some studies suggest that non-native speakers lack sensitivity to tonal categories and others that features from learners' first language e.g. pitch and intonation interfere with the acquisition of Chinese tones. Leather finds that native Dutch and English speakers' perception of tones in Chinese tends to be less 'categorical' than is the case with native speakers of Chinese¹⁰⁶. Context and sentence positions have also been to contribute to difficulties in tone perception among non-native speakers of Chinese.¹⁰⁷

One point on which research does seem to have reached a consensus is that the representation of tones is essentially different for native and non-native speakers. Using brain imaging techniques as well as behavioural evidence, psycholinguistic researchers have found that native Chinese speakers

¹⁰³ Shen, X. (1989). Toward a register approach in teaching Mandarin tones. *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 24 (3), p. 27-47.

¹⁰⁴ Zhang, H. (2010). Phonological Universals and Tonal Acquisition. *Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 45 (1), p.39-65.

¹⁰⁵ Neal, R.J. (2014). Teaching and Learning Mandarin Tones in an English Secondary School. *Scottish Languages Review*. Issue 27, Spring/Summer 2014, p. 9-20.

¹⁰⁶ Leather, J. (1987). F0 pattern inference in the perceptual acquisition of second language tone. In James, A. & Leather, J. (eds.), *Sound patterns in second language acquisition*. Dordrecht: Foris, p. 59–81.

¹⁰⁷ Broselow, E., Hurtig, R. R., & Ringen, C. (1987). The perception of second language prosody. In Ioup, G. & Weinberger, S. H. (eds.), *Inter-language phonology: the acquisition of a second language sound system*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House, p. 350–361.

process tones as a linguistic property predominantly in the left hemisphere¹⁰⁸, whereas for speakers of a non-tonal language such as English, the processing of Chinese tones takes place in the right-hemisphere frontal regions and as a non-linguistic stimulus. In other words, for native speakers of Chinese tonal pattern is an integral part of each word, an association which does not exist in for those whose first language is non-tonal.

Interestingly, a number of psycholinguistic studies have shown that cortical involvement can be modified in low-proficiency learners following specific training on tones. For example, Wang¹⁰⁹ carried out a study using a short period of perceptual, laboratory based training which showed that the ability of non-native learners to identify Chinese tones could be significantly improved and it was further noted that this improvement appeared to generalize to new contexts, transfer to the production domain, and also to be stored in learners' long-term memories.¹¹⁰ Other researchers have found that improvements in the identification of tones are associated with an increase in activation in the area of the brain known as Wernicke's area (left superior temporal gyrus, Brodmann's area 22) and the emergence of additional activity within adjacent regions (left superior temporal gyrus, Brodmann's area 42).

The research described above suggests that *some* explicit teaching of tones is needed in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. Indeed, as Neal¹¹¹ observes, too much procedural 'knowledge' of tones may result in learners ignoring tones altogether, having no real understanding of how the tonal system works, or even finding that their faulty tones become fossilized. Neal's research analyses hand gestures, body movements and colours as ways of explicitly teaching/learning the Chinese tonal system and also advocates peer assessment and tonal awareness tasks as ways of raising learner awareness of tonal production. Showalter and Hayes-Harb¹¹² carried out two experiments with native English speakers with no prior knowledge of Chinese, looking at the effect of tone marks on the acquisition of tones with new words. A group of learners presented with tone marks outperformed the group not given tone marks in both experiments, indicating that the presence of tone marks can support native English speakers' ability to associate a novel phonological feature (in this case, lexical tone) with newly-learned lexical items.

In summary, academic research suggests that because native speakers of Chinese tend to process tones as an integral part of words and learners of Chinese as a foreign language do not, teachers

¹⁰⁸ Hsieh, L., Gandour, J., Wong, D., & Hutchins, G. D. (2001). Functional heterogeneity of inferior frontal gyrus is shaped by linguistic experience. *Brain and Language*, 76(3), p. 227–252. Klein, D., Zatorre, R. J., Milner, B., & Zhao, V. (2001). A cross-linguistic PET study of tone perception in Mandarin Chinese and English speakers. *NeuroImage*, 13(4), p. 646–653. Wang, Y., Jongman, A., and Sereno, J. (2001). Dichotic perception of Mandarin tones by Chinese and American listeners. *Brain and Language*, 78, p. 332–348. Wang, Y., Behne, D., Jongman, A., & Sereno, J. A. (2004). The role of linguistic experience in the hemispheric processing of lexical tone. *Journal of Applied Psycholinguistics*, 25, p. 449–466. Wang, Y., Sereno, J.A. & Jongman, A. (2006). Chapter 22: L2 acquisition and processing of Mandarin tones. In Li, P., Tan, L.H., Bates, E. & Tzeng, O.J. L. (eds.) *The Handbook of East Asian Psycholinguistics, Volume 1: Chinese*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, p. 25–256.

¹⁰⁹ Wang, Y., Spence, M. M., Jongman, A., & Sereno, J. A. (1999). Training American listeners to perceive Mandarin tones. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 106, p. 3649–3658.

¹¹⁰ Wang, Y., Sereno, J. A., Jongman, A., & Hirsch, J. (2003). fMRI evidence for cortical modification during learning of Mandarin lexical tone. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 15(7), p. 1–9.

¹¹¹ Neal, R.J. (2014). Teaching and Learning Mandarin Tones in an English Secondary School. *Scottish Languages Review*. Issue 27, Spring/Summer 2014, p. 9–20.

¹¹² Showalter, C. and Hayes-Harb, R. (2013). Unfamiliar orthographic information and second language word learning: A novel lexicon study. *Second Language Research* 29(2) , p. 185– 200.

should work towards moving learners away from separating tones from phonemes. In other words, students should be asking ‘is this má or mà’ rather than ‘what tone is ma’.¹¹³

3. Learner perceptions

Key points

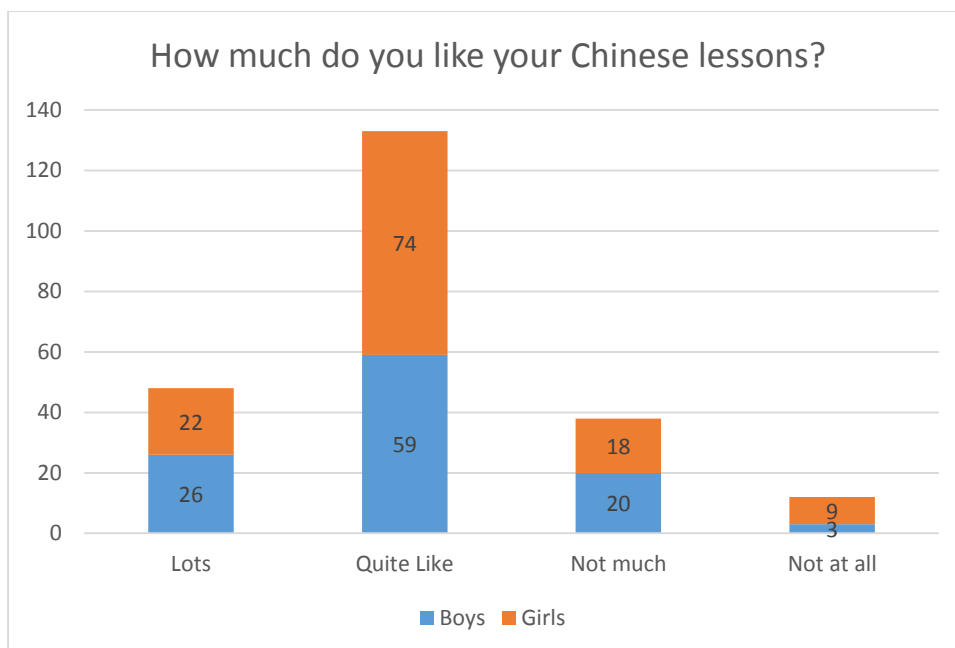
- Pupils learning Chinese are more likely they say they enjoy their lessons than pupils learning other languages, and particularly so in the case of boys.
- Although the vast majority of all pupils think that Chinese is hard compared to other languages, there is some evidence that this perception may be exaggerated – the perception of Chinese as a difficult subject is less marked in learners who are actually studying the subject than those who are not. Where pupils are well-taught and there is sufficient curriculum time available, they derive considerable satisfaction from ‘cracking the code’.
- Parents are strongly supportive of their children learning Chinese in those schools working in more privileged circumstances and where there are high aspirations overall for their children’s success.

A total of 440 pupils completed written questionnaires to contribute to this research, from all eight of the schools visited across the four UK nations. The sample included both pupils learning Chinese and those not learning it, either because they had not yet had the opportunity, or because they had chosen not to do so – see Appendix 4 for further details.

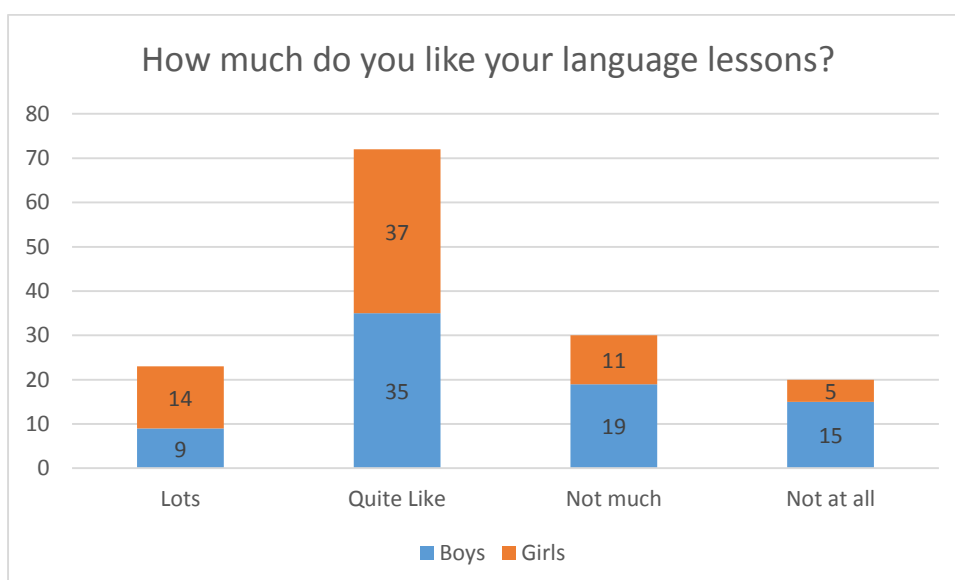
Enjoyment of language lessons

Pupils were asked to say how much they liked their Chinese lessons and these answers compared with those of pupils not learning Chinese in relation to lessons in other languages they were learning:

¹¹³ Neal 2014. As above.



Enjoyment of Chinese lessons: number of responses by gender (pupils learning Chinese)



Enjoyment of other language lessons, number of responses by gender (pupils not learning Chinese)

Comparing the two sets of responses, pupils of both sexes are more likely to say they like their Chinese lessons 'a lot' or 'quite like' them than pupils learning other languages. Twenty-one per cent of pupils learning Chinese said they liked the lessons 'a lot', compared to 16% of those learning other languages, and 57% said they 'quite liked' them, compared to 50% of those learning other languages.

A higher proportion of boys than girls said they liked their Chinese lessons 'a lot' whereas of those learning other languages, girls were more likely to say they enjoyed them 'a lot'. Boys studying other languages were much more likely than girls to say they did not enjoy their language lessons at all, however in the case of those studying Chinese, it was more common for girls to say they did not enjoy them at all. These are relatively small samples of mixed age children and not matched for other variables such as socio-economic background or ability, but the results seem to confirm

anecdotal evidence and that from exam figures that boys tend to enjoy learning Chinese more than other languages.

Pupils completing the questionnaires were asked to say in their own words what they liked best about learning Chinese. Secondary school students mainly stressed the cultural interest, followed by the intrinsic interest of the language and the characters (see quotes, right).

Another aspect that pupils liked was the comparative rarity of Chinese.

'It's a widely spoken language and it's so different. I can impress people.'

'...it is different and unique and unlike other languages'.

'Learning about the culture and what they eat and do daily, and learning where the characters come from'

'I like learning what the characters mean'

'It's different and new to have to write the characters instead of just words'

Pupils in primary schools also liked the characters, especially 'painting' them, and liked the fun aspect of lessons.

'Our teacher makes it fun, I enjoy learning Mandarin Chinese'

Pupils attending the supplementary school, rather than stressing the exploration of cultural differences, had more personal reasons for enjoying learning Chinese. Many stressed the importance of friendship and opportunities to meet other young people of British-Chinese descent. Those who had chosen to attend classes had often done so for family reasons.

'I want to be able to communicate with my grandparents in China'.

'This is a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity – I did French in primary school but I have now got a much better teacher'

'It is interesting how it all fits together – characters, pin-yin and tones'

'Mandarin makes sense to me – no other language has done so'

In focus groups pupils spoke enthusiastically about their experiences learning Chinese. In one school, many had learned French in primary school but considered themselves bad at it – they found learning Chinese no more difficult and certainly more enjoyable. When asked what they particularly liked about Chinese lessons, in this school two of the six pupils commented that they found tones particularly interesting because they could change a single word and give it a completely different meaning. Another pupil said that he found characters particularly interesting, especially the way each one was made of

different elements, each of which had its own meaning too.

When pupils were asked what they liked least about learning Chinese, the most common response was that it was hard. Some said they

'It's hard, awkward, too hard to pronounce'

'Sometimes I don't get what my teacher is saying'

'Sometimes it is difficult and I don't like having so many sheets it confuses me'.

found the characters difficult to remember or write and a few said they found it hard to pronounce or understand.

Pupils in some schools felt the pace of learning was too fast and required a lot of effort both in class and for homework.

In a focus group of primary pupils, those who were less enthusiastic about learning Chinese confirmed that they found the characters and the tones difficult and did not enjoy writing.¹¹⁴

'The characters might mean something to other people but to us it's just lines'

'Why are we writing? If I'm on holiday I don't need to write anything'

'It would be better to have more speaking and less writing'

'How can you remember a word and a tone and a character?'

'I don't understand tones – they are just little 'v's and things'

'Chinese is a bit difficult but you get used to it. The tone changes the meaning completely – really cool!'

Comparative difficulty of Chinese

The vast majority of all pupils thought that Chinese was harder than Maths, Science, English or learning another language.

However, the perception of Chinese as a difficult subject is less marked in learners who are actually studying the subject than those who are not. While 78% of those who had not had the opportunity to study Chinese thought it would be more difficult than Maths, only 66% of those studying the subject thought so. And while only 7% of those who had not yet had the opportunity to study Chinese thought it would be easier than other languages, 19% of those actually studying the subject thought it was easier. There is a similar pattern for comparisons with other subject areas – see Appendix 3 Table 9. Discussion of this topic in focus groups brought out the difficulties of comparing subjects which are quite different in content and approach and require different types of

'In French we just do a lot of writing and taking notes'.

'I know more in French, but I like my Chinese lessons better'

'You're not expected to be doing really well because it's hard'

'It doesn't seem harder because the lessons are fun'

'We're working at a higher level in Maths, in Chinese we're still really doing the basics'.

¹¹⁴ NB this group were from a school in a challenging socio-economic area.

response from pupils. Where pupils had an appropriately structured and paced programme, they were able, on reflection, to admit that although they still regarded Chinese as a difficult language, the goals they were being asked to achieve were no more demanding than for other subjects, and it gave them a sense of achievement to be learning something which many regard as impenetrable. In comparing Chinese and other languages, although pupils felt that with Chinese they were 'learning two languages' because they had to master the characters as well as the sound system, they also recognised (without prompting) that many aspects of Chinese were simpler than French or Spanish. Pupils in the Welsh school thought that Welsh was easier because it has phonetic spelling and they had been learning it from primary school. The fact that 'we have been doing it for longer' was seen to make it less hard.

'Chinese is like Maths because there is always an answer with Maths - because of its clear structure Chinese is the same'

'...it's more arty and not as academic'

In one focus group pupils likened Chinese to Maths in the way that many different elements combine in a logical way to establish meaning. However, in another group, pupils thought that Chinese draws on artistic abilities rather than 'academic' ones. One pupil commented that he thought Chinese was easier than other languages because of its clear word order and lack of tenses. He agreed that the characters were difficult at first but it became much easier to learn them once you found a

technique that worked for you.

In another focus group, pupils commented that they found other subjects are 'way easier than Chinese' and liked learning French better. Others felt that Chinese was similar in difficulty to other languages, but better because the classes were smaller. Many confirmed findings from the questionnaires that learning Chinese, although certainly a challenge is not as hard as it seems from the outside.

However, the perception that Chinese is a difficult language can limit the number of pupils choosing to take the subject. In one school the Head of Languages commented that they had to work particularly hard to promote Chinese (and also German) but not so other languages.

'It was a challenge but once you get into the groove it really isn't. You can quickly start to piece sentences together and build it up'

'I thought it would be totally alien. But after the first year it just flows'

'I thought it would be the hardest language but it's only as hard as Spanish'

Pupil confidence in their ability to learn Chinese and other languages

Pupils were asked to rate themselves on how good they thought they were at learning Chinese (those learning Chinese) or another language (those who had not yet had the opportunity to learn Chinese).

Ten per cent of the boys and 12% of the girls learning Chinese thought they were ‘very good’ at it. Of those learning other languages, only 6% of the boys thought they were ‘very good’; however 14% of the girls did so. Eight per cent of the boys and 5% of the girls thought they were ‘very bad’ at learning Chinese, and of those learning other languages 14% of the boys and 8% of the girls thought they were ‘very bad’. There is a similar tendency here as noted above for a more equal gender balance.

In focus groups, pupils asked how good they thought they were at learning Chinese produced a range of different responses.

‘It’s quite hard but OK – the characters are hard but saying things is easy’

‘It doesn’t come naturally but I’ve come to like it’

‘It’s not Mission Impossible but I’d rather be doing something else – I don’t even ken what I’m doing’

Pupils who thought they were quite good at learning Chinese acknowledged that it was difficult to remember characters and required constant practice. Pupils used different learning strategies - one pupil thought it helped to keep writing them in sentences rather than trying to learn them by heart while another mentioned a website she found particularly helpful. One pupil commented that he had noticed that his grades in tests were getting better and better and he found that motivating and did not want to give up learning Chinese. He said wasn’t a good idea to try to remember all the stroke orders as this was too hard – it was more practical to use the radicals plus mnemonics.

Pupils’ views on the importance of Chinese in their future lives

Almost all the Chinese learners responding to the questionnaires or taking part in focus groups with the researchers had a clear idea of the growing economic importance of China and a great many felt that it would be useful to them in future, either to work in China or as an impressive addition to their CV. They saw the job opportunities as being in China and some had very specific aspirations in this regard.

‘I would like to work in the video game industry and a lot of work will be in China’.

‘China is apparently famous for breeding and training birds. I would like to breed and train birds.’

In one of the focus groups, one female pupil wanted to become an actress in Taiwan. Others mentioned translation or business opportunities more generally. Some mentioned that they wanted to study Chinese at university or teach the language.

'Projections for the economy and speaking Chinese will mean that you will be able to do business. Chinese will be a global language'

'I want to go into business and Chinese will make a big difference'

'I want to do a gap year in China'

'People will think highly of me because I have made the effort'

Where pupils were most enthusiastic about learning Chinese, they were already convinced about the value of learning languages in general and saw languages as important for expanding their horizons and giving them opportunities to visit and find employment in other countries. Some – particularly those from more privileged backgrounds - were very articulate about the benefits of learning Chinese.

Pupils attending the supplementary school had a more nuanced awareness of how their language skills might be beneficial, recognising that it was the combination of their English language skills with the ability to speak Chinese that

would help them to mediate between the two cultures:

'Be a doctor/lawyer in England for both British and Chinese who don't understand English'

Others were less sure about how it would benefit them. Some pupils in the Welsh school in particular were unsure about whether they would use it in future and some said already that they did not intend to continue studying it. In the focus group of primary pupils, awareness of future opportunities was limited to 'going to Chinese restaurants', or working as an air-stewardess. One pupil said he hoped to go to China someday. The distance of China from the UK was off-putting for some who didn't think they would ever travel there, but might go to France or Spain.

China is a bit far and I can't go on a plane for long

Perceptions of pupils not learning Chinese

A few of the pupils in this category had not had the option to study Chinese because they were not in a high ability set. However, the overwhelming reason against studying Chinese was that it was more difficult than other languages. The distance from English and European languages was off-putting for some.

Some had chosen to study Japanese instead and thought that 'the characters seem way more complicated than Japanese'. It is interesting that this group of pupils was positively attracted to Japanese.

'It's really hard and my friends say they can't understand the teacher'

'It's weird writing in symbols'

'Because I think French and Spanish are alike and Chinese is different'.

'Because I like Japanese things'

'I chose Japanese because my brother chose it and I really like the culture, country and language'

'I watch anime'

The opportunity to visit Japan on an exchange trip was a motivator for some pupils, who had enjoyed a taster session, to choose Japanese.

Some pupils said they had no interest or connection with Chinese culture:

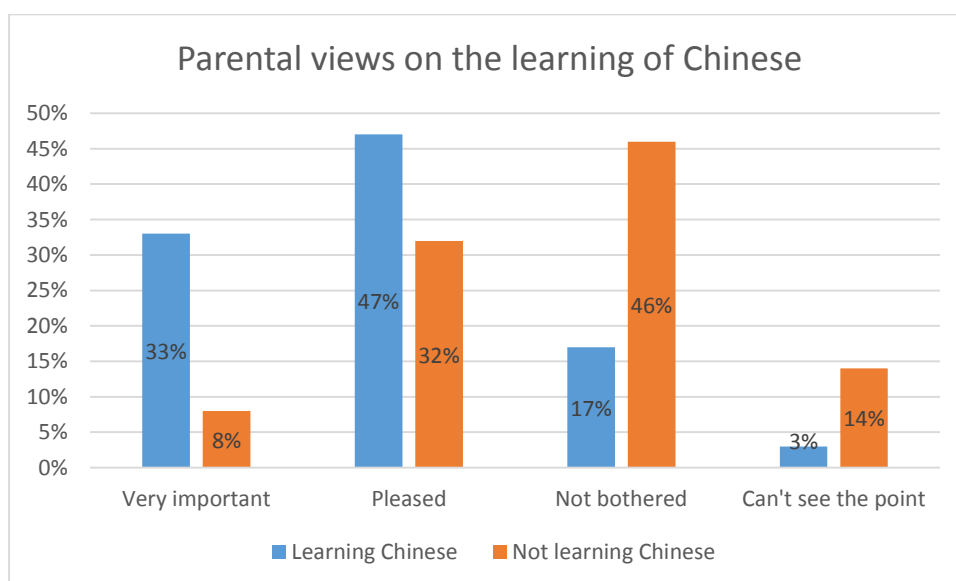
'I have no Chinese relatives and I was not interested in the language'

'Completely irrelevant to what I want to do in future'

These pupils were drawn towards French, Spanish or German because they were frequent visitors to those countries, or had family living there.

Parental attitudes

Pupils responding to questionnaires were asked to say what their parents' attitudes were or would be towards them learning Chinese. As can be seen from the chart below, a very large proportion of parents whose children were learning Chinese were supportive. The proportions of parents who thought it was 'very important' were particularly high in the Chinese supplementary school, in the independent school and in the state secondary schools in more privileged circumstances. However, more than half (60%) of parents of pupils not learning Chinese were reported to be either 'not bothered' or unable to see the point of their children learning Chinese.



Proportions of parents with different views on the importance of learning Chinese. Pupils learning Chinese and those not having had the opportunity

Parental attitudes were very strongly related to the context of the school. Apart from the supplementary school, where the decision to enrol the child for classes taking place at weekends had been generally taken by the parents, parental support was highest in schools which were working in more privileged circumstances. Here pupils have aspirations to travel to China and parents are proud and even envious of the opportunities their children have to learn Chinese. The only negative factor here was that, because parents were so ambitious for their children, in some cases they were worried that Chinese, as a 'difficult' subject, might bring down their grades.

However, in schools working in areas where parents and pupils have more limited horizons, teachers felt that the parents are not aware of what is going on in the school. One school said that although there were a minority of parents who were very keen, most were not interested and did not approach the Chinese teacher at parents' evenings. Some had even displayed racist attitudes which the school had had to deal with. A pupil focus group in another school did not report high levels of parental interest in their learning of Chinese with one pupil responding 'my Dad doesn't take much interest' and another saying 'My Mum & Dad just ask what I have done at school today'.

4. Teachers and their perspectives

Key points

- UK-trained and experienced teachers of Chinese are vital for enabling Chinese to become fully embedded in the school curriculum and facilitating the best use of temporary staff coming from China. UK teachers who are not specialists in Chinese require considerable support and training in order to be able to teach the language successfully.
- Problems with visas and adaptation to the UK context are among factors currently limiting the effectiveness of temporary staff from China.
- Many of the methods successfully used to teach Chinese are similar to those used by UK teachers of other languages; however, there is some evidence that in the case of Chinese, teachers may provide more explicit discussion of the distinctive features of the language in English.
- Most teachers teach both characters and pinyin. When taken at an appropriate pace, pupils enjoy learning and writing characters.
- There is a shortage of accreditation for the early stages of learning Chinese (Scotland excluded) and a widespread view that the current A level Chinese is skewed towards native speakers and therefore not suitable for those learning the language from scratch in school.
- Lack of curriculum time, motivation of pupils (and their parents), and issues related to a shared understanding a learner progression in Chinese, emerged as the key challenges for teachers.
- In schools where the language is well-established, Chinese has found a place alongside other languages taught. However, there can be tensions with teachers of other languages when Chinese is introduced a high profile way which is perceived to be in competition with other languages.

 Teacher profiles

The research found many different types of person with varying types of preparation employed in the teaching of Chinese in the UK. These have been categorised as follows:

<p><i>UK nationals with a high level of Chinese and QTS</i></p>	<p>These teachers have either studied Chinese at university or have lived in China for an extended period of time. They make excellent role models since they are living proof that UK nationals can attain a high level of written and spoken fluency in Chinese. They are fully aware of the intricacies of UK education systems, exam requirements and school culture, and can contribute flexibly – in one case the teacher was teaching Japanese as well as Chinese. They are well-placed to mediate between cultures and explain Chinese culture in a way which is interesting to pupils and connects with their interests. In one lesson observed in school E, the teacher deftly handled spontaneous questioning from pupils about aspects of Chinese culture and history. In this school, pupils were effusive about their enjoyment of Chinese culture and how this was a motivating factor for them.¹¹⁵ PGCE courses are becoming an increasingly popular option for graduates in Chinese, not all of whom want to go into business.</p>
<p><i>UK-based with Chinese background and QTS</i></p>	<p>These teachers combine familiarity with UK pedagogical approaches and understanding of the technical aspects of the education system with all the benefits of a native speaker teacher in terms of the authenticity of language and culture. Young graduates of the CILT/CfBT school-based initial teacher training programme have been quick to rise to the challenge of leading the development of Chinese in the schools where they are working and were developing highly innovative approaches with great success. There is a rich supply of UK-based Chinese native speakers who are interested in teaching, some of whom are also qualified teachers in China. There is a rich supply of UK-based Chinese native speakers who are interested in teaching, some of whom are also qualified teachers in China. At the supplementary school visited for part of this research, all the teachers are volunteers and all receive support and guidance from the school, though not all are trained. The advantages of UK-based teachers with a Chinese background are the ability to understand and connect with UK children and teenagers, as well as their permanence and immediate availability.</p>
<p><i>UK class teachers (primary)</i></p>	<p>When primary schools introduce the teaching of a language, it often falls to the generalist class teacher to undertake this task even though she/he may not have been trained to teach languages at primary level and may not have language skills on which to draw. Two examples of how different primary schools have approached this are included in Appendix 5.</p>

¹¹⁵ In one lesson observed in school E, the teacher deftly handled spontaneous questioning from pupils about aspects of Chinese culture and history. In this school, pupils were effusive about their enjoyment of Chinese culture and how this was a motivating factor for them.

<i>Hanban teachers</i>	Teachers from China are greatly appreciated as additional support, and make it possible for schools to reach out and involve pupils in other schools in their locality in Chinese language and culture. However, where schools are completely dependent on this external support for sustaining Chinese teaching there have been problems. One cause of these has been visa problems which have delayed the arrival of teachers. What works best is where there is a UK-trained Chinese teacher, whether a native speaker or a non-native speaker who has spent time in China who is able to help Hanban teacher settle in and ensure that they are deployed in the most effective way. Researchers observed a number of occasions where the Hanban teacher was simply observing the class without making any contribution at all. Hanban teachers are frequently asked to undertake after-school activities which have a Chinese cultural element such as calligraphy or paper-folding. Such classes seen in this research were low-key and suffered from irregular attendance, particularly when they involved pupils coming in from other schools. There is clearly a need for further training and preparation not only for the Hanban teachers in order to better equip them to contribute to the life of a school in the UK, but also for UK teachers and line managers in ways to deploy them most effectively and to help them to settle into working life in a new country. The researchers only saw one example of team teaching and this involved a UK-based Chinese teacher working with a teacher of another subject. A further limitation on the effective deployment of Hanban teachers as a resource is the length of time they stay in the UK. Although this has now been increased to two years, this is thought to be the minimum time for them to become sufficiently acquainted with UK systems and approaches to be effective in the schools in which they are placed.
<i>Hanban volunteer teachers</i>	Hanban volunteer teachers receive only accommodation costs and pocket money, and stay for just one year in the first instance. Comments about their effectiveness in supporting the teaching of Chinese are similar to those outlined in the section above. In one school, the volunteer teacher was observed delivering a full class; in another the teacher concerned mainly sat at the back of the class or helped to distribute resources to pupils.
<i>Chinese Language Assistants</i>	Chinese Language Assistants are clearly an important part of the mix if effectively used, though their role overlaps with that of Hanban teachers and volunteer teachers and this may be confusing to end-users. The comments above about the very modest amount of pre-departure and induction training in UK pedagogy and classroom practice apply to the CLAs just as much as they do to the teachers coming to the UK on Hanban organised programmes. There is also an issue for schools in that the CLAs only come to the UK for one academic year. This reduces the time they have to settle in and to become effective members of school staff.
<i>Other native speakers</i>	School also draw on volunteer native speakers of Chinese from the local university as additional support. However, the researchers did not see this in practice and teachers as well as pupils had mixed views about how helpful it had been.

Methods and approaches

Speaking and listening

Most examples of teaching observed by the researchers introduced new language via listening and speaking using, in the main part, communicative methodology. Teachers interviewed as part of the research felt that there was little difference in teaching the spoken word between Chinese and European languages, though one teacher observed that with Chinese, speaking skills and the writing system had to be taught as separate elements. Whereas with the most commonly taught European languages the written language can immediately act as a support for the spoken language, this is not the case with Chinese, though pinyin performs this function to some extent (see below). As with European languages, there are a number of sounds which are not present in English and these have to be practised and in some cases, explicit instructions given, for example, about where to place the tongue.

Researchers noted that in most schools there tended to be less use of the target language than would be usual in the teaching of European languages. In many of the lessons observed, teachers provided instructions and explanations in English e.g. one primary school teacher explained to her pupils what tones were and showed pupils how she would indicate the different tones through hand gestures, and only used Chinese for the words actually being learnt. However, it was also common for teachers to use a small amount of classroom language such as 'very good,' 'stand up' and greetings. In school A, the register was taken in the target language and all pupils answered in Chinese. In this school, oral skills were given priority and characters learnt for homework. The teacher reported that pupils had previously sat the GCSE short course in speaking and understanding only, but the teacher had found it impossible to teach the language without introducing some writing as support and so had changed the approach to accommodate this.

In school E, pupils talked in English about the sounds of the new words and devised their own mnemonics for remembering them. Many teachers used games and competitive activities to ensure all pupils had a chance to speak and practise the language. Pupils clearly enjoyed these and were keen to respond.

In the supplementary school, teachers mainly used the target language, relying on pupils' being accustomed to hearing Chinese at home even if they were not able to speak or write it. They used English to check children had understood the meaning of a particular word. This provided children with a deeper immersion in the language, at least for the 2 hours per week that they attended the school. In school C, a lesson was observed which was conducted almost entirely in the target language. Pupils remained engaged throughout and except for one incident with a reluctant pupil where the teacher had to revert to English, the lesson was successfully conducted in a relaxed yet purposeful manner.

In school B, one group of pupils was experiencing ‘immersion’ learning of Chinese which involved integrating the teaching of Chinese with other subjects for around one third of their curriculum time. The teacher had worked hard to accustom pupils to understanding and using core phrases such as ‘I’m sorry I’m late’ and ‘What is the word for...’ and these were written up on coloured card and displayed around the classroom. A PE lesson in Chinese was observed which included both the oral and the written language. This class was delivered jointly by the native speaker Chinese teacher and the English PE teacher who used phrases and words in Chinese to reinforce what the pupils needed to do.



Most teachers observed were either native speakers or were able to model near-native pronunciation. In large classes when pupils shouted out the answer to questions others may not always have been able to hear the correct pronunciation. In these situations Hanban teachers could have been used more to assist with linguistic modelling. In one case where the teacher had only a beginners’ level of Chinese, correct pronunciation was provided by the occasional visit of the Hanban teacher or Google Translate (on audio). One primary school mentioned that they used a Cantonese speaking pupil to help model pronunciation for the rest of the class.

Teachers feel there is a balance to be struck between developing good pronunciation in learners and creating anxiety by over-emphasising the importance of tones. Several teachers were unwilling to spend too much of their valuable classroom time on perfecting pupils’ use of tones, since ‘you can make yourself understood’ anyway. This is borne out by the recent research carried out by Rob Neal of Silverdale School who tested samples of pupil speech on native speakers of Chinese and found that although their tonal accuracy ratings were low, their intelligibility ratings were high¹¹⁶. However, a native Chinese teacher in a primary school was observed paying close attention to tones, drawing on young children’s ability to reproduce the sounds of the new language and laying the foundations for good pronunciation later.

Characters/pinyin

¹¹⁶ Presentation at Institute of Education/Confucius Institute conference, 7 June 2014

All the teachers observed used pinyin to a greater or lesser extent and all presented characters to pupils, though not all were teaching them to write them. In school G, a primary school, the teacher (from Hanban) deliberately did not teach writing because he believed that young children's motor skills were insufficiently developed. This policy was echoed by the Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute to which the teacher was attached, who confirmed that the policy was to focus on oral skills at both primary and secondary level and only teach characters to older students. Clearly this policy



has been developed to make the most of the time available to Hanban teachers, and to avoid putting too many demands on pupils which might be daunting for them. However, in England and Scotland, not teaching writing would be a barrier to mainstreaming Chinese in primary schools since curriculum frameworks in both systems advocate both speaking and writing. In another primary school visited (school J), researchers observed very small children (Year 1, 5-6 year olds) being taught to write characters using the correct stroke order and counting strokes in chorus. They were thoroughly enjoying it and their class teachers were obviously proud of what they had produced, taking photos to upload on the school blog for parents to see. In a third primary school, pupils were in the early stages of recognising characters, matching them to pictures/symbols.

Teachers recognise that the need to learn 4 elements of each word (characters + sound + pinyin + meaning) requires time. In school E, where there is sufficient time to progress to GCSE over 4 years, the teacher takes it slowly and ensures that learners have 'complete skills'. By this she means that they understand both hand-written Chinese and printed characters and she provides practice in this by writing on the whiteboard herself, as well using printed and on-screen material. She believes that 'over-use of pinyin switches learners off' but also notes that exact pinyin is important for word processing Chinese. In school A, there is much more pressure on time as pupils only have one hour of Chinese a week. The teacher therefore focusses more on oral skills. She believes that writing requires a picture-based approach such as that presented in the publication 'Chineasy'. In her opinion, 'The Chinese approach of endless repetition and counting strokes does not work in the UK.' Two schools noted that some pupils 'get upset' by characters and are unwilling to do them.

'The Chinese approach of endless repetition and counting strokes does not work in the UK.'

One teacher thought this was because of the shortage of time and the fact that pupils were insufficiently aware of what learning Chinese would involve when they made their choices. The teacher in the other school put it down to lack of confidence by the pupil concerned, who did not want to hold up his whiteboard for the other pupils to see what he had written.



Some teachers felt that pinyin should be a prop only, to be dropped after the word has been learned. Pupils in one school were confused by the inconsistent use of pinyin and characters and asked for them to be always presented in the same way, with the pinyin on top of the character.

In the supplementary school, the focus was more on writing than speaking, since it was assumed that most pupils could at least understand some spoken Chinese and that the reason for them attending the Saturday school was for them to become literate. Here reading and speaking were integrated, there was widespread use of flashcards, and in some classes the use of pinyin was omitted altogether.

Culture

Confucius classrooms welcome the wealth of resources they receive for introducing aspects of Chinese culture into the whole school, through displays and celebrations such as Chinese New Year. Teachers of other curriculum areas such as Art, Music and Drama also appreciate them. The resources also find their way into other schools as support for 'enrichment' or 'taster' activities. Many learners have opportunities to try Chinese calligraphy and to make and decorate dragons and lanterns, and they appreciate paper cuts given out as rewards. In one lesson observed (primary) children were learning about Chinese horoscopes.

There is a tendency for some cultural activities to be superficial and for pupils not to progress beyond these first contacts with the culture. The supplementary school visited offers workshops and language and culture sessions to local primary and secondary schools, but is disappointed that the demand is only for 'fun' activities and that head teachers are not interested in providing a deeper understanding of Chinese language or culture.

Real cultural learning seems to work best if integrated naturally as part of learning the language. In school E where pupils were highly motivated by the culture, they felt comfortable about asking the teacher about aspects of Chinese contemporary life and history, and this is what brought the subject to life for them. In

school A pupils said they particularly enjoyed hearing about life in China and especially liked tasting Chinese food! Teachers introduced aspects of the culture through the use of photographs and film, which also provided opportunities for cross-curricular learning. A particular example of this was in a primary school where children were learning the character for 'field' and the teacher explained that this was 'where they grow the rice'. Such insights help develop pupils' wider knowledge about the world and a real interest in the culture which moves beyond the perception that learning Chinese is only for instrumental purposes.

'Learning about the culture - it's great fun because they live differently to not just Brits but Europeans'

Assessment

In the English schools visited, assessment for Chinese is generally focussed around GCSE. Schools say there is a shortage of suitable accreditation at both lower and higher levels¹¹⁷. Several schools had previously used Asset Languages as an introductory accreditation and bemoaned the fact that this is no longer available because it had been a good way of accrediting elementary Chinese and motivating pupils to continue with their studies. One school has just introduced ABC as a replacement but are less happy with this. Another school had also developed a specification for a 20 hour Chinese module to fit within the Welsh Baccalaureate. This module had been designed to be taught during a single week and includes activities such as Tai Chi, Kung Fu, calligraphy and art activities. The school has runs this module very successfully with Year 9s, supported by funding from the 14-19 network. However, it is no longer possible to offer the module as the language element of the Welsh Baccalaureate is being withdrawn.

At the supplementary school visited, the aim is for all pupils to reach GCSE by age 14, though some take it earlier. The Head feels that GCSE is too easy, but A level is too difficult. School E has recently stopped teaching A level Chinese because of disappointing results. The teacher said they 'didn't feel they were doing right by their students' by preparing them for a qualification in which they obtained only an E grade when they were receiving an A in other subjects. She felt that the level of A level is pitched at native speakers and believes it is unfair that one exam board currently has a monopoly on Chinese. The school now offers Pre-U Chinese to its Sixth formers but has not yet had a cohort through. The school has had a very negative experience with AS and A2 Chinese (not for other languages). The teacher feels that the exams are marked as if entrants were native speakers and students have got poor grades as a result. They do not publish a list of core vocabulary. They have switched to PreU and find this better so far. This includes a culture paper which allows plenty of scope for discussion. Although it provides UCAS points it is not yet recognised by parents.

'One of my best students, who got 'A's in his other subjects, got a 'D' and nearly missed out on a university place'

In Scotland, the relatively new SQA qualifications for Chinese are being used flexibly. School H successfully enters S6 pupils for the Level 4 exams after a summer immersion course in China followed by a one year course. In the past pupils have also taken Access 3 and Intermediate/Higher and Advanced Higher examinations in Chinese. All pupils studying Chinese at School C currently study towards the SQA examinations and the International Baccalaureate. There has been some discussion in the school about adopting the Middle Years programme of the IB but no decision has yet been made.

Some schools were starting to use, or considering using the YCT for pupils starting to learn Chinese to help motivate them in their learning journey and to provide positive reinforcement at an early stage. However, there was little feedback on these at this stage.

Classrooms and resources

¹¹⁷ Schools outside Scotland can use Scottish qualifications if they wish to do so, but this is not generally known.

Several schools visited had what one called a ‘breakout room for Chinese’, indeed this is often part of the requirement to become a Confucius Classroom. These tended to be brightly decorated with materials from China, displays of pupils’ work and cards or posters made by teachers to remind pupils of key words or expressions.

In other cases Chinese lessons were being held in classrooms set up for other languages, with displays in French or Spanish. In primary schools, lessons were mainly held in the class’s own classroom, filled with displays covering a wide range of school subjects and topics.

Almost all schools visited made widespread use of ICT and interactive whiteboards. For example, one teacher used a Chinese website which showed the stroke order to help children learn characters.

The Chinese supplementary school visited was the least well equipped and classrooms were too small to allow pupils to move around or work in groups.

Confucius Classrooms receive a wealth of cultural resources from China, many of which are greatly appreciated. The ‘magic paper’ in particular is a big hit with pupils. However, in several schools visited, many boxes of teaching resources had been left unopened or unused, either because they were unsuitable or because they were exclusively in Chinese, so librarians and other staff had been unable to understand what they were for or how they could be used.



School H has a well-stocked library including a section with materials for Chinese aimed at both teachers and pupils but would welcome resources designed specifically to support the Scottish curriculum. Themed packs for primary schools of the kind produced by the British Council were very much welcomed. Schools would like more of these and not just for Chinese New Year. Secondary schools noted that it was important that such packs fit clearly into the curriculum and also that they are designed for more mature students. Both textbooks and resource packs are more often than not aimed at a younger audience which means they are not useable with secondary pupils. One of the difficulties reported is that the illustrations in existing textbooks (particularly those from China) are rather babyish and not suitable for secondary students or young adults.

The textbook Jinbu (Pearson) was being used not only in England but in Scotland too. Although it doesn’t fit exactly with the requirements for the SQA examination, it was welcomed by being written ‘by British teachers for British schools’ and because it facilitates a good comparison of levels and progression in relation to other languages being taught in the school.

Challenges

Teachers of Chinese were asked what the biggest challenge was that they faced in teaching Chinese to English speakers in the UK. Responses were as follows:

Lack of curriculum time – linked to pupils starting to learn the language too late – was seen as a major challenge. One teacher said that pupils received only ‘a fragmentary experience’ and that it was difficult to get the pace of learning right for all pupils, who progressed at different rates. One Hanban teacher said the greatest challenge was adapting to a different education system in which languages are only taught for one day per week.

Another challenge in some settings is clearly the **motivation of pupils**. A Chinese teacher at the supplementary school who also teaches in a local high school says that that pupils in the high school are much less motivated and quickly lose interest: ‘They are curious but they find it hard. They lose interest and give up.’ She believes the key is to start early in primary school. This was echoed by the teacher in school H who said that ‘Chinese requires double the effort of other languages and some pupils are not prepared for that’. The lessons and activities therefore had to be carefully planned and executed in order to maintain motivation and interest. However, in other cases, the motivation of pupils was very high – see section on Pupils for a discussion of this.

‘Chinese requires double the effort of other languages and some pupils are not prepared for that’

Parental support is seen as pivotal to maintaining pupils’ motivation and it is significant that parental support was lowest in those schools where Chinese was being taught least successfully. School B actively promotes the involvement of parents, with a scheme to encourage them to learn alongside their children.

For primary teachers without much background in Chinese, lack of **subject knowledge** is clearly the biggest challenge.

Another issue which emerged not through the school visits but at conferences for teachers of Chinese attended by the researchers was that of describing **learner progression** in the acquisition of Chinese in ways that are comprehensible and credible to others¹¹⁸. Teachers feel that curriculum guidelines and tools for measuring progression which have been developed for the most commonly taught western European languages are not always suited to measuring how learners are progressing in Chinese. Chinese teachers say they are ‘under pressure to do things in the same way as teachers of other languages’. They recognise that if Chinese is to be integrated into the mainstream curriculum, they need to be able to show that their learners are making progress and that they will be able to achieve the required grades at GCSE. One teacher who presented at a conference said that her students had been assessed lower against National Curriculum levels than those learning Spanish and French, and this had created pressures and tensions with her Head of Department. Some parents had withdrawn pupils from GCSE Chinese because of fear of low grades. However, her students had then gone on to achieve better grades at GCSE than those taking other languages. She had therefore created a system for measuring and communicating progress against (previous) National Curriculum guidelines which she could use to reassure both school management

‘Senior leadership must understand why Chinese is more difficult and help new Chinese teachers avoid the problems I had’

¹¹⁸ These comments may not pertain to Scotland where frameworks and national standards have been developed across all languages to ensure parity of esteem.

and parents. Although the new National Curriculum contains much less detail in terms of assessment criteria than the one it is replacing, the need to clarify to others what makes Chinese 'special' whilst at the same time ensuring parity with other languages has not diminished and it is clear that such a document is still very useful.

Methods and approaches to the teaching and learning of Chinese

As with any language, there is no magic solution and what contributes to effective learning in some environments with some groups of pupils may not work universally. This research would be overstepping its capacity if it sought to recommend a specific approach or method. However, certain principles can be drawn from the evidence gathered:

- Most teachers interviewed for this research felt strongly that characters (both recognition and writing) should be introduced from the beginning, in order to give pupils time to assimilate a sufficient number to progress beyond the early stages.
- Similarly, most felt that pinyin is a necessary part of the skill set pupils need as well as useful support, but should not be a substitute for the learning of characters.
- There is not yet a clear shared understanding of progression – how to describe different levels of competence, how to enable learners to reach them and find out whether they have.
- Whilst all teachers want to instil good pronunciation and provide learners with correct models of tones as part of this, many believe that tones are not crucial to understanding and should not be over-emphasised at the expense of progression in other areas.
- Active learning methods used for other languages work equally effectively with Chinese and are appreciated by learners.
- All teachers thought that English was necessary to explain features of the language and culture to pupils, and in some cases to translate words. There is some evidence that this practice is more widespread in the teaching of Chinese than in the teaching other languages. However, greater use of the target language could perhaps be made for classroom routines and standard interaction, as was witnessed in a number of schools by the researchers.
- The teaching of the culture is sometimes dealt with very superficially, particularly in 'taster' and 'enrichment' activities. There is insufficient development of the potential for Chinese to contribute to developing generic intercultural competences.
- The presence of native speaker teachers or assistants from China could be more effectively exploited to support classroom teachers. The research observed little team teaching. Training which focusses on techniques for using the native speaker within the classroom could help to ensure that the benefits both of Chinese native speakers from China and UK-trained and experienced practitioners are fully exploited to benefit learners.

There are rich opportunities for further research on methods and approaches which are effective in different UK contexts and other variables affecting UK learners.

Perceptions of heads of languages

In schools where the language is well established, Chinese has found a place alongside other languages taught. Many schools in England offering Chinese as a curriculum subject are former Language Colleges and so offer a wider choice of languages than the 'big three' European languages. In one of these schools, the Head of Languages commented 'We don't mind which language they learn. Our aim is to get them "languageed"'.

In some schools, the introduction of Chinese is seen as a way of revitalising the position and perception of languages within the school, from which teachers of all languages have to gain. However, in other schools, researchers picked up tensions in relation to the often high profile development of a new language. In some cases, the development of Chinese had been an initiative promoted by the Head teacher, with the Head of Languages effectively side lined. One Head of Languages spoke of her inability to judge the quality of teaching or the materials being produced and described Chinese as 'alien' to the department. In one case, Chinese was described in opposition to 'MFL' as if it were a different category of subject altogether. In another school, it was felt that German was under threat because of the development of Chinese, and because Chinese was offered only to the highest-attaining pupils, there was a perception that it was 'creaming off' the best and would therefore have better results.

Unlike other language teachers, Chinese teachers tend only to teach Chinese and do not speak other European languages. This can be difficult in departmental meetings or during internal CPD sessions when examples are given in languages they do not understand and can leave Chinese teachers feeling somewhat marginalised. In one school, teachers of other languages had initially been sceptical and nervous about the introduction of Chinese but had now accepted Chinese as part of the school's languages offer.

Heads of Languages' perceptions of Chinese teaching did not always coincide with the experiences of pupils learning the language. One Head of Languages said that she thought that Chinese tended to be taught 'more traditionally, with 'chalk and talk', whereas what was happening in other languages classrooms ('MFL') was 'buzzy and exciting'. This again reinforces the view by some that Chinese is not seen as an integral part of the work of the school's languages department.

5. System-level barriers and enabling factors

Key points

- Head teachers of schools where Chinese is taught are convinced that it makes an important contribution to pupils' broader educational attainment and to their understanding of the world. This vision is key to developing and sustaining the subject in schools.
- Parental attitudes can also be a crucial enabling factor.
- Teacher supply is a major barrier preventing the language becoming more strongly embedded within the school system.
- For Chinese to be successfully embedded in a school, sufficient curriculum time must be allocated over a sustained period – there are schools already providing innovative models of how this can be achieved.
- The current rapidly-developing status of language teaching within the primary curriculum in England and Scotland constitutes an important opportunity and enabling factor for developing Chinese.
- Most English secondary schools teaching Chinese apply some sort of selection by ability; this may limit expansion by reinforcing the perception that learning Chinese is only suitable for a small number of pupils with special talents.
- The potential for Chinese to appeal to different types of learner may provide opportunities for more pupils to derive success and satisfaction from language learning.
- Pupils' 'learning journeys' are at risk of being disrupted at a number of points within the system, notably when they move from primary to secondary school or into the Sixth Form from a school which caters only for pupils up to the age of 16. Access to degree courses for those who have studied Chinese at school, which was identified as a problem in the past, has now been resolved.
- The outreach work to other schools undertaken by Confucius Classrooms, while valuable in its own right, does not always provide the best opportunities for sustained expansion.
- Links with business, with partner schools in China or with Chinese communities in the UK are under-developed and could provide valuable support to Chinese teaching in schools.

Head teachers' vision for Chinese

The diverse range of schools visited were all working in very different environments and contexts and heads' visions for Chinese within their schools varied accordingly. All were convinced that it made an important contribution to pupils' broader educational attainment and to their understanding of the world and this vision has been **key to developing and sustaining the subject in their schools.**

School A saw many cultural benefits in introducing Chinese into a community with very little diversity. A review of its curriculum more generally had provided the opportunity to consult pupils about language provision and they had said that they would like to learn Chinese and Latin.

School G, also in an area with very little cultural diversity but one also of high socio-economic deprivation saw the introduction of Chinese as a way to broaden children's horizons and provide opportunities 'based on what they can do not their IQ'. The Head hopes that this will eventually lead to job opportunities for some pupils and sees having Chinese as an advantage for local children, a way of giving them confidence and encouraging them to look beyond their daily experiences. The Head wants to overcome parents' 'acceptance of failure'.

Secondary schools in more advantaged areas are aware that some parents see Chinese as an 'élite' language and Chinese is therefore perceived as part of their high quality offer which one school described as 'private school education in a state environment'. However, this tends to be part of a rich language experience more generally rather than 'special' or 'different' from the wider offer. The Specialist Schools' initiative,

'We believe that all pupils should have another language as a skill which benefits their literacy'

which created over 300 Specialist Language Colleges in England between 1995 and 2011, had been the driver behind several schools' decision to introduce Chinese as a curriculum subject. School E has been a Language College since 1996 and from the start set out to teach Chinese as part of its remit to broaden the range of languages taught. It chose to make Chinese a timetabled language from the start in order to put it on a comparable footing with European Languages offered in the curriculum.



Chinese was introduced to School B as a direct response to the growing political and economic importance of China. It was introduced initially as a niche subject while they sought out best practice and then began to develop it within the context of their school.

School H described their language provision as a key element in their bid to become a 'School of Ambition', committed to 'a radical programme of development to secure significantly improved outcomes for their children'. The Deputy Head teacher was clear that the school's commitment to the teaching of Chinese had added to the status of the school which was already known for its leadership in global citizenship. The school believes that a focus on languages and global citizenship boosts children's confidence and make them outward-looking. The school's ambition is to continue to improve their offer of Chinese and to embed it even further. Chinese is overtly marketed to parents and the school takes part in a wide range of exchange/visits programmes and competitions connected with China/the teaching of Chinese. They would like to develop links with the Chinese community based in Scotland but this is not easy given the school's relatively rural location.

For the supplementary school in this research, the motivations for teaching Chinese are entirely different. The aim is to respond to the demand from parents, particularly in the Chinese community which makes up 8% of the local population. The opening of direct flights to China is encouraging the growth of business links and as a community organisation the school plays an important role in forging cultural links and raising awareness of Chinese culture. The school is open to all comers, however in reality only Chinese parents make use of the facility.



Although there are some instances of pupils of all abilities and socio-economic backgrounds successfully learning Chinese (particularly in Scotland with the recent drive to expand the teaching of Chinese) the profile of Chinese learners in UK schools as a whole remains skewed towards high achievers and those from more advantaged backgrounds. **Parental support is seen as a crucial enabling factor** and some schools make determined efforts to raise levels of support beyond simply mild approval to proactive encouragement. Where parents are only mildly supportive, this can easily melt away if pupils start to find the subject demanding and lose interest. It is easy for parents who are relatively uninformed to believe that a taster or fragmentary experience of Chinese learning is all that is necessary. The strongest support was seen in schools where parents themselves were likely to have had direct experience or business links with China – in other words either parents who were themselves Chinese, as in the supplementary school, or those in more privileged circumstances with high aspirations for their children. In some cases, Chinese was being used as a way of raising aspirations in the community, but this meets with circular obstacles when motivation to study Chinese comes mainly from an awareness of its importance in the first place.

Teacher supply

Teacher supply has emerged as the major barrier from this and previous research in relation to schools' ability and willingness to develop the teaching of Chinese, and the supply of teachers from China via Hanban has been a key factor in enabling many more children to have an introduction to Chinese language and culture. However, although in one primary school, the Head was introducing Chinese into the school with the aid of the Hanban teacher alone, secondary heads were adamant that they would not be able to timetable classes, let alone exam classes, relying solely on teachers from China. In part this is because of issues relating to visas and contracts which are too short, with one Head reporting 'We never know when they will arrive'. But it is also a question of the preparation Chinese teachers receive to enable them to work effectively in schools across the UK and to contribute more broadly to the school.

When we recruit a teacher, we look at the whole person, not just the subject they can teach

In the words of one Head, 'When we recruit a teacher, we look at the whole person, not just the subject they can teach', in other words not only having the flexibility to teach other subjects on the curriculum but also being able to take on responsibilities such as form tutoring¹¹⁹. In order to introduce a new subject, teachers need to be innovative and have influencing skills and for this they need excellent English as well as a high level understanding of how British school systems work. One example of this in practice was in School J where the teacher had introduced short daily lessons in Chinese instead of one longer weekly session.

Head teachers are clear that high quality UK trained teachers are key to developing the teaching of Chinese. Not all schools are in a position to appoint such teachers as full-time members of staff; however it is teachers filling these full-time or near full-time positions that are best able to support incoming Hanban teachers, Language Assistants and volunteers. A critical mass of UK trained teachers of Chinese is also vital both for the success of Chinese within Scotland's new 1 + 2 approach to languages as well as for the training of future cohorts of Chinese teachers via England's new school led initial teacher training system. A good example of where this is working well is School B, which has a history of involvement with teacher training programmes for Chinese. They will receive two trainees from September 2014. Along with the two full time Chinese teachers on the staff and a Hanban teacher, this will create a critical mass of expertise in Chinese, with opportunities to discuss practice, share resources and observe each other. The development of such communities of practice is a key enabling factor for the future success of the subject.

The current permanent, full time teacher of Chinese (native speaker) felt strongly that her initial teacher training through the GTP programme run by CILT/CfBT Education Trust had been an outstanding preparation for working in the British state school system. She had studied alongside trainees of French/German and Spanish and had only had opportunity to observe language classes of European languages. This approach had enabled her to immerse herself throughout the course in the British system of pedagogy.

There is not a shortage of Chinese speakers wishing to teach the subject, but few have the right combinations of linguistic and pedagogic skills. Head teachers say that when school advertises a post they receive many applications from teachers from China with high qualifications but they are not always suitable to work in the state school environment and do not have Qualified Teacher Status or permission to work in the UK. They often have insufficient competence in English.

Organisation of curriculum and time available for language learning

Another major barrier is the organisation of the curriculum and the time available for language learning. Language learning in general suffers from a shortage of curriculum time¹²⁰ but it is a particular issue for Chinese where, according to one experienced teacher, pupils need at least 3 years to progress beyond the beginning stages to a level where they can start to identify patterns. There is sometimes a contradiction between the perception of Chinese as a 'hard' language, and its

¹¹⁹ In Scotland, only GTC-registered teachers can present pupils for exams.

¹²⁰ Board and Tinsley. Language Trends. Op cit.

status as a second or third foreign language that pupils can ‘pick up’ in Year 9 or 10 rather than starting earlier.

This model was not seen to be working well, and the best results and the most motivated pupils were obtained where pupils started the language earlier and had plenty of time to reach exam standard. One teacher said categorically that Chinese ‘won’t work as a 2 year GCSE course.’ Her comments reflect the findings of this

report that if the subject is to attain a critical mass, heads have to be committed to getting it on the timetable and supporting small numbers of pupils if

‘Chinese won’t work as a 2 year GCSE course’

necessary. Many schools are currently ‘dabbling’ and need to be convinced that Chinese is viable as a mainstream language subject alongside French, Spanish and German.

Two schools involved in this research had found innovative ways of being able to allocate more curriculum time for Chinese: in school H, Chinese had been timetabled over two language slots, so that pupils took *either* French and Spanish, *or* Chinese. In school B, the school had achieved additional time for Chinese by integrating it with the teaching of other curriculum subjects including ICT (Information and Communication Technology), PE (Physical Education) and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education). In primary schools such integration is also possible and was being trialled in one school visited, although non-specialist teachers need considerable support to develop this successfully. Several of the education specialists interviewed for this research believed that the key to finding enough time for Chinese was to start early in primary school.

Opportunities in primary schools

The introduction of Chinese into primary schools has great potential for overcoming the current skew of Chinese learners towards the more able and the more affluent. In primary schools, all subjects are compulsory, therefore what is taught is accepted and seen as normal for everyone. There is some evidence also that the ‘critical age hypothesis’ - the innate potential of young children to acquire language, which diminishes as children get older – may be even more relevant for Chinese than for other languages. Research reviewed in the academic perspectives section of this report suggests that younger children may be able to acquire characters and tones more easily than older children. Clearly, age is not the only variable and there are also big challenges if these opportunities are to be realised. Considerable thought and resource needs to be allocated for additional training if we aspire to have Chinese taught in primary schools to a standard which enables pupils to make real progression with the language. However, **the current rapidly-developing status of language teaching within the primary curriculum in England and Scotland constitutes an important opportunity** and enabling factor for developing Chinese in a way which overcomes its association with privilege and intellectual prowess.

Selection by ability

Most secondary schools involved in this research applied some sort of selection by ability. However, **the message that Chinese is only for the most able is likely to inhibit future expansion.**

School A offers the option of Chinese to all pupils, in order to show parity with other languages. However it tries to guide to favour upper ability as it feels the less able will not be able to cope.

In School H, at present all pupils have the right to opt to learn Chinese but the Chinese teacher felt that selection on the basis of ability might be preferable as some pupils who choose to do Chinese struggle with it and can hold others in the class back. Results in a recent test had varied from 2% – 90%. The Chinese teacher also felt that rapid growth in the numbers of pupils studying Chinese was not necessarily beneficial. Slow but solid growth was likely to produce better academic results and make the teaching of the language more sustainable.

In School E, only the able pupils are offered Chinese although if a pupil in a lower set wished to study Chinese and had a valid reason, he or she would be accommodated. Another school has resolved the question of who should study Chinese by offering a Chinese taster to all pupils in Year 7, allowing all pupils who wish to take Chinese in Year 8, but after that providing it as an option only to the top 50%.

School B's 'immersion stream' is highly sought after, receiving approximately 80 applications from pupils in primary schools for the 28 places available in Year 7. The school therefore sets criteria for selection but these are based on motivation and parental support rather than ability.

Currently the perceived – and actual – difficulty of Chinese means that schools are wary of making it available to pupils of all abilities. In introducing a new subject on the curriculum, they know they are taking a risk, even more if it is perceived to be a 'hard' subject, and they naturally want to ensure that it is a success. The best way of doing that is by reserving it as an option for more able students. Even where Chinese is open to pupils of all abilities, there may be an unspoken message that it is not really something to choose unless you are very able academically. A successful experiment with high ability students then sets the standard for the future and inhibits expansion to those who are less high flying. Schools may prefer to keep numbers low in order to maintain good results and some pupils mentioned that they liked Chinese because the classes were smaller. Expansion of Chinese within a school is therefore difficult to manage and needs strategic support. Secondary schools and teachers want to maintain the optional nature of Chinese where possible. They do not see the imposition of Chinese as a compulsory subject for certain groups of pupils as helpful, and indeed this research confirms that this is not likely to be successful.

Although there is widespread agreement that certain features of the Chinese language – in particular the writing system and the lack of cognates – make learner progress slower for English speakers than is the case in languages which have more similarities with English, other features of the language present less difficulty than highly inflected languages. **There is a general consensus that, with sufficient time and appropriately staged goals, Chinese can be taught as successfully as any other language to the full range of learners.**

The potential to attract different types of learner

Data from examination entries show that the learning of Chinese is less gender-marked than other languages, and feedback from teachers and pupils interviewed for this research confirms that Chinese may appeal to certain types of pupils – often but not always boys – who may be ‘turned off’ by other languages. This seems to be connected on the one hand to the lack of cognates and grammar and on the other to the way that learning Chinese draws in other abilities such as spatial awareness or artistic or mathematical intelligences, rather than mainly literary competences. This requires verification by research involving matched pairs and control groups but may suggest that a high level of literacy in English (or the mother tongue?), which is an advantage in the learning of European or Latin-based languages, may not be such an advantage when learning Chinese. Even as a preliminary finding, it suggests that **Chinese might be an enabling factor in helping more pupils to derive success and satisfaction from language learning**. Schools might consider offering Chinese alongside European languages, in order to cater for the learning preferences and potentials of different groups of pupils.

Opportunities for pupil progression

Pupils’ ‘learning journeys’ are at risk of being disrupted at a number of points within the system.

None of the schools visited had successfully resolved the issue of transition from primary to secondary. This is a significant barrier because the time spent learning Chinese in primary schools – however valuable in its own right - may be seen to be ‘wasted’ if pupils do not have the opportunity to continue learning the language when they move into secondary school. Primary schools involved in this research were concentrating on successfully introducing the language, while secondary schools offering Chinese did so from scratch. However, as more primary schools successfully embed Chinese into their teaching, there are likely to be problems of continuity for learners further down the line unless schools can develop collaborative solutions.

Providing progression for pupils post 16 is a problem for schools which do not have their own Sixth Form. Two of the schools visited were in this position and had not resolved the issue.

Schools with Sixth Forms where Chinese was well-established said they had already had some students who had progressed to study Chinese at university. Another school not specifically a part of this research project, has said that 20% of its eligible students have gone on to do Chinese studies at university¹²¹. A few years ago there had been problems in access to specialist Chinese degree courses which catered solely for students learning Chinese *ab initio* and who regarded such students as ‘over-qualified’. However these problems now appear to have been resolved and universities are more flexible now. This was confirmed both by Chinese teachers in the schools concerned and by university course providers who say they are now seeing fewer *ab initio* applicants.

There is a variety of different university courses for Chinese, including single honours courses, and joint degree programmes combining Chinese with other disciplines. Students at very many universities can take courses in Chinese as an accredited or non-accredited module alongside their main subject(s). The single honours course in Chinese at London’s School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) includes a year abroad. It teaches both full form and simplified characters and gives advanced Chinese proficiency equivalent to HSK5. Joint degrees and ‘Chinese studies’ programmes

¹²¹ Dartford Grammar School. BACS ‘Chinese Studies in Universities’ conference, 25 June 2014

tend to be less rigorous linguistically and a new type of business-oriented degree course is now springing up which teaches only simplified characters but includes a strong focus on social sciences. Chinese, in common with other language degree courses, is mainly concentrated in the élite ‘Russell Group’ of universities. However, one institution which caters for ‘non-élite’ students of Chinese is Westminster University which offers language courses focussing on the practical use of the language and contemporary culture. Despite a high failure rate after the first year, the course prides itself in offering a course which prepares students for using Chinese in a business environment. It too includes a year abroad.

There is no common set of standards in describing the level of Chinese covered by university courses. Dr Song Lianyi at SOAS has investigated ways of mapping Chinese language skills in degree courses to make them more intelligible for both course applicants and employers. Course leaders were polled on whether external assessment via Chinese official HSK exams might be a solution. However 75% said it would not and 46% would not use such a system even if asked to do so.

In 2014 the British Association for Chinese Studies ran a consultation on the future of Chinese Studies. Respondents felt that the diversity of approaches and courses on offer was both a strength and a weakness of current provision. They also saw the lack of standardisation of language levels as a weakness and felt that university courses were often teaching Chinese ‘too little, too late’ because of poor opportunities for pupils to study the language at school, and the lack of initial teacher training courses¹²².

Outreach

Most of the schools involved in this research were Confucius Classrooms and as such had outreach programmes with other schools in their area. These programmes tended to be focussed on cultural enrichment and ‘tasters’ rather than sustained language teaching. Schools would often assign their own teachers to timetabled classes and use their Hanban teacher for outreach work with other schools. Not all local schools wish to be the recipients of this offer and those that do are grateful for ‘free’ support but appear relatively uncommitted to developing Chinese teaching. The most promising developments for extending Chinese teaching were seen within the individual schools already offering Chinese to some pupils rather than through their outreach programmes.

Very few schools visited had any links with local businesses. In some rural or deprived areas indeed there were no suitable businesses to link with. Similarly, there were very few links with local Chinese communities.

‘We have a Chinese Assistant through the British Council who teaches one lesson of enrichment per week, and who offers lunchtime conversation classes and an after school lesson for Sixth Formers’

¹²² BACS Consultation on the Future of Chinese Studies (Spring 2014). BACS

Part 3: Effective practice in the teaching of Chinese in schools

In the course of this research, many different schools were visited in all four countries of the UK. Schools were carefully chosen to reflect the variety of settings in which Chinese is being studied by pupils at both primary and secondary levels. Urban and rural locations were included as well as those located in affluent or less affluent places. Schools from the state, independent and supplementary sector were also covered by the research team, and case studies are presented below.

After hours spent watching pupils learning Chinese and talking at length to managers, teachers and pupils researchers concluded that there is no single effective way to teach Chinese. However, effective teaching occurs when a number of a number of factors are present. These are listed below and are drawn from the many good examples of effective teaching of Chinese that researchers were privileged to observe.

1. Factors which contribute to the effective development of Chinese in schools

I. *Systems*

- Chinese is fully embedded alongside other languages being taught in the school
- The school has a long term strategic commitment to developing the teaching of Chinese and all staff and parents have bought into the benefits of Chinese
- The school makes full and effective use of collaboration with partners
- The school works to ensure effective transition between educational phases through outreach work and supports learners' journeys from primary through to university
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities
- There is sufficient curriculum time to enable pupils to make good progress in their study of Chinese

II. *Teachers*

- The teacher(s) of Chinese is/are able to provide an excellent linguistic model as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for pupils studying in the context of the UK
- The school provides training placements for the new teachers of Chinese
- The school ensures that all teachers teaching Chinese are well networked with others in the same situation and that they have appropriate professional development (CPD)
- The teacher of Chinese is able to stimulate pupils' interest in Chinese culture and to develop their ability to appreciate and think critically about different cultures.

III. *Innovative Approaches*

- The use of an immersion (CLIL) approach ensures that a large amount of curriculum time is given over to Chinese so that pupils can make good progress with the language

- The IDL (interdisciplinary learning) approach allows pupils to learn Chinese through cross curricular projects which extends the curriculum time available and encourages learning in realistic contexts
- The use of team teaching and IT can be invaluable in providing access to good linguistic models.
- A short but daily lesson in Chinese can be highly effective where curriculum time is under pressure. Regular exposure to the language helps learning
- A whole school approach in which many different departments contribute to the pupils' knowledge of China and Chinese can be particularly effective when curriculum time is under pressure
- Providing pupils of Chinese heritage with the opportunity to gain qualifications in Chinese ensures a steady supply of bilingual/bi-literate and bicultural young people who can use their language skills for higher education and work

IV. *Pupil Motivation*

- There is a recognition that commitment to the language must also involve an exploration and appreciation of the culture which goes beyond superficial images and descriptions
- Early success with language learning demonstrated through success in examinations like YCT can be a motivating factor
- Creative use of a wide range of resources including traditional “rewards” from China, IT, age appropriate textbooks and self-made materials/activities drawing on resources both from China and the UK can be stimulating to pupils
- Where parents are actively engaged by the school in the value of their children learning Chinese, the levels of pupil motivation are generally higher

2. Case studies

Case study 1: Anglo European School, Ingatestone, Essex

- Chinese is fully embedded alongside other languages being taught in the school
- The school makes full and effective use of collaboration with partners (Jiangsu Centre/British Council and Confucius Institute)
- The school works to ensure effective transition between educational phases and supports learner journeys from primary through to university
- The school provides training placements for the new teachers of Chinese

Background

The Anglo-European School (AES) is a large 11-18 comprehensive school and Specialist Language College which converted to academy status in 2011. Located in Ingatestone on the Essex/Greater

London border, it has 1150 pupils on the roll, of whom 60% are white British. It is high-attaining academically with 80% of pupils achieving 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths (compared with 59% across England). It has a lower than average proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (5.3%, compared with 16.3% nationally), a higher than average proportion of pupils with English as an Additional Language (20.7% compared with 13.6% nationally) and much lower than average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals (3.8% compared to 16.3% nationally). In 2013 Ofsted rated it 'good' and described it as 'a distinctive school with strong global links which enable pupils to have a rich and fulfilling experience of many other cultures and languages'. It has been a Confucius Classroom since 2008 and started teaching Chinese 9 years ago. The school also works with the Jiangsu centre which is a local authority link with the province of Jiangsu. This started as a business link but has developed an educational dimension. The Jiangsu Centre provides teachers, organises cultural activities and exchanges.

Language Teaching and Chinese

AES has developed a rich language offer as a Specialist Language College but it can be difficult to sustain a wide range of languages in the time available. However, the school is committed to maintaining and developing its teaching of Chinese.

In Year 7 all pupils receive a fortnightly taster of Chinese. All pupils at AES study two languages. In year 9 Chinese is an option as a third foreign language (along with Japanese, Italian and Russian) for the top 50% of pupils. Between 25 and 30 pupils per year choose Chinese and can take this to GCSE if they wish. There are currently 22 pupils in the Year 10 GCSE class, 14 in Year 11 and 16 took GCSE in summer 2013. Chinese is also offered in the Sixth form as part of the International Baccalaureate. There are currently 6 students taking it in Lower sixth and 4 in Upper sixth. A number of students have progressed to study Chinese at university.

Learners

Pupils choose to study Chinese which is firmly embedded as a language within the school's broad offer of languages. The school does recognise, however, that not all students are keen on languages. Of those who took GCSE last year 86% got an A* or A, and 93% did the same or better as in their first foreign language. 53% did better than in their other language. AES used to offer Asset Languages as accreditation at the end of Y9 and is disappointed that this award has now been withdrawn. ABC has been introduced as a replacement. All students take a language in the Sixth form and ABC is also offered for those who are not studying a language at an advanced level.

Teachers

As a Confucius Classroom the school has 2 Hanban teachers who provide outreach to a number of local primary and secondary schools in the form of enrichment classes once a week or once a fortnight after school. They also organise community events and conferences for teachers and cultural activities such as Chinese New Year. Confucius Institute grant funding has helped AES to create a network of practice and they have provided a training placement for a teacher trainee from the CfBT Education Trust initial teacher training programme for the last three years. As well as the Head of Chinese, AES employs a part time NQT (who is shared with another school) and a Chinese language assistant through the British Council. A new Head of Chinese has recently been appointed to replace the current one who is moving on. However, the school finds that recruiting suitable teachers of Chinese is an ongoing difficulty partly because of the difficulties of offering a full timetable for someone who is only able to teach Chinese (it is rarely offered in combination with other subjects) and partly because of the shortage of supply of suitably qualified teachers.

Parents

The parents of pupils studying Chinese at AES are 'delighted' because it makes their children 'stand out in a crowd'.

Case study 2: Argoed High School, Bryn Y Baal, Flintshire

- The school provides training placements for the next generation of teachers of Chinese
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to all pupils who are interested (rather than being based on ability)
- The teacher of Chinese provides both an excellent linguistic model as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for her pupils

Background

Argoed High School (AHS) is an 11-16 English medium comprehensive school in Bryn y Baal, Flintshire and in 2012 became one of the first Confucius Classrooms in Wales. It serves private housing estates in a semi-rural location and was judged 'Good' by Estyn in 2009. AHS has around 600 pupils on the roll, of which around three quarters obtain 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths (2012 figures). This compares well with the Welsh average of just over 50%. AHS has no bilingual pupils or pupils with Welsh as a first language, very few ethnic minority pupils and none with English as an Additional Language. Fewer than 7% are eligible for free school meals FSM), compared to more than 17% across Wales.

Language teaching and Chinese

The school strongly promotes its language provision and all pupils take at least the GCSE short course in Welsh. Some 40% of pupils take a language GCSE which is high in comparison with the situation across Wales. Airbus is a major local employer which helps raise awareness of the need for languages amongst many parents who are employed there.

The school introduced Chinese some three years ago when it was developing its curriculum in response to the Welsh Learning and Skills Measure. Pupils consulted about language provision said they would like to learn Mandarin and Latin. The school saw many cultural benefits in introducing Chinese into a community with very little diversity. Following a visit to Calday Grange School, AHS appointed its Chinese teacher. Becoming a Confucius classroom enabled AHS to develop a separate classroom for the teaching of Chinese as well as to purchase better IT equipment and resources to enhance the teaching of Chinese. Some funding from an "able and gifted" grant is also used to support Chinese.

The school has encountered difficulties in organising visits to China for pupils and also in establishing a school link with China. Both of these would enhance the AHS's efforts to promote Chinese to pupils and parents.

A Chinese club is offered in Year 8, and timetabled Chinese begins in Year 9 when pupils can choose Chinese (or German) alongside French and Welsh. Around 25% of the cohort opted for Chinese in

2013. Those pupils who wish to take a second modern language to GCSE level can continue with Chinese to GCSE and two pupils are currently doing so. The Chinese teacher uses 'Jin Bu' (Pearson) as her core textbook. The school would like to increase the amount of curriculum time available for Chinese (currently 1 class per week) as well as introducing Spanish but it is difficult to see how these aspirations might be achieved when pupils are already studying French and Welsh.

AHS has a partnership with 'The Allan' 6th form college which could provide progression for pupils wishing to continue to study Chinese after GCSE. The Hanban teacher currently teaches enrichment classes at the college.

AHS offers after school classes in Chinese for a consortium of local schools. These are taught by the Hanban teacher but attendance can be irregular because of other priorities. Most of the schools in the consortium value the offer and three out of four promote it heavily. The Hanban teacher also goes into primary schools but there is little demand from feeder schools and it is not possible to go non-feeder schools. AHS has worked with primary feeder schools on a triple literacy project (Welsh, English and a foreign language) which included input in Chinese.

Teachers

The school employs a part time teacher of Chinese who is an English native speaker who has learnt Chinese while working in China for a number of years. She trained on an employment-based route (GTP) as a mature entrant to the teaching profession. AHS also has a Hanban teacher but is not able to use this resource to provide more curriculum time for Chinese because of the uncertainties of teacher availability created by well documented visa issues.

The school will be offering a teaching placement for a trainee teacher from Edgehill University next year.

Case study 3: Bohunt School, Liphook, Hampshire

- The use of an immersion (CLiL) approach ensures that a large amount of curriculum time is given over to Chinese so that pupils can make good progress with the language
- There is a recognition that commitment to the language must also involve an exploration and appreciation of the culture which goes beyond superficial images and descriptions
- The opportunity for pupils to learn Chinese is not based on ability
- The school recognises the need to train the next generation of teachers of Chinese and provides placements for trainees
- The teacher is able to provide an excellent linguistic model and pedagogic skills which are appropriate for her pupils

Background

Bohunt School (BS) is an 11 – 16 co-educational comprehensive school with converter academy status located in the rural village of Liphook in Hampshire. It has 1600+ pupils with 13 forms of entry in Year 7 and was rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in 2013. Its pupil profile is advantaged and high achieving. Only 3.1% of pupils are eligible for FSM (Free School Meals) (16.3% average across England); 3% have Special Educational Needs (7.7% England) and 3.7% have English as an Additional Language (13.6% England). Some 85% achieve 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths compared to 60.6% of state schools in England. BS was one of the first schools to be given Specialist Language College status by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) in 1996. The school has a strong international flavour and offers pupils the opportunity to study a wide range of languages including Chinese. However, unlike other languages which the school offers, Chinese comes under the direct management of the Head teacher and Assistant Head teacher. The school has been a Confucius Classroom since October 2013 and works in collaboration with the Confucius Institute at the University of Southampton. Based on a belief that a deep understanding of the culture is a critical accompaniment to good language skills, BS aspires to become a 'Centre for Chinese Culture' in a way that goes far beyond the typical cultural manifestations which usually accompany the teaching of Chinese.

Language Teaching and Chinese

BS offers pupils a choice of French/German/Spanish/Japanese and Chinese as part of the curriculum at some point in their secondary education. The school is also able to offer Italian and Russian though these have not run for a while. Pupils choose one language (either French or Spanish) to study in Year 7 and then have the opportunity to add a second language from Year 8 (Chinese, German, Japanese etc.). In Year 9 pupils have to choose at least one language to take through to GCSE. Languages are compulsory for all and there is a strong awareness across the school of the value of learning languages other than English.

The Chinese teacher uses a combination of textbooks provided by the Hanban and self-designed resources. This is particularly necessary for the immersion group as there are no published courses suitable for a CLIL approach to Chinese.

Immersion (CLIL) option - Each year one language is offered to one of the Year 7 groups as an immersion (CLIL) subject. French, German and Spanish have been offered in this way in the past but for the past couple of years, with the growing importance of China, the immersion option has been for Chinese and there are no plans to change this. As a result the school now has two immersion groups who have studied Chinese intensively for one and two years respectively. Pupils following the immersion route do ICT, PE, PSHE and Enrichment in Chinese as well as the Chinese lesson itself, giving them 2 hours 40 minutes of Chinese per day i.e. one third of available curriculum time.

Admission to the CLIL group is selective but not based on ability. Year 6s who have been offered a place in the school are invited to apply to join the immersion group when they start Year 7. The criteria for selection are i) the pupil's perception of the benefit of learning Chinese and why he/she wants to learn it and ii) why the parents want their child to be in the immersion course. In 2013/14 there were approximately 80 applications for 28 places.

For the CLIL/immersion group, the teacher uses lots of routine based activities in Chinese to get pupils accustomed to being surrounded by Chinese and to be able to use expressions such as: Can I

sit down, I'm sorry I'm late/is that correct. These are all written in characters/pin-yin on coloured card and displayed around the classroom to support pupils as they learn. The teacher bases her teaching on the Communicative method and feels that this works well for both able and less able pupils. The teacher has to do a lot of forward planning to try to seek out links in characters/stroke order to support the pupils' learning.

BS currently has three classes studying Chinese as a modern language (non-immersion route) in Year 8, two classes in Year 9 and one GCSE group in Year 11. All pupils in the school have the opportunity to study Chinese either as their first or second foreign language. For the 2014/15 academic year there will be 250 pupils studying Chinese across the school and a GCSE cohort of 50

At present it is not possible for pupils to continue their study of Chinese beyond GCSE since none of the feeder colleges offers Chinese. However, BS is waiting to hear if its application to offer post-16 tuition has been approved, in which case they will be able to offer higher level Chinese studies.

Learners

The Assistant Head teacher believes that the pupils' initial perception of Chinese is that it is harder but says that they then get involved and enjoy it. Writing characters is a real appeal and increases pupil engagement.

Teachers

BS currently has one full time, native speaker teacher of Chinese who was trained on the GTP (Graduate Teacher Programme) offered by CILT, the National Centre for Languages (now CfBT Education Trust). In 2013/14 there was also a Hanban Teaching Assistant. From September 2014 the school will be expanding its complement of Chinese teachers with two full time teachers and two Teach Direct trainees (one British national from Durham University with 5 years' experience of living in China and one native speaker).

Parental Engagement

Parental attitudes to Chinese are extremely positive (particularly those with children in the CLIL group) and pupils are highly motivated to learn Chinese. The immersion group in Year 7 run a system to share their learning with their parents and to help them to learn too. All pupils spoke about active support from their parents to learn Chinese.

Case study 4: George Watson's College, Edinburgh

- Chinese is firmly embedded within the languages department of the school
- The teachers of Chinese are able to provide both excellent linguistic models as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for their pupils
- All pupils can choose to study Chinese
- There is sufficient curriculum time to enable pupils to make good progress in their study of Chinese

Background

George Watson's College (GWC) is a co-educational independent day-school located on a 50 acre site in the Merchiston district of Edinburgh, south of the city centre. It has 2,300 pupils in the secondary school and also has an affiliated junior school. The school was originally founded as a hospital school in 1741 but became a day school in 1870. It has been co-educational since 1975.

The school has an impressive list of well-known alumni and prides itself on the high academic achievement of its pupils. Entrance to the school is via a highly competitive entrance examination. The school excels in all areas of the curriculum.

Language Teaching and Chinese

George Watson's College offers its pupils a wide range of languages for study. Chinese has been part of that offer for at least 8 years and is firmly embedded in the Languages Department. It is offered as one of four languages in S1 (along with French, Spanish or German) and can be studied throughout secondary school. Pupils in the last year of the junior school are offered a 6 – 8 week block of Chinese as a taster. To date approximately 18 pupils i.e. one group per year choose to study Chinese and have 4 or 5 x 40 minute lessons each week (i.e. on 6 days in every 7 day cycle of classes). However, at S3 level it has now been decided to split the group into 2 ability sets. From the 2014/15 academic year it will also be possible for pupils to join a beginners' group for Chinese starting in S3. However, the school's experience is that it is hard to persuade pupils to continue with their language studies beyond the early levels. Teaching is rooted in the communicative method of teaching languages and use of the target language as much as possible in class is encouraged throughout the Languages Department. The Chinese teachers also make good use of those traditional methods of teaching languages, both from the West as well as from China, which have proven to be effective..

Key to GWC's success is a focus on ensuring that the teacher provides pupils with a good role model. The school works hard to ensure that their teachers have a very high level of subject knowledge and offer only the highest quality of teaching.

For Years S1 – S4 the textbook 'Jin bu' (Pearson) is used but the teachers of Chinese also make use of a wide range of authentic materials, particularly at higher levels. Throughout the Languages Department extensive use is also made of ICT to stimulate and support pupil learning

All pupils study towards SQA examinations and the International Baccalaureate (IB).

Learners

The numbers of pupils choosing to learn Chinese in George Watson's College is fairly steady and has not seen any significant drops or increases since 2010. While motivation levels vary from class to class, it is generally high even among the less able groups of pupils.

Teachers

The school employs two full-time permanent teachers of Chinese, one originating from Singapore and the other from Taiwan but both settled in Edinburgh. Both teachers are QTS – one trained initially in Singapore but then obtained QTS in the UK (school funded) and also has a PGCE in TESOL; the other did her MA in the UK (Edinburgh) and has a PGDE from Moray House, Edinburgh.

Parents

Teachers at GWC reported that parents are generally very pleased with the fact that their children are learning Chinese and see the advantages this might bring them in later life. Pupils who attended the focus group also reported very active parental engagement and interest in their learning.

Case study 5: Granton Primary School, Edinburgh

- The IDL (interdisciplinary learning) approach allows pupils to learn Chinese through cross curricular projects which extends the curriculum time available and encourages learning in realistic contexts
- The school is supporting learner journeys by introducing pupils to a language which they can continue to study throughout their Broad General Education
- The class teacher is highly creative in accessing good linguistic models through team teaching with native speakers and IT.
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities

Background

Granton Primary School (GPS) is located in the district of Silverknowes, Edinburgh, a socio-economically deprived part of the city. The school has 344 pupils and 41.6% FSM (compared to an Edinburgh average of around 20%). The school has a teaching staff of 20. The current head teacher has only recently taken up post and the school is undergoing considerable changes in its staffing.

Language Teaching and Chinese

Granton Primary School has been teaching Chinese for 3.5 years and uses an interdisciplinary approach in line with Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence and to support the 1 + 2 approach to languages adopted by Scotland which advocates that pupils be introduced to a third language no later than P5. In 2013/14 pupils in P6/7 studied Chinese as part of an IDL (Interdisciplinary Learning) project e.g. in term 1 pupils completed a 'compare and contrast' project on village life in Scotland and China (1 – 3 hours per week for 10 weeks) and in term 3 pupils worked on a 'mapping' project, studying both language and culture for 2 hours per week across the 8 week term.

GPS is part of a cluster of primary schools which share a teacher from the Hanban and which prepare pupils principally for Broughton High School which teaches Chinese in S1 – 3 (Broad General Education). The Hanban teacher provided by the Confucius Classroom in Leith Academy comes into GPS for one term in the academic year. At other times the class teacher is on her own.

The class teacher uses flash cards and other self- made resources (from 'Sparklebox') and finds that the pupils respond well to matching/jigsaw tasks. To support the modelling of the language, the teacher uses an online app available on the iPad when no native speaker is available. The school has some books in Chinese which were provided by Edinburgh City Council who put together a series of themed 'Chinese Boxes' which could be loaned out to schools via the school library services.

Learners

Pupils interviewed for this research reported that they enjoy learning Chinese, particularly the lessons about writing characters, those about Chinese painting, videos about hutong living and the Chinese way of counting with fingers. They also commented very favourably on the current Hanban teacher who had done much to raise their interest in China and Chinese.

Teachers

The class teacher is a full-time trained primary teacher with specialisms in Sports and Science and a permanent member of the teaching staff at GPS. She studied Chinese through the Modern Languages in Primary School (MLPS) initiative organised by Edinburgh City Council which comprised two part time courses of about eight weeks each taught by a native speaker of Chinese. In addition to the support from the Hanban teacher (c.f. above), there is also occasional support from native speakers of Chinese who are students at Edinburgh University (a pilot scheme run by Edinburgh City Council involving both primary and secondary schools and volunteers from the University). There is also one Cantonese speaking pupil in the class (who also attends the local supplementary Chinese school at the weekend) who the teacher is able to use to help with modelling pronunciation.

The class teacher said that she felt that the most effective approach for teaching Chinese in her particular situation is team-teaching, either with a native speaker of Chinese or with a teacher who has a good grasp of the language and who can support her in developing ways to link Chinese to other areas of the curriculum. The teacher recognised that a longer term commitment and greater access to a native speaker teacher would be necessary if the school wished to develop its teaching of Chinese further.

Teachers across GPS do projects e.g. to mark the Chinese New Year and welcome the opportunity to use the resources that are available for Chinese as well as to “borrow” those pupils who are learning Chinese.

Case study 6: Katharine Lady Berkeley School, Wootton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire

- Chinese is fully embedded in the school’s extensive offer of languages
- The teacher of Chinese provides both an excellent linguistic model as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for her pupils
- The teacher of Chinese is able to stimulate pupils’ interest in Chinese culture and to develop their ability to appreciate and think critically about different cultures.
- The school recognises the need to train the next generation of teachers of Chinese and provides placements for trainee teachers

Background

Katharine Lady Berkeley School (KLB) is a large 11-18 comprehensive school and Specialist Language College, situated in the rural village of Wootton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire. It has 1450 pupils, predominantly white, middle class and with well-educated parents with high expectations. It has a very low proportion of children with English as an Additional Language (0.6%) or eligible for Free School Meals (4.3%). KLB is a converter academy and in 2013 69% of its pupils obtained A*-C in 5 GCSEs including English and Maths (average across England 59%). In 2012 Ofsted rated the school 'Good'.

Language teaching and Chinese

The school has been a Specialist Language College since 1996 (one of the first) and has taught Chinese since then. Chinese was made a timetabled language from the outset to put it on a comparable footing with the European Languages offered. In recent years the range of languages on offer has begun to decrease, as specialist teachers leave or there is a decline in pupil demand for a particular language. For example, Russian is no longer offered, German is being phased out because of increasingly low take up and there are also problems with sustaining Latin.

All pupils study French to GCSE and in Year 7 all receive tasters of other languages from which they choose in Year 8. All but the bottom set also study a second foreign language in Years 8 and 9. The school only offers Chinese to Sets 1 and 2 (upper ability) who choose from Chinese, Latin, German, Spanish and Japanese. Sets 3 and 4 choose from Japanese and Spanish. At the end of Year 9 students can choose to study either one or both of their foreign languages to GCSE. 57% achieve a GCSE in a language subject at A*-C and about 25 achieve this in two languages. Japanese and Chinese have good retention rates (from Year 9 into Key Stage 4). According to the Assistant Head teacher this is 'because children know it gives them a unique selling point' – such as they might achieve if they had gone to an independent school". The school sees a rich language experience as an important part of what it offers pupils and Chinese is an integral part of this. However, it believes that Chinese is not an easy language for the less able who 'find it too much of a culture shock' and struggle with its tonal character and the script. There is a sense also that lower ability children will not expect to go to China and see French and Spanish as more accessible.

In order to maintain the rich languages offer post-16, KLB has had to show flexibility to enable, in some cases, a single student to take a particular language further.

Learners

A group of between 20-30 pupils choose to study Chinese each year. There are currently 8 learning Chinese in Y12 and 2 in Year 13. The school also offers Chinese post 16 but has recently stopped preparing students for the A level examination because of disappointing results. It now offers PreU and will review this once the first cohort has completed the course.

The school is a long-standing Confucius classroom and as such receives an annual grant, most of which is earmarked for students going abroad. The grant funding is important in sustaining Chinese in a context where other languages have had to be withdrawn.

In Key Stage 4 all students have the opportunity to go to China and may go again if they continue with Chinese into the 6th form. The school is considering using an outside organisation to organise these trips rather than the Confucius Institute scheme in order to ensure that all pupils who want to go are able to do so.

Teachers

The school has a complement of 3 people who teach Chinese. The Head of Chinese is an English native speaker with a degree in Chinese, during which she spent a year in China. She has taught Chinese in Japan and also teaches Japanese in the school. She trained in the school through a Graduate Teacher Programme. A second teacher who has taught Chinese and French is in the process of being replaced. The third member of the Chinese teaching team is a Hanban teacher who acts as a part-time Chinese Language Assistant (CLA). The Head of Chinese has the responsibility for supporting Hanban teachers and knows how to use them effectively as well as how to help them settle in.

KLB uses its Hanban teacher to provide Chinese support to local primary schools. One partner primary school is planning to use the Chinese Key Stage 2 Scheme of Work from the 2014/15 academic year. KLB also offers a short immersion course for Year 5s and a day at the school itself aimed at raising awareness of Chinese.

The greatest challenge for the Head of Chinese is staff retention and the difficulty of finding 'inspirational, good quality teachers'.

The school offers training placements for PGCE Mandarin trainees from Edgehill University.

Parents

Some parents choose KLB because of its status as a Specialist Language College, but not explicitly because of its offer of Chinese. There is enthusiasm for a range of different languages, plus trips and activities which make languages attractive to parents wanting their children to have a wide range of opportunities in the course of their school education.

Case study 7: Manchester Chinese Centre

- By providing pupils of Chinese heritage with the opportunity to gain qualifications in Chinese, the school ensures a steady supply of bilingual/bi-literate and bicultural young people who can use their language skills for higher education and work
- The school provides pupils at many mainstream schools in Manchester with an introduction to Chinese language and culture
- The school recognises the need to train the next generation of teachers of Chinese and offers valuable training placements to teacher trainees
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities

Background

Manchester Chinese Centre (MCC) is a supplementary school located in a converted terraced house in Central Manchester. It was started in 2006 with 6 children and has now grown to 263 pupils of whom 25 are taking GCSE and 26 A level Chinese. Classes take place on Saturdays and Sundays. The centre is entirely run by volunteers: parents pay £150 for a 36 week year plus a small amount for a course book/CD. The 26 teachers working at the centre receive only their travel expenses. There are

also some 15 other helpers. The centre also provides classes for parents learning English and courses in community interpreting. In theory the school is open to all comers but in reality only Chinese parents send their children to the centre. The Chinese community makes up 8% of the local population and there are growing links between Manchester and China with the opening of direct flights to China from Manchester airport.

The centre is preparing a bid to open a free school in partnership with Manchester Airport and Edgehill University. The school would specialise in Chinese teaching but not adopt CLIL methodology in the first instance while it becomes established. It aims to attract children from all backgrounds.

The school offers workshops for mainstream primary and secondary schools across Manchester. The greatest demand for these tends to be around Chinese New Year and at the end of the summer term.

Teaching

Pupils start classes from five years of age. They are placed into groups according to their level of Chinese. The aim is for every child to take a GCSE by the age of 14 though some take it earlier. The school itself is the exam centre and undertakes all the administration.

Text books come from China. They follow the Chinese system and have annual targets for achievement which provides a framework. Having course books means that parents can support their children at home. Teachers also use the internet to create their own materials.

The school is disappointed by the withdrawal of the Asset Languages assessment by OCR in which they had invested heavily and which enabled them to offer annual assessments and certificates to all children.

Learners

All pupils have a Chinese background, some were born in China and speak some Chinese at home. Some also speak Cantonese and all are learning another language at school: French, German or Spanish. All attend the school because their parents want them to. Researchers conducted a focus group with 13 children of different ages preparing for GCSE. They felt that having English made learning European languages easier. They liked coming to the Saturday school to meet others who have in common with them the fact that 'we all speak Chinese'. They found learning Chinese hard and did not regard themselves as good at it. They were all very aware of the importance of Chinese in the world and expected to use it in future 'for business', 'to teach others' and 'to travel around the world because I know languages'. They saw a tremendous advantage in being able to speak both English and Chinese well.

Teachers

Although only some of the school's staff are qualified teachers, all are carefully vetted and supported. MCC trains its own volunteer teachers and teaching assistants and provides placements for teacher trainees from Edgehill University.

Case study 8: Millburn Primary School, Coleraine

- The school is pioneering the teaching of Chinese at primary level in Northern Ireland
- The Chinese teacher provides not only an excellent linguistic model for pupils but also inspires them with his knowledge and expertise in Chinese music
- The school recognises the need to motivate pupils through early success in their learning and makes good use of the YCT examinations
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities

Background

Millburn Primary School (MPS) is located on the Millburn Estate in Coleraine and has served its community since 1956. It has 375 pupils of whom 49% are entitled to receive FSM (free school meals) (compared to 25% of pupils across Northern Ireland as a whole) and there are areas of extreme poverty in the immediate vicinity of the school. The school has a large staff of more than 40. The Principal is very conscious of the school's wider social responsibilities in an area of high socio-economic deprivation and potential religious tensions and there is a wide range of additional after-school activities as well as programmes with parents.

The school depends on the North Eastern Education and Library Board, based in Ballymena. The school is in a neighbourhood renewal area and as a result has been awarded substantial additional funding which it shares with its partner secondary schools.

Languages are not part of the primary curriculum in Northern Ireland (NI) so MPS is in many ways paving the way for other schools to follow. The school was designated a Confucius Classroom hub in April 2013 and the teaching costs for Chinese are therefore covered by Hanban. It is the only hub in NI based on a primary school. The Hanban teacher has been teaching one day a week at the school since March 2014, assisted by a Hanban volunteer teacher.

The school has applied for links to 3 schools in China (the smallest has 4000 pupils) and is awaiting the decision of the Chinese government.

There is no local Chinese community and few local businesses. However, good links have been made through the Confucius Institute with the company Moy Park in Dungannon which supplies chickens to China.

Language Teaching and Chinese

Chinese is taught in a weekly 30 minute lesson to all classes from Primary 3 to Primary 7. Younger children (Primary 1, 2 and 3) receive Spanish classes – also a 30 minute lesson one day per week. At the end of Year 7 pupils progress to one of four main secondary schools in the area, three of which also provide Chinese teaching. The number of schools that Millburn will work with is intended to increase to 14 and the aim is to build a solid programme over time.

No writing is taught in the primary phase – this starts in Year 8 (secondary school).

The Hanban teacher has a doctorate in Chinese Opera and teaches about this as well as Chinese musical instruments to small groups of pupils. He has brought musical instruments from China to motivate the pupils.

The teacher uses the Hanban materials which are provided and supplements these with materials downloaded and printed from the internet if needed. He uses paper-cuts as rewards for pupils which he has bought himself.

Learners

All pupils in Millburn Primary School learn Chinese. In June 2014 a total of 62 pupils took the YCT examination.

Teachers

The reason why Chinese has only been introduced so recently into MPS is due to the difficulty of recruiting a teacher of Chinese. This only became possible with the Confucius Institute was opened in Northern Ireland. It is hoped that the two teachers on the staff who have languages in their degrees will develop the confidence to support the teaching of Chinese by consolidating what has been taught by the Hanban teacher but at present 'they can see the benefits, but not yet that they need to be part of it'.

Case study 9: Rosendale Primary School, West Dulwich, London

- Chinese is fully embedded into the school with a structured programme of learning from Year 1
- The teacher of Chinese provides not only an excellent linguistic model for pupils but also pedagogic skills which are appropriate for her pupils. The teaching of Chinese has been described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted
- The school recognises the value of early success with language learning and enters all pupils for the YCT examination at some point in their primary phase education
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities

Background

Rosendale Primary School (RPS) is a large state-funded primary school in West Dulwich (South London) with an ethnically and socially diverse intake. Slightly fewer than half of pupils are white British and there is a large number of pupils of Caribbean or African heritage. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with English as an Additional Language, and a higher than average proportion eligible for FSM (free school meals). The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is high – 89% reach the expected level in reading, writing and Maths compared with 75% nationally. The school has been teaching Chinese since 2010 and is a Confucius classroom though not involved in any outreach work. The quality of RSP's Chinese teaching was described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted in 2013. The school's excellent reputation also means that it receives many PGCE primary language teacher trainees who want to observe good practice in the teaching of languages at Key Stage 2.

Language Teaching and Chinese

RPS teaches French and Chinese to alternate year groups of pupils, beginning in Year 1 and continuing to Year 6. The school has recently introduced a system whereby every class receives a short daily lesson of 15-20 minutes (this is reduced to 4 lessons per week when pupils are taking SATs). This works well but requires organisation and energy on the part of the teacher, who has to take her laptop and resources box to many different classrooms spread across the school's large site. Pupils are not overloaded with new input and daily practice consolidates learning.

The weekly cycle of lessons developed by the Chinese teacher and which she uses throughout the year has the following pattern:

- Monday – revision of previous week
- Tuesday – introduction new vocabulary (relating to a new topic)
- Wednesday – combinations of the new words in phrases and sentences
- Thursday – questions and answers using the new works
- Friday – writing

This approach also seems to work well from the point of view of the classroom teachers, who remain in the classroom and are able to see for themselves how the learning of Chinese supports the wider curriculum. Some teachers learn a few words and use them in class at other times of the day. The daily interaction with a large number of class teachers means that the Chinese teacher is well-integrated into the school.

The teacher has created many of her own resources and designed her own syllabus. She has also created a revision book for YTC2. RSP has a partner school in China, which came through a personal link developed by the Chinese teacher. They have termly video-conferences and email pen pals. In 2013 some 25 children from the Chinese partner schools visited Rosendale with their teachers but there are currently no plans for Rosendale pupils to go to China.

The lack of opportunities for pupils to continue learning Chinese when they progress to secondary school is seen as a problem, but not one with an obvious solution at the moment.

Learners

Pupils are prepared for YCT tests, the aim being to reach YCT level 3 by the end of Year 5, or the beginning of Year 6 for slower learners.

Teachers

The Chinese teacher is a native speaker who originally qualified as a secondary teacher through the CILT (now CfBT Education trust) GTP programme. She is a full time member of RSP's teaching staff and with the enthusiastic support of the Head teacher, has established the system described above. She is supported by a primary-trained Hanban teacher who works with small groups of pupils from each class or those who are progressing more slowly. The Hanban teacher therefore enables the teacher to cater for different levels of ability and to reduce the size of the groups so pupils have more opportunities to talk.

Case study 10: St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch, East Dunbartonshire

- The whole school is committed to Chinese language and culture and makes effective use of every opportunity for partnerships/exchanges/resources etc.
- The opportunity to study Chinese is open to pupils of all socio-economic backgrounds and abilities
- The teacher of Chinese is able to provide an excellent linguistic model as well as pedagogic skills which are appropriate for her pupils
- The school provides effective collaboration and outreach with local primary schools, extending pupils' learning journeys as much as possible
- The school has found innovative ways of allowing sufficient time in the curriculum for Chinese

Background

St Ninian's High School (SNHS) is a Roman-Catholic, co-educational, state funded secondary school located in Kirkintilloch, East Dunbartonshire. It was founded in 1874 and has approximately 750 pupils. In the last few years the school has been completely rebuilt and now has attractive new premises and extensive outdoor recreational space. SNHS was one of the first of Scotland's "Schools of Ambition" which means that it is "committed to a radical programme of development to secure significantly improved outcomes for their children". The focus of SNHS's bid was modern languages. The school has a track record for innovation and for taking on challenges. The school is the centre of a local "cluster" of schools and has 4 direct primary feeders. It has 10% FSM (free school meals) which is high for the area.

SNHS is one of twelve Confucius Hub Classrooms in Scotland and is partnered with the University of Tianjin, enabling it to undertake outreach work with local primary and secondary schools in the area. Both the Head teacher and Depute Head teacher as well as the Head of Languages have been to China. The school has a partner school (School 42) in Tianjin which has visited SNHS.

The school believes that its commitment to the teaching of Chinese has added to the status of the school which is already known for its work in global citizenship. Chinese is overtly marketed to parents and the school takes part in a wide range of exchange/visits programmes and competitions connected with China/the teaching of Chinese. They would like to develop links with the Chinese community based in Scotland but this is not easy given the school's relatively rural location.

Language Teaching and Chinese

SNHS has been teaching Chinese since the 2009/10 academic year. Pupils are also offered the opportunity to learn French and Spanish. Until the school began teaching Chinese, the third language offered to pupils was Italian

SNHS is the Confucius Classroom hub for East Dunbartonshire. There are 4 feeder primary schools and a number of academies which send pupils to SNHS to study Chinese. The grant funding SNHS receives for this role is used to support the work of the hub and to allow other schools to send their pupils to Chinese classes at SNHS as well as to enable teachers to attend meetings at other schools to explore how SNHS can provide support with Chinese related events/resources.

The Chinese teacher makes all her own materials for classroom use and collaborates extensively with other teachers of Chinese to develop/exchange resources which work well. The school makes good use of their Chinese teacher's experience in Chinese opera and many departments are involved in putting on elaborate performances for the rest of the school. The school takes full advantage of the various visits and exchange programmes offered by the Hanban.

Learners

Having made the decision to embed the teaching/learning of Chinese much earlier in the secondary phase, the system that has now been introduced at SNHS means that Chinese is taught as follows:

S1 – all pupils do French/Spanish and a rotation of Chinese (14 have chosen to do Chinese in the 2014/15 academic year)

S2+3 – all pupils choose either French + Spanish OR Chinese in 3 x 50 min sessions per week (those who choose to do Chinese in S2 cannot do Spanish or French as it is recognised that pupils need more time to achieve National 5 in Chinese).

S4 – at the moment pupils only do French/Spanish but this will eventually include Chinese (as pupils now beginning in S1 reach S4)

S6 – for those pupils who have not had the opportunity to study Chinese before there is the opportunity to do an intensive course (5 hours per week), followed by the immersion course in China and a qualification National 4) in one year.

A number of pupils are selected each year to participate in the summer immersion course in China and report finding this course inspirational in terms of i) boosting their linguistic competence and ii) opening their eyes to the richness of Chinese culture/history etc. One of the conditions the school imposes on pupils who put themselves forward for the immersion course is that they continue with their study of Chinese when they return.

Teachers

For the first two years of teaching Chinese, SNHS had to rely on probationary teachers. However, SNHS now employs one full time, permanent, native speaker teacher of Chinese with QTS (Edinburgh University/ Moray House and a first degree obtained in China) who is in the final year of a part time MA in Education at Edinburgh University. The full time teaching post at SNHS is funded by the local authority. The teacher (now in her third year at the school) is part of the school's Modern Languages team and also a member of the school's Expressive Arts IDL (interdisciplinary learning) team. In addition to teaching Chinese at SNHS, the Chinese teacher also does 6 week rotations in P7 in some six local primary schools and also teaches one lesson per week for 3 weeks to a group of P6 pupils who come to SNHS from four schools in the neighbourhood.

The school also has two part-time teachers from the University of Tianjin who support the school's outreach work and wide range of Chinese cultural activities.

Parents

The School's Parent Council is very supportive of the teaching of Chinese and have fully backed all stages of its development in the school. Pupils report that their parents are enthusiastic about their learning Chinese and have been particularly encouraging about the opportunities given to pupils to go to China. Parents emphasise to their children that a knowledge of Chinese would be good for university applications and for their careers.

Conclusions

1. High level aspirations are not aligned with action on the ground

The high level of political support, both in the UK and in China, for increasing the numbers of learners of Chinese, and the generous resourcing of the Confucius network, provide a very positive and potentially fertile context for the development of Chinese within UK education systems. There is widespread awareness amongst pupils, students, parents and teachers as well as politicians, of the growing importance of China as a global power and an appetite to reach out beyond the languages and cultures which are traditionally most widely taught in our schools, colleges and universities. The development of primary languages in many parts of the UK also provides new opportunities for introducing pupils to Chinese at a young age.

In 2007, and again in 2009, research which investigated the potential for the growth of Chinese teaching in schools indicated that it remained largely marginal to the main thrust of language teaching and many good initiatives were failing to create impact in the longer term. The key challenge was seen as moving Chinese from an 'enrichment' to a 'mainstream'¹²³ subject on the curriculum.

In common with previous research, this study has identified a number of obstacles which are hindering the growth of Chinese. The principal one is the **lack of strategic thinking which would translate high level political support into action on the ground**. In Scotland, a clear long term strategy for developing relations with China on many fronts, the China Plan, is already starting to deliver positive results, but in the rest of the UK, the lack of comprehensive and coordinated strategies mean that good intentions are not being realised. Recent years have seen the rapid expansion of the Confucius Institute network, meaning that more and more children are receiving an introduction to the Chinese language and aspects of its culture. This is often handled in a 'light touch' way to ensure that learners are not deterred by perceptions of difficulty and difference. Schools are often eager to offer such 'enrichment' opportunities to their pupils but a response involving commitment or resources on their side is harder to achieve unless, as in Scotland, there is co-funding from other sources. The exposure of increasing numbers of pupils to Chinese language and culture is valuable in its own right and may well lead to interest which can be developed or exploited at a later stage in the individual's career. However, these experiences are generally too superficial to consider those taking part as 'learners' of Chinese according to the definition used in this research – in other words, pupils undertaking a systematic and sustained programme of Chinese language learning.

The many different players interviewed for this research were unanimous **that the goal must be to develop Chinese as a curriculum subject on a par with other languages taught** such as French and Spanish as part of what one commentator called 'the modern languages family'. The very high expectations and aspirations set by politicians may lead to disappointing results unless there is a framework for channelling energies and investment from all players and the ability to coordinate their efforts within an overarching medium to long term plan. Schools cannot achieve this alone and

¹²³ i.e. being offered as a timetabled subject in the same way as the main languages taught, though not necessarily in all schools.

un-resourced, and resources need to be targeted on developing the capacity of schools to offer Chinese teaching.

A major recommendation of this report is therefore to adopt a **strategic and collaborative approach to the development of Chinese** and to ensure that investment and resources are focused on achieving shared aims. We recommend that a coordinating group be established to guide, develop and monitor the strategy.

The issue of **accreditation** is crucial since it dominates UK education systems and is especially important in England where it is the basis on which schools and local authorities are judged, not only pupils. In Scotland the suite of qualifications for Chinese introduced from 2009 is being updated and this, along with the new 'Languages for Life and Work' qualification will provide very flexible pathways for pupils in the senior phase who are beginners in Chinese. However, outside Scotland, the **accreditation available for Chinese continues to be in need of strategic attention** if Chinese is to grow. Most participants in the research felt that the GCSE for Chinese was now satisfactory; however, the appropriateness of the GCSE needs to be kept under review as reforms to GCSE come into effect and new exams and marking systems are introduced. As these exams develop, and at the point when public consultations are held, Chinese will need a strong and well-informed lobby attentive to any changes which might impact negatively on the growth of the subject in schools.

In addition (Scotland excluded) there is an identified need for **an earlier qualification than GCSE** for those pupils who do not expect to reach GCSE standard within the time available to them, and also for younger learners for whom the tasks and content of GCSE are less suitable. Such a qualification would be valuable in many different circumstances: primary and secondary, mainstream and supplementary, and for both 'enrichment' and 'curriculum' provision. It is of course not an issue peculiar to Chinese – the lack of such a qualification is felt by other languages too, particularly since the demise of Asset Languages, and, to a lesser extent, the language element in the Welsh Baccalaureate. In order for such a qualification to be attractive to schools, it would need to be relatively cheap and have value in the education system, for example for school performance tables or UCAS points. Schools in the research trialling the YCT tests were not yet in a position to report positively on their suitability for the UK education system.

Post GCSE there is potentially a more severe problem with accreditation for Chinese in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. **Schools are being deterred from offering A level Chinese** because the content and marking of the exam is felt to be unfair to non-native speakers. This appears to be an unintended consequence of relatively large numbers of native speaker Chinese speakers sitting the exam as part of their Sixth Form studies in the UK. Schools are experimenting with an alternative examination - Pre-U, which enjoys high academic esteem but as the exam was only introduced in 2013 it is too early to draw many conclusions about its suitability. As an academic exam selling itself as preparation for university, it is unlikely to be suitable for less academic students who want to focus on practical language skills at a higher level than GCSE. However, it will be some time before a qualification for this type of learner is needed (see below).

This research recommends that DfE ask Ofqual and relevant examining bodies to address these issues as a matter of urgency.

2. Need for coordination and monitoring

In 2009 the Price Waterhouse Cooper report for the DfE (then DCSF) highlighted that the lack of coordination between the various stakeholder organisations was making it difficult for end-users to understand the full range of support available and how to access it. This was proving a major obstacle to the development of Chinese. In 2014 there is still little evidence of joined up thinking and the range of different programmes and initiatives for Chinese remains confusing for end-users, with some duplication of roles. Improved partnership working would help to target resources where they are most needed and enable promotional efforts to be more effective.

There is scope for Confucius Institutes across the UK to work much more closely as a network and to share best practice, led by the two which have the most expertise in developing the teaching of Chinese at school level – the Confucius Institute for Scotland’s Schools and the Institute of Education Confucius Institute. Confucius Institutes in Wales and Northern Ireland involved in school-based work would benefit from being drawn into these networks.

The level of investment from China in promoting the teaching of Chinese language and culture in the UK is considerable. However, because - with the exception of Scotland – there is no coherent policy lead from within the UK, neither the UK nor China can derive the full benefits from this investment and are unlikely to achieve the hoped-for step change in provision for British children to learn Chinese. Efforts from China and Chinese institutions in the UK need to be matched by a coherent response from the UK authorities, led by a UK institution.

This research provides the most comprehensive data yet on the current situation for Chinese in the UK. This information should be refreshed regularly in order to monitor the success of the policy measures taken as a result of the findings.

3. A permanent UK-based teaching force is essential

The single most pressing issue identified in this research is the need to **develop capacity in the teaching of Chinese within a permanent UK-based teaching force**. There is over-reliance currently on temporary teachers from China who are unable to fulfil all schools’ needs if Chinese is to have a full place in the curriculum. While more appropriate, tailored training for teachers arriving from China, or speeding up visa decisions would be helpful, it is really the management expertise, close knowledge of UK education systems and influencing power that experienced UK-based teachers can bring - whether they are native speakers or non-native speakers of Chinese – which will be the key to expansion of the language in UK schools.

The development of Chinese teaching needs leadership from locally-based professionals who are able to drive curriculum and teacher development and grow communities of practice which embrace and are enriched by temporary teachers from China. The benefits of what is a substantial injection of funding, resources and teachers, cannot be fully realised unless the resource can be managed and focused where it is most needed. There is already a small but growing body of such UK-based specialist Chinese teachers but if Chinese is to become successfully embedded in a greater number of schools, the priority must be to increase the supply of this middle management/subject leader

layer of expertise which combines excellence in pedagogy with the ability to lead the development of Chinese within schools and clusters of schools. A plentiful flow of temporary teachers from China, however well trained, may actually be providing a disincentive for developing a home-grown product which in the long term is the only sustainable solution. This is true both for the demand-led teacher training context in England and for the more directive top-down models of teacher education in existence in the rest of the UK.

This message already appears to have been understood by policy-makers in Scotland and England, although not yet in Northern Ireland and Wales. In Scotland teacher education places for Chinese are being expanded, although effective growth depends on finding enough NQT placements and beyond that, permanent jobs. Directors of Education are key in this as they control the staffing budgets and ultimately decide whether to recruit or not. In England, Education Ministers have announced a significant expansion of initial teacher training for Chinese, but in the short term the introduction of the new 'Schools Direct' system of teacher training has actually reduced the number of places which can be provided and there is a continuing shortage of schools able and willing to offer placements for trainee teachers of Chinese. Schools and training institutions report that there is no shortage of people wishing to become teachers of Chinese and some incentives are already in place for trainees. The problem is finding enough schools prepared to offer teaching and NQT placements so that they can be trained. If the supply of Chinese teachers is to be increased, **incentives must therefore also be considered for schools and other training providers.**

The expertise of volunteers who teach the thousands of children of Chinese heritage in Saturday and weekend schools throughout the UK has until now been an under-used resource in the development of Chinese teaching to a broader clientele. A **training and a tailored programme of support targeted at Chinese teachers in supplementary schools** would enable this group of professionals to contribute to teacher supply in mainstream schools.

The comparative lack of opportunities to train as a primary school teacher with Chinese also needs attention. At present there are no opportunities in evidence for initial primary training with Chinese, although there are some current initiatives in both Scotland and England for primary teachers to learn enough Chinese to start to be able to include it in their teaching. Such **primary teachers need opportunities for further integrated language and pedagogy training** if they are to develop their skills, time both for developing subject knowledge and for planning, and external support and guidance. Resources for all these need to be carefully targeted at those schools and teachers which are committed to developing Chinese.

4. Heads of Languages are an important target group (as well as head teachers)

The role of the head teacher has previously been identified as crucial and the research has witnessed some committed and enthusiastic head teachers who are leading the development of Chinese in their schools. Without their vision and commitment, many of these developments would not be happening. Generous programmes which take head teachers to China aim to inspire similar enthusiasm. However, as Chinese becomes established, its 'rarity value' will diminish and there is a risk of cynicism developing around the perception of 'free trips' which have little follow-through, or personally motivated projects for which the rest of the school community has little enthusiasm. Resources aimed at incentivising head teachers should be balanced with efforts to stimulate

developments in other parts of the language teaching eco-system, for example the middle management layer which has been identified above as being crucial to the development of Chinese.

Development of the middle management cadre needs to include not only those who in future will be leading teams of Chinese teachers within a school, but also existing and future Heads of Languages. Currently almost all Heads of Languages are experts in one or more European Languages, and for many of them Chinese is a closed book or even a potential threat. It is all too easy for, Chinese to take a path of 'separate development' from other languages and for the perception that it is an 'odd' or 'impenetrable' subject to be reinforced. Heads of Languages, who may have been overlooked in the past, are an important target group for helping Chinese to become 'normalised' in the curriculum, and we recommend that a strategy for Chinese should include **training and development opportunities for Heads of Languages and for those who aspire to these positions in future**. The offer of intensive courses in China for serving language teachers and PGCE trainees is a welcome initiative in this respect and one which should be closely monitored with a view to expansion.

5. There is a need to develop coherent learning pathways for pupils

Another key challenge which has emerged from this research is that of finding a place for Chinese in the curriculum which allows sufficient time for learners to develop a measurable level of competence and enables progression within the system. This challenge also applies to other languages, all of which tend to be squeezed in terms of curriculum time and suffer from discontinuity at points of transition between educational phases¹²⁴. In the case of Chinese, a language with a completely different writing system and practically no common vocabulary, it is even more important to ensure adequate time and continuity. However, because Chinese is a relatively rare subject which few schools offer, it can be very difficult to ensure consistency and progression opportunities for pupils.

This research found Confucius classrooms throughout the UK who were involved in outreach activities with other schools. Frequently, this took the form of 'enrichment' classes in local primary or secondary schools which help to raise the profile but rarely equate to sustained learning of Chinese for the pupils involved. However, where pupils had opportunities to visit China as a result of such contacts, this was certainly valuable. The requirement for Confucius Classrooms to submit only annual plans for outreach activities militates against the development of more sustainable longer term strategies for involving local schools and there is a need to think through more carefully about how this might be achieved. The high profile achieved by the hub school in becoming a Confucius classroom may in some cases be a disincentive for other local schools to develop their own provision and the challenges of developing strong partnerships and collegiate working should not be underestimated, particularly where partner schools are spread over a wide area. However, enthusiasm and commitment can be more important than geographic proximity. Greater impact might be achieved by investing more heavily in a smaller number of consortia of schools committed to the sustainable development of Chinese. This would create a critical mass in a local area and help to resolve some transition and continuity problems. Where outreach activities contributed most to capacity-building, they included training and networking for teachers and local language-based activities for pupils.

¹²⁴ Board and Tinsley. Language Trends. Op.cit.

Too many pupils who are currently accessing Chinese language and culture have an insubstantial or fragmentary experience. It may be more productive in the long term to **concentrate efforts on the development of substantial high quality programmes in a smaller number of schools**, rather than outreach to the many.

None of the schools involved in this research had yet satisfactorily resolved the problem of transition from primary to secondary, or, where not provided in the same school, from lower secondary to higher secondary. The current growth of primary language learning in UK educational systems throughout the UK provides an excellent opportunity to develop the teaching of Chinese, but it also risks creating disappointment and frustration in learners and their parents if there are no opportunities to continue with the language when children progress to secondary school. Secondary schools may be reluctant to introduce a new subject which relies on only one teacher who may be difficult to replace if for whatever reason they decide to move on. The Confucius Institute model of 'hubs' provides a potential solution here. **Primary and secondary schools need to work together in consortia to develop Chinese teaching strategically** as part of a medium to long term plan.

At the same time, it needs to be recognised that not all learners will start Chinese in the primary school. Again, this is something that Chinese has in common with other languages, but is an even more crucial issue for Chinese given its distance from English. Secondary schools in this research have provided some innovative examples of how to provide more time for Chinese within the curriculum.

If a *sine qua non* for the successful development of languages in the primary school is a 'clear national statement covering language teaching from primary through to secondary, setting out expectations on what pupils are expected to achieve at each stage is a pre-requisite for avoiding wastage and frustration in the system'¹²⁵, such a statement does not yet exist for Chinese, although in Scotland a framework for primary Chinese has recently been published which could provide a useful model¹²⁶. The National Curriculum programme of study for languages in Key Stage 2 in England refers to any modern or ancient language and contains references which are not applicable to Chinese. The CILT Curriculum Guide for Chinese¹²⁷ could also provide a good basis, as could the Scheme of Work based on the Key Stage 2 programme of study for languages, accompanied by training and resources for teachers developed by the Institute of Education's Confucius Institute in London. One teacher interviewed for this research has produced a progression document for Chinese in Key Stages 3 and 4, linked to the previous National Curriculum attainment targets. All these provide an excellent basis on which to build and should be more widely known and discussed across the Chinese teaching community, with a view to creating **a shared reference document setting out progression in Chinese** which can be used flexibly across the UK. This would provide clarity and consistency between educational phases and peace of mind for head teachers and Heads of Languages who are currently wary of Chinese because they do not understand how progression works in the language. It would also serve as a basis for the development of appropriate qualifications.

¹²⁵ Tinsley and Comfort. Op. cit.

¹²⁶ 'Knowledge about Language (KAL) in Mandarin' Downloadable from:
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/k/knowledgeaboutlanguagealllanguages.asp?strReferringChannel=educationscotland&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-615801-64>

¹²⁷ The CILT Curriculum Guide for Chinese. https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/cg_chinese_web.pdf

6. There is a need to develop a body of expertise and shared professional understanding of the teaching of Chinese in a UK context

The teaching of Chinese as a school subject in the UK is in a relatively early stage of development and lacks the depth of shared expert understanding of ‘what works’ that other languages enjoy. However, there is a small but growing body of expertise, stimulated through Action Research projects and opportunities to share challenges and solutions at conferences and training events and via electronic forums. These embryonic **communities of practice need to be supported and developed further**. They also need to be integrated into wider language teaching communities in order to break down barriers between languages and overcome wariness about Chinese being ‘different’.

Teachers from China bring with them a rich resource of Chinese language and culture, but need support and training from UK-based experts who understand what works in a UK primary or secondary school context. **Pre-departure training for teachers and language assistants coming from China should be more targeted** than it is already to the UK context and the various programmes bringing teachers to the UK rationalised to provide clarity for end-users. More opportunities could be provided for teachers from both countries to learn from each other as well as from the experience of Chinese teaching in other European or English speaking countries.

Is Chinese a hard language to learn for English speakers?

This research did not find evidence to contradict the commonly held view that Chinese is ‘hard’. However there is evidence that pupils who are actually learning Chinese consider it less hard than pupils who are not learning Chinese. In other words the difficulty of Chinese is over-exaggerated in the public mind. Pupils warm to the features of Chinese which are seen as less complex than European languages (lack of inflections, articles etc.), but also derive enjoyment from what they perceive as the ‘difficult’ aspects of Chinese: the characters, tones and its difference from European languages. When the goals and expectations of what they can achieve are in line with the time available, they see that they can make progress and be successful. Even though the majority still say it is ‘hard’ this does not necessarily impact on their enjoyment or motivation. If they are taught well they derive considerable satisfaction from tackling a ‘hard’ subject.

The obverse of this is that if they are not taught well, or if the goals and expectations of what they can achieve go beyond what is reasonable in the time available, Chinese classes are not likely to be successful. Hence the importance of teachers who are expert in methods and approaches which work in a UK context and who can devise suitable programmes and communicate their rationale to school management.

Resources

The availability of suitable resources for the teaching of Chinese did not emerge as a major issue or barrier in this research. Teachers were generally satisfied with those available and successfully creating their own, tailored to the needs of their students. They felt that centrally produced resources could never be a substitute for this and that they were easily able to draw on up to date

resources available online such as photos, videos and language learning websites, to fulfil their needs.

If there was any issue at all surrounding resources, it was over-supply of unsuitable material from China, leading to wastage. Some means of consultation is needed whereby schools can specify what material they would like to receive. **An English-language classification system is needed so that librarians and school staff who do not speak Chinese can easily see what has been sent and make it accessible to those likely to use it.**

7. Advocacy for Chinese must be part of the strategy

The research has highlighted the importance of continuing to **promote China and Chinese culture amongst the general public in the UK** in parallel with the development of Chinese teaching. There is a need for promotional and informational materials setting out the benefits of Chinese and its distinctive nature.

Typical low cost artefacts sent from China such as paper cuts and lanterns are useful for schools for display and rewards and as such are very well-received. Such items are widely seen by parents, pupils and staff and help to raise awareness generally of China and Chinese culture. **Providing schools with low cost promotional items should certainly continue** as part of a strategy for developing Chinese.

Very few schools involved in this research exercise had links to businesses involved with China, or to the local Chinese community (in some cases the latter or the former did not exist locally). However, **business and community links are a key area for development** and have potentially much to offer in relation to the development of Chinese.

8. Strategic challenges for each of the four nations

England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of a national, centrally coordinated strategy to support the development of the teaching of Chinese • The lack of a sustainable home grown source of teachers with very high levels of both linguistic and pedagogic skills • Training policies which require schools to take the lead, combined with an insufficient number of schools willing/able to offer placements for teacher training in Chinese • The often prohibitive cost and logistics of in service teacher training for many primary and secondary schools • The difficulty of providing full time employment to a teacher of Chinese because of the relatively small numbers of pupils learning Chinese • The lack of time available in the curriculum to ensure progress of learning in the language • The current A level Chinese examination is inappropriate for those learning Chinese as a foreign language
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of a qualification for Chinese which accredits pre-GCSE competence • The lack of appreciation of the value of languages by significant sections of the English population
Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of compulsory language learning in any point in a child's education other than Key Stage 3 • The fact that languages other than the main European languages must be offered in addition to rather than instead of the main European languages, limiting the time available in the school day • Absence of teacher training for Chinese and total reliance on teachers from elsewhere
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work needs to be done to ensure that there is effective co-ordination of the demand/supply of GTC registered teachers of Chinese across Scotland. • An insufficient focus in both initial and in-service teacher training for primary school teachers on the need for good levels of subject knowledge and confidence to teach Chinese • A lack of tailored training and support for volunteer teachers from China which is currently hindering their effectiveness in Scottish schools • Transition issues preventing pupils from making progress in Chinese throughout their school education • Schools and local authorities are not fully aware of the support available to them • Resources need to be targeted to where they can be used to build capacity • More work needs doing to continue to develop and share appropriate pedagogies for the teaching of Chinese • Teaching models of Chinese need to consider the language as an L2 as well as an L3 (in the context of the 1+2 approach)
Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales has the lowest take up figures for foreign languages in Key Stage 4 of any of the UK nations. • The lack of focus in current educational policy in Wales on increasing uptake in languages • The inadequate amount of time during which the study of languages other than Welsh and English is compulsory (between the ages of 11 – 14) makes it difficult for pupils to achieve any real progress in language learning • The fact that all Welsh children have to learn English or Welsh in addition to their mother tongue leaves little time in the curriculum for any further language study. • Absence of teacher training for Chinese and total reliance on teachers from elsewhere • The severely constrained budgets of local authorities hampers their ability to support schools with any new initiatives or in service training • The lack of appreciation of the value of languages by significant sections of the population – perhaps even more marked than in England

Recommendations

This chapter sets out recommendations arising from the research exercise and discussions with stakeholders.

The vision

There can be no doubt that closer collaboration between the four nations of the United Kingdom and China will bring untold benefits to both countries, not just in economic terms but also by enriching the cultural, social and educational aspects of the lives of citizens in both the UK and China. The work already done by Government, public and private bodies, schools and individuals has set us on the right track but will remain limited in its impact without much greater commitment by all players to work together to meet the challenges ahead. The real benefits to be derived from achieving a mutually beneficial relationship of deep understanding between China and the UK require sustained and co-ordinated strategic direction from the top with clear goals as well as incentives and long term partnership working between languages providers, businesses, academics and parents. The reward will be a generation of young people on both sides of the world who appreciate what each other brings to the table and who can communicate and collaborate without difficulty to ensure a richer and safer world.

Aims

The overarching aim across all 4 UK nations should be to ‘mainstream’ Chinese as a curriculum subject – not in all schools but in a small critical mass of schools which can ensure a place for Chinese alongside other languages being taught. Action should be directed towards making Chinese a realistic choice for head teachers by ensuring that the supply of qualified teachers, training opportunities, resources, assessment systems and progression for learners match in quality and suitability – if not yet in quantity - those available for the most widely-taught languages.

Different nations are at different stages of development in the introduction of Chinese into their schools. Each will need to adopt a different timescale to achieve this aim. In England and Scotland, where the teaching of Chinese is most developed, with high level political support, it is possible for Chinese to have a sustainable and accepted place alongside other languages within 5 years. However, whereas in Scotland there is already a strategy in place designed to deliver this, England has still to develop coordinated action to achieve the aspirations of its leaders.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been grouped into three strands: those which are policy-focused, those which are about the teaching and learning of Chinese, and those which relate to advocacy for Chinese. They do not presuppose a large investment of additional resources, but the implementation of a more strategic approach in order to make better use of those currently available. Within each strand, specific recommendations have been grouped under seven key aims.

Strategic and policy-focused recommendations

- Align high level aspirations with appropriately-targeted and resourced action on the ground
- Build a UK-based teaching force for Chinese
- Coordinate efforts and monitor the success of the strategy

Recommendations relating to teaching and learning

- Provide a coherent 'learning journey' for pupils starting in primary school or in the first years of secondary school through to higher education
- Develop capacity in the management of Chinese in UK schools
- Develop a body of expertise and shared professional understanding in the teaching of Chinese language and culture in a UK context

Recommendations relating to advocacy for Chinese

- Provide advocacy for Chinese to enhance appreciation of the benefits of a knowledge of Chinese language and culture amongst pupils, parents, teachers, school leaders and the general public.

The recommendations are not intended to be suggestions from which stakeholders can select. All are essential components of an overarching strategy to develop the teaching of Chinese. No timings have been shown as these depend on differing circumstances in the four nations of the UK. However, there are three key recommendations which need to be put in place as a pre-condition for success. These are:

- Adopt a strategic and collaborative approach to the development of Chinese and ensure that investment and resources are focused on achieving shared aims. Establish a coordinating group to guide and develop the strategy.
- Provide an increasing number of teacher training places for teachers of Chinese, with incentives to schools and other providers if necessary.
- Develop a body of expertise and shared professional understanding in the teaching of Chinese language and culture in a UK context

The recommendations are targeted at a relatively small group of stakeholders, all of whom have the remit and the expertise to act strategically.

In view of its experience in receiving and training incoming teachers, in organising educational visits to China, in developing materials for schools and in providing advocacy for languages, and its UK-wide remit, the British Council is best placed to provide the co-ordination that is needed and to drive the strategy for Chinese on behalf of UK authorities. It should be tasked with establishing the coordinating group - bringing together all the organisations named in the recommendations - and with providing the UK-based leadership which is crucial if efforts to expand and improve the

teaching of Chinese are to be most effective. Its role should include ensuring that effective practice and lessons learned in each of the UK nations can be shared and developed further.

The Hanban will derive most benefit from its investment if it works with the British Council as a major strategic partner. This may mean some adjustment of roles and the streamlining of a number of existing programmes so that the expertise of both organisations can be fully harnessed to their mutual benefit. The first priority must be to address the overlap between the Hanban teacher and volunteer teacher programmes and the Chinese Language Assistants programme. The aim should be, in time, to integrate these programmes. First steps could include the sharing of induction and training, and sharing the evaluation and discussion of what works well and best contributes to realising the aims of the strategy. Integration of these programmes would also bring considerable benefits to schools for whom the plethora of different but similar programmes and initiatives can be confusing.

The coordinating group should also review the range of programmes for educational visits to China and ensure that these are targeted within schools and at the levels where such visits will yield the greatest returns. Shared promotion to schools is another area which could be explored immediately by the co-ordinating group, which could also play an important role in gathering the views of schools about the resources which are most needed to support the teaching of Chinese.

Recommendations grid and Appendices provided in separate files.