

1999 SSCLC Workshop for Teachers of Chinese

The ninth workshop for pre-collegiate Chinese teachers conducted by the Secondary School Chinese Language Center at Princeton University was held in conjunction with the Princeton University Chinese Language Instruction Conference on April 24, 1999.

The theme of the Princeton Chinese Language Instruction Conference was "Chinese Language Instruction: Materials and Pedagogy." The participating teachers attended presentations that covered a wide range of topics and issues relating the Chinese language instruction, including development of materials, testing and assessment, error correction, overseas Chinese programs, and application of linguistics theory to Chinese language teaching.

As in previous years, the pre-collegiate teachers had a special session in the afternoon to share experiences and discuss issues of common concerns. There were fifteen participants, including teachers from regular American schools, as well as teachers and leaders of the Chinese language schools. Participants spoke about their own programs and shared with each other the exciting happenings in their schools.

The participants discussed the issue of promoting the Chinese AP Test and felt that Chinese teachers should work together to urge the College Board to develop a higher level test to meet the needs of growing Chinese programs in the United States. Another major concern expressed by the participants was how to further inform the public of the importance of learning Chinese. In spite of the great success of the existing Chinese programs, the European-only concept is still dominating many of the American schools. It was recommended at the workshop that more articles and speeches be presented at the local level as well as the national level to educate the public and to stimulate the interests in learning Chinese. The Princeton Center also pledged its support in providing research findings and information that promote Chinese language instruction at the pre-collegiate level.

The participant teachers commented on the workshop as a good opportunity for them to become better informed and connected with the Chinese teaching community, both at the pre-collegiate level and the college level.

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The 1998 SSCLC Workshop for pre-collegiate Chinese teachers was held in conjunction with the Princeton University Chinese Language Instruction Conference on April 25. The 1998 workshop was the eighth workshop for Chinese teachers conducted by the Secondary School Chinese Language Center at Princeton University. More than fifty Chinese teachers attended the workshop. Most of the participants were from New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania; some came from Texas, Massachusetts, California, Maryland, New Hampshire, Ohio, and North Carolina. Though some of the teachers had years of teaching experience, many had just started their Chinese teaching career. Also, among the participants, there were Mr. Larry Shyu, president of the National Council of the Associations of Chinese Language Schools (NCACLS), and Mrs. Theresa Hsu Chao, Editor-in-General of the NCACLS Newsletter.

The participating teachers attended the Princeton Chinese Language Instruction Conference sponsored by the East Asian Studies Program at Princeton University. The presentations during the conference covered a wide range of topics and issues relating the Chinese language instruction: development of materials, testing and assessment, error correction, overseas Chinese programs, and application of linguistics theory to Chinese language teaching.

In the afternoon, the pre-collegiate teachers had a special session to share experience and discuss issues of common concern. Every participating teacher was invited to speak for a few minutes about his/her Chinese program. It was really exciting to hear all the wonderful happenings with the Chinese language instruction in the secondary and elementary schools across America.

The participating teachers also voiced their concerns about several issues in the field. There was a strong appeal about the urgency of training qualified teachers of Chinese. The need to develop a Chinese AP Test was discussed as well. In addition, other issues such as creating instructional materials, technology in Chinese instruction, and networking among programs were mentioned.

Teachers commented on the workshop, saying it was an "eye-opening" and precious learning opportunity. They felt energized and encouraged, illustrated by the letter Catherine Wang of St. Stephen's Episcopal School, TX wrote, "It was very exciting to see what people are doing and how much potential there is in the field."