

ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP: CHINESE AND RUSSIAN

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PREPARING STUDENTS FOR CAPSTONE YEAR: CURRICULAR FEATURES: Multiple pathways to develop advanced levels of cultural literacy

- **Content specific coursework—**
 - Chinese/Russian history, Chinese/Russian economics, Russian Art/Culture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Chinese/Russian literature, media, etc.
- **Explicit cross-communication cultural preparation course – short term course or module in current coursework or tutorials**

Online Cafés project

- Adapted from Cultura model for intercultural exchange developed at MIT.
- Offers ways for language teachers to access the “silent language of culture” (Edward T. [Hall](#)) by having students engage in online intercultural exchanges with speakers of the target language.

Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence Learning Objectives

- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Skills of interpreting & relating
- Skills of discovery & interaction
- Cultural awareness

- (Byram, 1997; Chun, 2011; Schenker, 2012)

- **Online cafes offer students the ability to:**
 - Observe
 - Compare
 - Hypothesize
 - Clarify

Chinese Cafés: Pedagogical Objectives

- **Curricular model:** To create an online cultural module to be embedded in a Flagship course for students preparing for Capstone Year in China
- **Online Communities:** To engage students from multiple Chinese Flagship Programs & connect them with a community of Chinese students at Nanjing University
- **Sustainability:** To develop new online cafes for each upcoming cohort of Flagship students

Pre-Flagship Pilot Project: Spring 2011

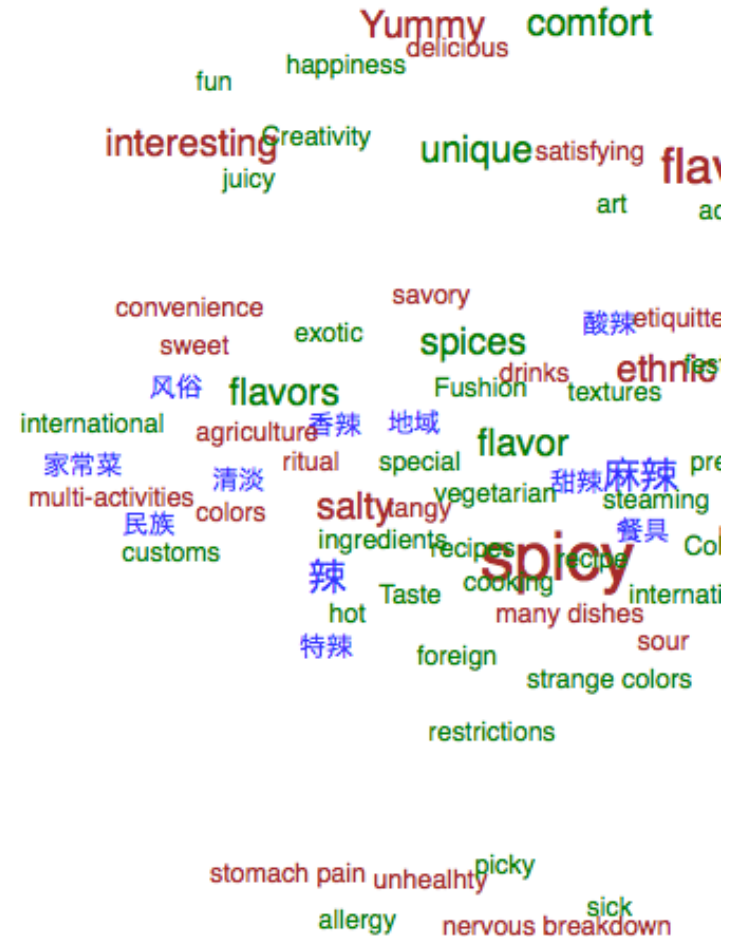
- Café Population:
- 4th yr. Chinese students from Arizona State University (15)
- 4th yr. Chinese students from University of Hawai'i (15)
- Graduate students in TCFL from Sichuan University (15)

2011 Café model

- **Café language:** Chinese
 - students could work in pairs or small groups & could get editing assistance from teachers or T.A.s
- **Thematic focus-** multiculturalism in Arizona, Hawaii, Sichuan
- **Assessment:** Pre- and post activity – essay on topic above; to see gains in intercultural competence & awareness of linguistic aspects of exchanges
- **Technological innovation:** Tag cloud activities
 - Offer enhanced functional manipulation of word associations used in original Cultural projects
 - All students use L1

Sample of cloud tag groupings

[hide activity information] + -



Successes of café

- Overcame limitations of semester/quarter/spring break challenges
- Students became familiar with technology; added element to regular class activities
- Interesting observations regarding individual/group identity (e.g., language used in commenting on cloud tags); distinctions between types of introductions & choices of photos, etc.)
- Excellent facilitation through UH BRIX system (roles of Tschudi & Medina --- critical for future cafés)

Limitations of 2011 café

- Pre/post essay assignment was too vague. Topic needed more focus.
- Sometimes students wrote in groups, responses not authentic due to concerns about about language usage
- Focus on language reduced potential gains in cultural understanding.

Flagship café #2 Spring 2012

Chinese Flagship Café



[See All Classes in This Semester](#)

Semester/Year/Section:

Spring 2012 [Section 1]

Login Name:

madelines

Password:

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Login

Flagship Café, Spring 2012

- Population:
- ASU Chinese Flagship students (10 students)
- San Francisco State Chinese Flagship students (8 students)
- BYU Flagship Students (8 students)
- Nanjing University, Chinese graduate students (16 students)

Spring/Fall 2012 Project design

- **Language usage:** All students write in L1 but read and respond to L2 posts.
- **Language focus:** Students work with respective instructors at home institutions regarding issues of language & more in depth discussions on topics related to cross cultural communication.
- **Thematic focus:** Units follow current class on cross cultural communication for Flagship students, taught previously at ASU, BYU
- **Cultural objective/assessment:** Evidence of student interactions based on inquiry, hypothesis, comparison, evaluation

Café menu

Course Menu	
Cafe	I
Welcome - 欢迎光临领航咖啡室	
Getting to Know You - 互相认识	I
1. Self-Introduction - 自我介绍	I
Culture in Images - 图像中看文化	I
The Family - 家庭和亲情	I
Tools	

Self introductions

NFLRC: Online Cafes x Google x +

nflrc.hawaii.edu:8084/cafes/activity/227




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本组成员：
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请用麦克风录音，用汉语谈谈你自己的家乡和家庭。请你也利用"+image"的链接将你的三张图像张贴到文本框中，每上载图像时，图像用将显示在文本框中鼠标器所在之处。请在你的叙述中一定要谈到每张图像的内容，这三张图像，一张应是自己的家乡的，一张应是自己的家人的，一张应是自己所喜爱的 业余活动的。

Talk about your home town and family in Putonghua. Include three digital images (one of your home town, one of your family, and one of a hobby or pastime you engage in) and incorporate the story of the pictures into your recorded introduction. (Click in the textbox. You can type something, and then click "+image" and choose a picture file. After upload, the image will appear at the point where your cursor is in the textbox.)

Kevin Keller 柯可乐 Mar 04, 09:25AM

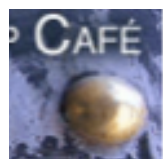


Danica Harvey
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Cultural in Images: Student posting

Chinese Flagship Cafe, Spring 2012
(Section 1)



Home

Schedule


Classmates

Teachers

Lo

Culture in Images: 张贴文化图像

Instructions:

在中国的同学：在论坛上，请你利用Rich Text Editor操作板上"image"的链接 () 上载并张贴的图像。图像内容可能涉及到所谓的“大文化”（即民间风俗、穿着、饮食等等），但是也可能涉及成文的规定等等）。请将图像张贴到文本框中并用中文稍微加以说明图像中的文化内容。每上载图像器所在之处。图像小一点为妙。

Students in the USA: Please post two digital images that you feel illustrate something images may illustrate so-called "big C Culture" (festivals, cuisine, culture, etc.), but i culture" (shared values, norms of behavior, unwritten rules) might be even more inte use written English to briefly explain the cultural values or cultural phenomena illustr include images in your posting, you will need to click Rich Text Editor. There is an im you to upload and choose picture files. Keep the image size small, please!)

Enter forum Post cultural images

图像
的文化

Example of Prompt for posting that guides students to compare, observe, hypothesis, clarify.



Using ENGLISH (US students), please write a brief, informal posting that answers the following questions about these two clips. The idea is to share your thoughts with your 网友, not to write a formal essay. Your 网友 will be posting in Chinese.

What do you observe regarding the relationships between the Chinese mother and son and the American mother and son? Explore the differences between the parent-child relationships in terms of being "Chinese" or "American." Why do you think the advertisers chose these specific scenarios in order to portray these relationships? Do you agree that these family relationships are realistically portrayed? Why or why not? (If a clip is unrealistic, does that mean it is an idealization of cultural values?)

If you have time and interest, also explore the effects of how the clip is produced. For example, what is the role of the narrator versus the characters? How about captioning?

Task 2:

Read all the postings in the forum. Respond to the postings from your Chinese 网友 and probe more deeply. Feel free to address your 网友 by name to request clarification or explanation of anything you did not understand. (To address someone, use @Name.) At the same time, make sure to respond to any questions you can, especially if you have been asked personally. Remember: *observe*, *hypothesize*, and *clarify* (through questions and answers).

Challenges and lessons learned

- Arranging scheduling across multiple universities is quite complex (e.g., Chinese new year, quarter/semester system, etc). (cf. Bashrini *et al*, 2008; Beltz & Müller-Hartmann, 2002; Warschauer, 1997; Little *et al*, 1999)
- Need to start early, define communities clearly.
- Instructor buy in, organization, & collaboration are critical (O'Dowd 2007; Bashrini *et al*, 2008)
- Connecting café with academic course is key (cf Tschudi *et al*, , Müller-Hartmann 2006; Chun 2011; Levine,2011)

Next steps: Online café, Fall 2012-Spring 2013

- Population: students from ASU, SFSU, IU (12 total) and Sichuan U (15).
- Have skype meetings among language instructors whose courses will be impacted by the café. Decide specifically how the café will be embedded in the course.
- **Stage 1:** 11/ 5-11/30 netiquette, self introductions, Unit 1 (students become familiar with technology)
- **Stage 2:** 1/21-2/11 Units 2-3 (total 8 weeks)

Results? (to be continued)



References

- Chun, D. (2011). Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence through Online Exchanges. *CALICO Journal*, 28(2), p-p 392-419.
- Schenker, T. (2012). Intercultural Competence and Cultural Learning through Telecollaboration. *CALICO Journal*, 29 (3), pp. 449-470.
- Tschudi, S., Hiple, D., Chun, D.(2010). Fostering Cohesion and Community in Asynchronous Online Courses. 1-43.
- Tschudi, S Medina, R. (2011). Interactive Tag Clouds: A Tool Supporting New Possibilities for Dialog in Online Language Learning. CALICO Presentation.