



**Teachers' Mandarin Usage in EFL Classrooms in Two Universities  
in Southeast Mainland China**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## **Declaration**

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis/project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Yuhong Lu

February 26th, 2015

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## **List of Abbreviations**

- CHEAN – College Human Ethics Advisory Network
- CLIL– Content and Language Integrated Learning
- CLL – the Community Language Learning method
- CLT – the Communicative Language Teaching method
- EFL – English as a Foreign Language
- ES – effect size
- ESL – English as a Second Language
- FL – the foreign language
- HDR – Higher Degrees by Research
- HREC – Human Research Ethics Committee
- L1 – the first language
- L2 – the second language
- MOE – Ministry of Education
- PRC – the People’s Republic of China
- TBLT – Task-Based Language Teaching approach
- TPR – the Total Physical Response method

## **Abstract**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been taught using various approaches in a diversity of settings over many years from the traditional Grammar Translation method, to the Community Language Learning method, to the Content and Language Integrated Learning method. However, in all the approaches to EFL teaching, debate still exists over the usage of students' first language in EFL classes. Questions regarding the relationship between EFL and the age of the learner and the factors that interfere or facilitate EFL learning continue. This study investigated the teaching of EFL, for non-English major students, where students' first official language was Mandarin in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. The research examined how teachers used Mandarin in EFL classes, in what situations and why teachers used Mandarin in EFL classes, what students' and teachers' attitudes were regarding the switching from English to Mandarin, and the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom.

The study employed a Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Research Methodology. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of 417 higher education university students and 22 EFL teachers in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. Subsequently, qualitative data were collected through eight audio-recorded classroom observations and four semi-structured EFL teachers' interviews.

The conclusions drawn were that EFL teachers believed that it is important to switch to Mandarin for the following reasons: to assist higher education students to understand EFL more efficiently and effectively, because of the insufficient class time for EFL teaching and learning in the classroom, because of the EFL teachers' low competence in mastering the English language, because of the limited English experiences the students have with the language, and because students do not appear to engage with the text book driven teaching content of EFL classes. The study highlights the need for further exploration of the teaching of EFL in university settings particularly the EFL teachers' requirements of professional development in effective practices for adult learners.

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

The teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), or English as a Second Language (ESL), has had an exponential rise in demand in the Asian regions of the world in the last 50 years. This includes teaching English to small children in an English speaking context; teaching English to secondary students in a foreign language context; or teaching English to higher education students. Knowledge related to the pedagogy of how to teaching English, when to teach in English to whom using which method has become a new driver in education.

This study was conducted in two universities in Southeast Mainland China where English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a course designed for and taught to non-English major university students. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) means English is taught in a country where English is not the first language. Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) means English may be the first language of the culture but not necessarily the first language of the students. In this study, theories about foreign language or second language teaching, and specifically theories about EFL and ESL teaching were examined as these theories can be applied to EFL classes in the context of the higher education in Mainland China.

This study has addressed the need for more detailed knowledge about the teaching and learning of English to non-English major university students in Mainland China. The research was concerned with teachers' Mandarin usage (also called Putonghua in Mainland China, students' first official language in this study) in EFL classroom in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. Year 1 and Year 2 university students of non-English major and their EFL teachers were selected as participants of this study. This study aimed to

- quantify the amount of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms;
- examine students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms;
- explore the contexts under which EFL teachers used Mandarin; and the reasons why EFL teachers incorporated Mandarin in their teaching in non-English major EFL classrooms; and finally
- investigate the relationship between students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' English proficiency levels.

## **1.1 International context**

The use of students' first language in foreign language or second language classrooms has generated heated debates among researchers in the area of language teaching (Atkinson, 1987; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). Historically, in some teaching methods,

such as the Direct method (Berlitz, 1982), students' first language usage was totally banned. For much of the last century, the "monolingual principle" (Howatt, 1984) dominated foreign language or second language classrooms. Influenced by the "monolingual principle", foreign language or second language teachers shared the opinion that they should avoid or minimise students' first language use. In some regions, or countries, such as Hong Kong, Korea and the UK, the "monolingual principle" has been even incorporated into guidelines for foreign language or second language teaching (Curriculum Development Council, 2004; Department for Education, 2013; Jeon, 2008; Kang, 2008; Kim, 2002). However, the use of students' first language is widely observed in foreign language or second language teachers' actual practices in language classrooms. As discussed below, students' first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms has become a controversial issue drawing critical debates among researchers in this area.

Some theorists (Asher, 1977; Cook, 1991; Turnbull, 2000; Weinreich, 1968) have advocated the total elimination of students' first language in the foreign language or second language classrooms. For example, based on Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis, some researchers (Cook, 2001; Day, 1985) argued that a sufficient target language input was vital for successful foreign language or second language learning. Others (Ellis, 1984; Turnbull, 1999, 2000) have argued that students' first language input would reduce the target language input amount and become detrimental to foreign language or second language learning. Based on these research results,

teachers should maximise the usage of the target language and avoid or minimise students' first language usage (Chaudron, 1988; Kim & Elder, 2005; Polio & Duff, 1994; Wong Fillmore, 1985).

Other researchers (Chambers, 1991; Long, 1996; Macaro, 2001; Weinreich, 1968) argued from different perspectives and opposed students' first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms. Weinreich's (1968) interaction assumption pointed out that students' first language usage would interfere with the target language teaching as these two languages formed two distinct systems in bilinguals' minds. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis has claimed that interaction in the target language is vital for foreign language or second language learning. If students want to improve their language proficiency levels, they need to communicate in the target language. Too much first language input would impede students' target language learning processes. These arguments are supported by researchers such as Chambers (1991), Macaro (2001) and Polio and Duff (1994).

However, in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there has been a change in researchers' attitudes towards students' first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms. Some studies focused on advantages of students' first language usage in target language classrooms (Cook, 2001; Klapper, 1997, 1998; Moore, 2002; Schweers, 1999; Skinner, 1985) and have suggested to foreign language or second language teachers "don't ban mother-tongue

use but encourage attempts to use the target language” (Willis, 1996, p. 130). Cook (2001) pointed out that foreign language or second language acquisition did not resemble first language acquisition and foreign language or second language meaning did not exist separately from first language meanings. He has suggested that to facilitate the acquisition process foreign language or second language teachers should ensure sufficient target language input amount and incorporate students’ first language in the target language teaching processes.

Other researchers claimed that students’ first language could not be totally excluded in foreign language or second language classrooms, as the first language and the target language are interdependent (Cohen, 1998; Macaro, 2000, 2001; Moore, 2002; Skinner, 1985). These researchers have suggested that students cannot connect thoughts and ideas that they have already developed in the first language if their first language is banned in the target language classrooms (Skinner, 1985). Macaro (2000) suggested that teachers could incorporate the first language into their teaching as the first language could help associate the two languages and reduce students’ memory constraints. In addition, first language usage was found to be helpful for enhancing students’ linguistic awareness regarding differences between two linguistic structures (Moore, 2002). Students’ first language usage could facilitate the target language learning in some certain circumstances, such as for explaining grammar (Cook, 2001) and for translation or contrast (Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002):

- Explaining grammar means that teachers use students’ first language to

explain the grammar in the target language.

- Translation means that teachers switch from the target language to students' first language to make input comprehensible, which includes translation of items from lessons and other items, usually items from instruction.
- Contrast means that teachers use students' first language to contrast the target language forms with students' first language forms; and contrast cultural practice in the target language with the cultural practice in students' first language.

Some researchers (Bolitho, 1983; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Guest & Pachler, 2001; Klapper, 1997, 1998; Schweers, 1999; Van Lier, 1995) have supported the teaching of English involving students' first language usage as it can help create a learner-friendly environment in which students could be more comfortable and confident, and thus target language learning could be facilitated.

Due to the debate on students' first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms, a number of studies have been conducted to explore the amount of students' first language used by teachers in target language classrooms; in what contexts teachers used students' first language; students' and/or teachers' attitudes towards students' first language usage; and the reasons why teachers used the first language in foreign language or second language teaching (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Kim & Elder, 2005; Macaro, 2001; Rolin-Ianziti &

Brownlie, 2002; Turnbull, 1999). The results of these studies showed a great variability in the amount of students' first language usage. For example, Duff and Polio (1990) reported that the amount of students' first language used by teachers ranged from 0% to 90% in thirteen foreign language classrooms at the University of California. Other researchers went further to explore the contexts in which teachers used students' first language; and students' and/or teachers' attitudes towards students' first language usage (Polio & Duff, 1994; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002). Polio and Duff (1994) identified eight contexts in which teachers use the first language, including administrative vocabulary items, grammar instruction, and classroom management. Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) created their context scheme based on Duff and Polio's study, categorising contexts as translation, metalinguistic uses, and communicative uses. Other studies investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms (Schweers, 1999; Varshney & Rolin-Ianziti, 2006). According to the responses from students and teachers to survey questions, both students and teachers considered first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms necessary and helpful.

The findings from these studies indicate that there is a need for further research to examine teachers' usage of students' first language in different contexts. Working in a higher education context these research studies inspired me to examine teachers' usage of students' first official language in EFL classrooms for non-English major

students in two Southeast Mainland China universities.

## **1.2 EFL context in Mainland China**

In Mainland China, Mandarin is not necessarily peoples' first language as they speak various dialects (e.g. Cantonese, Hakka, Min, Wu) as their first language. However, Mandarin is the sole official language taught at all levels of schooling. Mandarin is thus considered as the first language in the studies conducted in the context of Mainland China.

University EFL teachers in Mainland China have a consensus to speak as much English as possible in classrooms. However, at the level of national policy, no specific requirement has been made with respect to EFL teachers' language choices (Department of Higher Education of Ministry of Education of P.R.China, 2007).

As it seems inevitable that teachers use Mandarin in EFL classes, several studies have been conducted in the context of English classrooms in universities in Mainland China. Using Mandarin was found beneficial to English learning and teaching (Liu, 2010) under different Mandarin usage contexts, which were classified as explaining grammar, translating new vocabulary, teaching abstruse concepts and building rapport with students (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002). The findings from some studies (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009) were that one main reason that teachers used

Mandarin was students' low English proficiency levels; however, the opposite findings were reported in Van Der Meij and Zhao's (2010) study, as they claimed that teachers' Mandarin usage was not and should not be related to students' English proficiency levels. Cheng (2013) and Song (2009) both examined EFL teachers' attitudes towards the code-switching in classrooms. Cheng (2013) found that most EFL teachers held negative attitudes towards the code-switching; while Song (2009) believed that in general EFL teachers had neutral attitudes towards code-switching practices.

However, this level of documentation of Mandarin and English usage has not been undertaken in a higher education context involving university non-English major EFL students. Tang (2002) and Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) carried out research in EFL classes for English major students in universities in Mainland China; Liu (2010), Cheng (2013) and Song (2009) mixed English major and non-English major students and/or teachers together as the participants of their studies. However, none of these previous research studies have specifically quantified the actual amount of students' first language (Mandarin) used by university English teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in Mainland China. Nor did these previous research studies quantitatively analyse their data to find out whether there was any relationship between students' attitudes towards their English teachers' Mandarin usage and students' English proficiency levels. This study aims to address these questions. The new knowledge gained will add to our understanding of the learning and teaching of

non-English major EFL in the higher education context in Mainland China.

### **1.3 Purpose and research questions**

In this study, I began the research by using the term code-switching, which means the act of alternating between two languages in either spoken or written expressions (Auer, 1999). However, as the research proceeded I realised that I was more interested in only one side of the code-switching, the switching from English to Mandarin by teachers in their EFL classroom teaching. Therefore, I became solely concentrated on teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classroom teaching. I began to use the term 'teachers' Mandarin usage' instead of code-switching, or switching into Mandarin. English is taught to each student in the Higher education in Mainland China in two different models: English-major courses and non-English major courses. Non-English major students have EFL classes as one compulsory course. This study focuses on the context of the EFL classes in the higher education in Mainland China, thus EFL students and EFL teachers from two universities in Southeast Mainland China were selected as participants.

In light of the gaps in the previous research, the purpose of this study was to quantify the amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage; investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms; classify EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts in which EFL teachers resorted to using Mandarin; and

document the reasons why the EFL teachers incorporate Mandarin into their teaching processes in EFL classrooms.

The research questions are as follows:

1. How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?
2. What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes?
3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
4. When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms?
5. Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
6. Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is three fold. First, as discussed above, several studies have already provided insight into the role and value of first language usage in the context of Mainland China. However, little has been documented on the actual

amount of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. Based on participants' answers to survey questions, previous studies did not, and could not, give an exact answer to the actual amount of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. This study aimed to document the actual amount of four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms at two universities in Southeast Mainland China by applying a 15-second sampling technique, adopted from Duff and Polio's (1990) study.

Secondly, previous studies concerning students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage mainly focused on students' general attitudes towards EFL teachers' overall Mandarin usage. They did not examine students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in each particular Mandarin usage context. In EFL classrooms, teachers used Mandarin in different contexts, such as using Mandarin to explain English grammar or to give the translated Mandarin version of their English articulation. Previous studies did not examine students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in these different contexts. This study, by applying a quantitative analysis, aims to explore students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts. The study is also designed to investigate the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes.

Thirdly, this study delves further into the reasons why EFL teachers used Mandarin in EFL classrooms through qualitative interviews with four EFL teachers. These teachers

were asked why they incorporated Mandarin into their teaching in EFL classrooms in different contexts, and how they evaluated their Mandarin usage.

## **1.5 Structure of the thesis**

This thesis comprises nine chapters. The present chapter is an introduction outlining the international context, EFL context in Mainland China, purpose and research questions, significance and structure of the thesis. Chapter 2 contains the Literature Review concerning first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms. The chapter contains four parts: a historical review of foreign language or second language teaching methods in various settings; a history of discouraging the first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms; discussion of the debate on the first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching; empirical studies on first language usage; and research studies related to EFL in Mainland China. Chapter 3 discusses the context for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Mainland China. It includes a history of EFL education; an overview of the education system in Mainland China; the national policy for EFL; and teaching and learning styles in Mainland China. Chapter 4 details the methodology applied in this study, including research design, context of the study, data collection, data analysis, and RMIT research processes. Chapter 5 contains a quantitative analysis of data collected from class audio-recording sessions, students' questionnaires and teachers' questionnaires. Four EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin

usage were quantified; then students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage were examined and compared; finally the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes were explored. Chapter 6 discusses the different contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin in classrooms. The transcriptions of eight classes' audio-recording sessions were analysed qualitatively to build up the code scheme for the four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage. Chapter 7 provides the qualitative analysis of the teachers' interviews. Here, the reasons given by the four teachers for using Mandarin in EFL classrooms are discussed. EFL teachers' attitudes towards their own Mandarin usage in classrooms were also further explored. Chapter 8 brings together the results from this study and compares them with findings from previous studies reviewed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Chapter 9 presents the study in context, the key findings, contributions to new knowledge, limitations of this study, issues observed during this study, and recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Teachers' Mandarin usage in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in non-English major classrooms in two universities in Southeast Mainland China is the major focus of this thesis. However, it is initially important to examine the theories of how to teach second languages or foreign languages in general. From the general theories for language learning, some specific theories were developed for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In this chapter, general theories of second language or foreign language teaching as well as specific theories for ESL and EFL teaching are introduced for they are all relevant and useful for examining EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the context of higher education in Southeast Mainland China.

This Literature Review chapter is presented in five parts: a historical review of foreign language or second language teaching methods in various settings; a history of discouraging the first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms; debate regarding the first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching; empirical studies on first language usage; and, lastly, research

studies related to EFL in Mainland China.

## **2.2 Historical review of foreign language or second language teaching methods in various settings**

In the history of foreign language or second language teaching method development, a variety of teaching methods have been proposed as a response to meeting people's specific requirements in various education settings and in different historical periods. These methods often derived from social, economic, political, or educational circumstances and were influenced by developments in the fields of linguistics and psychology (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). From the traditional methods used in the early nineteenth century to the methods currently used, specialists and teachers have been inspired to develop new approaches which would be more effective and adequate to improve foreign language or second language teaching and learning. Some well-known methods for foreign language or second language teaching are: the Grammar Translation method, the Direct method, the Audio-lingual method, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, the Silent Way method, the Community Language Learning (CLL) method, and Language Immersion method. These are reviewed in the next sections.

### **2.2.1 Grammar Translation method**

From the seventeenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century, the Grammar

Translation method dominated foreign language or second language classrooms in Western countries. This method, which originated from the teaching of classical languages such as Latin and Greek, was believed to be the only approach for teaching a foreign language or a second language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Grammar translation classes were often conducted in students' first language. The foreign language or second language grammatical rules were elaborately explained and vocabulary items were taught in the form of word lists. The Grammar Translation method focused mainly on the written form at the expense of the oral form. Students learned the foreign language or second language grammatical rules and vocabulary, then translated sentences or entire texts from the target language to their first language. No attention was given to oral practice. Through translation from and into the target language, the Grammar Translation method aimed to develop a student's reading and writing ability in the target language. According to this method, the first language is freely used as "a reference system" in the processes of the target language acquisition (Stern, 1983, p. 455).

The Grammar Translation method was widely used for its merits. First, it made few demands on teachers. As the first language was the medium of instruction; foreign language or second language teachers did not need to be native speakers or even near to native speaker proficiency. Moreover, millions of students learned a foreign language, or a second language, even to a high proficiency level in reading, writing and translation, without any real contact with native speakers. Furthermore, the

Grammar Translation method gave students a basic foundation upon which they built their communicative skills. Learning grammatical rules did not impede students' communicative skills. On the contrary, explicit grammar instruction could raise learners' conscious awareness of the form and structure of the target language in their communication practice. Finally, the first language could help avoid misunderstandings in the teaching processes, because students' first language was used as the medium of instruction, students could more easily understand the curriculum content.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, European society underwent great changes (Berger, 2006; Lindemann, 2012). Mutual trade activities, commercial exchange and transnational travels contributed to an increase in contact between people in different European countries. Oral proficiency in a foreign language, or a second language, gradually became the goal of language learning. Many European countries witnessed the questioning and rejection of the Grammar Translation method (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). People who were critical of the Grammar Translation method felt it created a teacher-centred learning environment in which students passively memorised endless lists of vocabulary and grammatical rules (Chastain, 1971; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Rivers, 1981). Furthermore, students could not escape the dominance of their native languages in language learning processes; and as a consequence students hardly enhanced their communicative competence at all (Patel & Jain, 2008). The Grammar Translation method could no longer satisfy people's demands for an effective method

of teaching and learning a foreign language, or second language.

Opposition to the Grammar Translation method gradually developed into the Reform Movement of the 1880s to 1890s (Bayley, 1998; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Scholars and language teachers from European countries, such as England, France, Germany and Scandinavia, were attracted to the discussion on developing new approaches for foreign language or second language teaching. The Reform Movement was not a single particular language teaching method; it "... was an umbrella term for a variety of approaches, all of which had the common aim of teaching the learner to communicate in the foreign language, i.e. to teach the language, not to teach about the language" (Bayley, 1998, p. 42). According to Eric Hawkins there were four schools of thought within the Movement: the reading method, the phonetic method, the natural method and the Direct method (as cited in Bayley, 1998, p. 42).

Oral proficiency was increasingly demanded in European countries. This demand initially created a new market for conversation books or phrase books intended for private study, specialist also began to pay attention to the language teaching method in secondary schools. Individual language specialists, such as Marcel and Gouin in France and Prendergast in England (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 7) developed specific approaches for language teaching. However, their approaches for foreign language or second language teaching did not have a long lasting or widespread influence on modern language teaching. As Richards and Rodgers (2001)

argued:

[...] the ideas and methods of Marcel, Prendergast, Gouin, and other innovators were developed outside the context of established circles of education and hence lacked the means for wider dissemination, acceptance, and implementation. They were writing at a time when there was not sufficient organizational structure in the language teaching profession (i.e., in the form of professional associations, journals, and conferences) to enable new ideas to develop into an educational movement. (pp. 8-9)

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, leading linguists, such as Englishman Henry Sweet and German Wilhelm Viëtor (Bayley, 1998), began to give reformist ideas greater credibility and acceptance. These authors, and other reformists, shared the beliefs that spoken language was a very important component of second language learning. They proposed that:

- The spoken language is primary and that this should be reflected in an oral-based methodology.
- The findings of phonetics should be applied to teaching and to teacher training.
- Learners should hear the language first, before seeing it in written form.
- Words should be presented in sentences, and sentences should be practiced in meaningful contexts and not be taught as isolated, disconnected elements.
- The rules of grammar should be taught only after the students have practiced

the grammar points in context - that is, grammar should be taught inductively.

- Translation should be avoided, although the mother tongue could be used in order to explain new words or to check comprehension. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 10)

Avoidance of students' first language usage was thereafter incorporated into a variety of second language teaching methods, such as the Direct method, the Audio-lingual method, and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach.

### **2.2.2 Direct method**

The Direct method, also called the Natural method, was popularised by Maximillian Berlitz towards the end of the 19th century (Berlitz, 1982). Just as the name suggests, advocates of the Direct method argued that a foreign language, or a second language, could be taught without translation or use of the learner's first language if meaning could be conveyed directly through demonstration and action. According to the Direct method, foreign language or second language learners should be immersed in the target language as it is believed that the target language learning should be analogous to the first language acquisition. Teaching involves only the use of the target language "as a means of instruction and communication in the language classroom", and through "the avoidance of the use of first language and of translation as a technique" (Stern, 1983, p. 456).

The Direct method was the first teaching method to attempt to claim that knowing a language is being able to speak it. Unprecedented in the history of foreign language, or second language teaching, the oral practice became the focus of language teaching processes. Compared to the Grammar Translation method, teachers of the Direct method apply the new techniques in teaching practice, such as question and answer activities, conversation practice and dictation activities. The basic principles of the Direct method are as follows:

- No use of the mother tongue is permitted (i.e., teacher does not need to know the students' native language).
- Lessons begin with dialogs and anecdotes in modern conversation style.
- Actions and pictures are used to make meanings clear.
- Grammar is learned inductively.
- Literary texts are read for pleasure and are not analyzed grammatically.
- The target culture is also taught inductively.
- The teacher must be a native speaker or have native-like proficiency.

(Celce-Murcia, 2013, p. 3)

The Direct method enjoyed great popularity in private schools where language learners had enthusiasm for speaking foreign languages and the use of the native speaker teachers was the norm (Brown, 1994a). However, as Brown (1994a) pointed out, “(it) did not take well in public education where the constraints of budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background made such a method difficult to use” (p.

56). However, the applicability of the Direct method soon began to be questioned (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). First, it requires that teachers should be native speakers or have native like proficiency in the target language (Patel & Jain, 2008). In practice, it is hard to meet the requirements as not all teachers have high language skills in the target language. Secondly, it is difficult to avoid misunderstandings, especially when teaching abstract words, since students' first language is strictly excluded from language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

By the 1920s use of the Direct method had declined because of its perceived limitations. However, the Direct method laid the foundation for the development of other approaches and methods for foreign language or second language teaching, such as the Audio-lingual method and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach.

### **2.2.3 Audio-lingual method**

The Audio-lingual method, also known as the Army method, dominated foreign language or second language teaching during the 1950s and 1960s. It was developed during World War II as an answer to the increasing demand for US trained military personnel to be able to use the target language communicatively (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). The US government established the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) in 1942 to train military personnel to speak the allies' and enemies' languages.

The Audio-lingual method is theoretically founded on the behaviourist theory of language teaching (Skinner, 1957), which professed that people's language learning processes could be a result of habit formation through a reinforcement process with an emphasis on a successful error-free learning environment. The teacher's role is to direct and control students' behaviour, providing a model, and reinforcing correct responses. Errors from students are not expected or accepted. Like the Direct method, the Audio-lingual method also hypothesised that a foreign language can be taught directly without using students' native language to explain new words or grammar in the foreign language or second language. However, unlike the Direct method, the Audio-lingual method does not focus on the teaching of vocabulary. Instead, emphasis is given to the use of grammar; students are thus drilled to use the linguistic structures and features of the target language.

The Audio-lingual method teaches a foreign language or second language through repetition and pattern drills. Classes are often conducted in a language laboratory, teachers provide correct sentence structures and patterns, and students continue to practise until they can give correct answers automatically. No explicit grammar explanations are given. The characteristics of the Audio-lingual lesson can be summed up in the following list:

- Begins lessons with dialogs.
- Uses mimicry and memorization because it assumes that language is habit formation.

- Grammatical structures are sequenced.
- Grammar is taught inductively.
- Skills are sequenced: listening and speaking-reading and writing (postponed).
- Pronunciation is stressed from the beginning.
- Vocabulary is severely limited in the initial stages.
- A great effort is made to prevent error.
- Language is often manipulated without regard to meaning or content.
- The teacher's role can be compared to that of a dog trainer.
- The teacher must be proficient only in the structures, vocabulary, etc. that she/he is teaching, since learning activities and materials are carefully controlled. (Celce-Murcia, 2013, pp. 3-4)

The Audio-lingual method relies on repetition drills and thus can be used to teach large numbers of learners at the same time. This method gained popularity in the 1960s, it was applied to teaching foreign languages in the United States and to teaching English as a second or a foreign language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). However, the Audio-lingual method is based on static repetition drills and memorization of standard phrases. Students are not given the chance to be exposed to real or realistic communication in the target language. As a result, students cannot develop their speaking skills to a high level of proficiency.

The Audio-lingual method has also been discredited. Rivers (1964) criticised the

Audio-lingual method for its failures in promoting students' oral proficiency and for its undue attention on memorization and repetition. Chomsky (1959) questioned the theoretical foundation of the behaviourist psychology of this language learning methodology. Thereafter the Audio-lingual method was quickly phased out.

#### **2.2.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach**

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is a set of learning and teaching principles. However, CLT quickly took on the nomenclature of an EFL methodology. CLT started from the late 1970s and was prominent in late 1970s and early 1980s (Hunter, 2009; Karunakaran & Babu, 2013) “as a reaction against” (Hunter, 2009, p. 22) the Audio-lingual method. The primary goal of CLT is to develop communicative competence, to move “beyond grammatical and discourse elements in communication” and probe the “nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language” (Brown, 1994b, p. 77).

The aim of the CLT approach is to develop learners' foreign language, or second language, communicative competence; and it includes procedures for teaching of the four language skills known as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The CLT approach encourages activities involving real communication to be incorporated into meaningful tasks. The term communicative competence was first coined by Hymes (1966, 1972) and later refined by specialists such as Canale and Swain (1980). For Hymes (1966, 1972), the acquisition of communicative competence meant not only

the acquisition of the knowledge about linguistic rules and also the ability to apply these rules to use language appropriately. Thus linguistic skills and communicative abilities should be seen distinct in language teaching (Widdowson, 1978). Canale and Swain (1980) developed the meaning of the communicative competence, defining the term of the communicative competence as the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence. They proposed that the communicative competence was:

[...] one in which there is a synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social contexts to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse. (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 20)

In 1983, Canale modified the definition of the term communicative competence. For him, communicative competence encompassed four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence:

- Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of the rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, lexical items, and phonology “to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances”(Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30).
- Sociolinguistic competence means “the appropriateness with which speakers

produce and understand language within a particular social context” (Hoekje & Williams, 1992, p. 250).

- Discourse competence refers to how to integrate grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence to “produce and interpret cohesive and coherent discourse” (Hoekje & Williams, 1992, p. 254).
- Strategic competence is “described by Canale as the mastery of verbal and nonverbal strategies that can either be used to compensate for deficiencies in other areas of competence or to increase communicative effectiveness in general” (Hoekje & Williams, 1992, p. 257).

Another feature of the CLT approach is the communicative syllabus (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The CLT approach has a functional and notional syllabus in many European countries, rather than the more traditional categories of grammar and vocabulary. Notional categories include concepts such as time, location, frequency, and quantity; and functional categories include communicative acts such as offers, complaints, denials, and requests.

In a CLT classroom, a foreign language, or second language, teacher is expected to be a needs analyst, a counsellor and a group processes manager. The teacher is expected to analyse students’ needs in teaching and learning processes; respond to students’ needs; facilitate and organise classroom communication and communication activities; and act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. A CLT

classroom is student-centred; a student is a negotiator between himself or herself, the learning processes and the object of learning. A student has to be an inter-actor, interacting not only with the teacher but more frequently with all the other students. A student should be a speaker rather than a listener in the CLT approach, one who receives and give information.

The CLT approach has made language learners more enthusiastic about speaking out about what they want to express; and it has changed the education from the traditional master-servant relationship into a harmonious interaction between teachers and students. By applying pair work and group work to make classroom activities more motivating and meaningful, students can learn from hearing the language used by other learners; students can speak more than in a traditional teacher-centred language classroom; students can be more activated as the teaching content has become more meaningful for them; and finally they can increasingly develop their foreign language fluency.

However, the CLT approach was criticised for having a number of disadvantages (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). First, it is hard for the teacher to monitor and correct students' errors, especially in classrooms with a large number of students. In the CLT approach, students are allowed to make mistakes. However, they need corrections from teachers to help improve their language proficiency. If too much attention is given to activities among students, rather than interactions between teachers and

students, students can not immediately get corrections from their teachers. Secondly, low level language learners often find it difficult to participate in classroom activities. Understanding between learners and teachers, as well as among learners, is a must. However, it is hard for low level learners to understand classroom activities and then express themselves in pair work or group work if they have limited vocabulary and language skills. Finally, not all teachers can meet the requirements in the CLT approach. In this teaching method, a foreign language or a second language teacher should first be a very knowledgeable person in both the students' first language and the target language. This is an unrealistic expectation. Furthermore, the teacher should have a good monitoring ability during the teaching processes so that the teacher can correct students' errors when needed. In large classes this is also an unrealistic expectation. Moreover, a foreign language teacher should try to make the teaching content creative and motivating in order that students become eager to practise in the target language.

Although the CLT approach gained widespread acceptance in the area of language teaching, and it is still used in current language teaching, it has been criticised by researchers. Questions have been raised with regard to its applicability to the teaching of languages, such as whether the CLT approach can be applied at all levels in a language program, or whether it is equally suited to ESL and EFL situations (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The language teaching methods discussed above each represents a combination of teaching beliefs and has focused on one or several specific issues in teaching practices, therefore it is inevitable that such methods have inherent drawbacks. Motivated and inspired to develop new methods which would be more effective, specialists have been working on the new teaching methods for foreign language or second language teaching from the 1960s to the present. Some of these new methods are well known in the history of foreign language or second language teaching method development. In addition, some methods are still widely applied in practice today. In the next section, some of these methods are introduced, they include the Total Physical Response (TPR) method (Asher, 1977), the Silent Way method (Gattegno, 1972), the Community Language Learning (CLL) method (Curran, 1972), and Language Immersion method (Cummins, 1983, 2007).

Paralleling the CLT approach was a collection of other EFL teaching and learning methods: the Total Physical Response (TPR), the Silent Way, Community Language Learning (CLC) and the Language Immersion methods. These will be briefly covered in the next sections.

### **2.2.5 Total Physical Response (TPR) method**

Total Physical Response (TPR) method is a language teaching method developed by psychologist James Asher (1977). TPR is linked with the “trace theory” (Katona, 1940) in psychology which proposed that the more the target language is associated with

physical movements, the more likely the target language is recalled. In this method, language learning is coordinated with physical movements. It is believed that students can learn a foreign language or second language more easily when their body movements are involved in the teaching and learning processes. The teacher gives commands to the students and the students respond with their body movement; in this way the teacher assumes that the students' understand the commands.

The essential of the TPR method can be summarised as follows:

- Understanding the spoken language should be developed in advance of speaking.
- Understanding should be developed through movements of the student's body. The imperative is a powerful aid, because the instructor can utter commands to manipulate students' behaviour. Research suggests that most of the grammatical structures of the target language and hundreds of vocabulary items can be learned through the skilful use of imperatives by the teacher.
- The teacher should not attempt to force students to speak. As they internalize a cognitive map of the target language through understanding what they hear, they will reach a point of readiness to speak. The individual will spontaneously begin to produce utterances. (Asher, 1977, p. 4)

The TPR method is effective when teaching a foreign language or second language to beginners, or young children, who have a limited level of oral proficiency. As Asher

and Price (1967) stated, “children outperform adults in foreign language comprehension because the new language is learned through play activity in which the child makes action responses”; for children, the second language learning is “synchronized with physical responses” (p. 1219). In Krashen and Terrell’s (1983) Natural Approach, TPR was considered to be an effective technique in language teaching for the reason that TPR could help beginners participate in meaningful and realistic language activities and thus ensured the target language input.

However, this method over-emphasised listening comprehension and, as a result, foreign language speech proficiency is delayed. Reading and writing are not introduced until students can respond to a series of commands and they themselves can give commands to other students. The Total Physical Response (TPR) method is often applied in foreign language or second language classrooms alongside with other methods (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

#### **2.2.6 Silent Way method**

Introduced by Caleb Gattegno (1972), the Silent Way, as its name implies, requires teachers to keep silent most of the time during teaching and learning. The Silent Way proposes that students learn a foreign language or second language autonomously, thus teachers provide the model language once, and then the teachers keep silent and monitor students’ reproductions of the model language. Language pronunciations and structures are taught through the presentation of specialised teaching materials, such

as sound-colour charts, and word charts. Students reproduce the language after the teacher provides models, while teachers mostly give feedback to students by nodding or head shaking.

The principles of the Silent Way are:

- To avoid the use of vernacular.
- To create simple linguistic situations that remains under the complete control of the teacher.
- To pass on to the learners the responsibility for the utterances of the descriptions of the objects shown or the actions performed.
- To let the teacher concentrate on what the students say and how they are saying it, drawing their attention to the differences in pronunciation and the flow of words.
- To generate a serious game-like situation in which the rules are implicitly agreed upon by giving meaning to the gestures of the teacher and his mime.
- To permit almost from the start a switch from the lone voice of the teacher using the foreign language to a number of voices using it.
- To provide the support of perception and action to the intellectual guess of what the noises mean, thus bring in the arsenal of the usual criteria of experience already developed and automatic in one's use of the mother tongue.
- To provide duration of spontaneous speech upon which the teacher and the students can work to obtain a similarity of melody to the one heard.

- To give students a great deal of meaningful practice without repetition.
- To make meaning clear to understand students' perceptions, not through translation. (Karunakaran & Babu, 2013, p. 524)

An opposite of the traditional teacher-centered classroom, teachers using the Silent Way usually do not speak. However, it is difficult for most of the foreign language or second language teachers to conduct a class without speaking or seldom speaking to their students. In addition, students in this method need to be skilful at using different charts or rods. For these reasons, the Silent Way is considered to be outside of the mainstream of the foreign language or the second language teaching methods (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It certainly is not used in higher education settings with adult university students.

### **2.2.7 Community Language Learning (CLL) method**

The Community Language Learning (CLL) method was designed and elaborated by Charles Curran (1972). CLL is different from the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach (see Section 2.2.4): the major feature of CLL is to create interpersonal relationship between students and the teacher so that language learning can be facilitated; while in a CLT classrooms, the emphasis is given on developing students' communicative competence.

Deeply influenced by Carl Rogers' (1959) humanistic psychology, the CLL method

aims to remove fears of learning a foreign language or second language and change the traditional relationship between teacher and students. The students are considered as clients and the teacher becomes a language counselor (Karunakaran & Babu, 2013).

Based on the Rogersian assumption that human beings have an ultimate motive – that being self-actualisation to achieve one's goals (Rogers, 1959), Charles Curran (1972) considered the processes for learning the target language as self-development and personal growth. La Forge (1971) considered language learning a social process:

Learning is a social affair and optimal learning can come only from social interaction. Because individuals vary in degree of anxiety about the difficulty and consequences of engaging in learning, in traditional classes these differential anxieties and resistances can easily add up to a group climate of partial resistance to the teacher. (p. 49)

In this method, a small group of students sit in a circle, the teacher takes the role of a counsellor and students are the learners. Students decide what they want to talk about in their first language, and the teacher translates it into the target language in a whisper, then the students practise the sentences in the target language through group work. When students are satisfied with their practice in the target language, they transcribe their conversations and analyse them. Finally, students reflect on their experiences of classroom activities and listen to the monologue of the teacher about

the elements elicited from their interactions in class.

The CLL method motivates and inspires students to speak in the target language by giving them the freedom of choice in class. It also helps reduce students' anxieties and removes threatening elements during the learning processes. The potential benefits of CLL can be summarised as follows:

- provides a student-centred, contextualized and negotiated approach to learning
- increases students' awareness of their own language
- enables students to explore the options available within the sociolinguistic nexus of different roles and situations
- encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning
- can target speech events within the students' own experience
- develops both critical and supportive dynamics in the classroom
- shifts responsibility for error correction and language selection onto the student
- shifts the role of the teacher away from that of presenter/controller towards facilitator/advisor
- provides a resource of student-generated materials which can form the basis of further lessons
- can be adjusted to all levels of proficiency (Crichton, 1994, pp. 61-62)

However, it is not suitable for teaching a large number of students in a group.

Furthermore, it requires that all students speak the same native language in group work; it is not suitable for teaching students with different language backgrounds. Finally, the teacher might become too non-directive and therefore not give enough critical guidance in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

### **2.2.8 Language Immersion method**

The Language Immersion (Cummins, 1983) method originated in Canada in the 1960s. It is a method in which students are taught partly, or totally, in a foreign language, or a second language. The target language is both the curriculum content and the instruction medium (Akcan, 2004). The teaching is in the target language, thus students are immersed into the second or foreign language (Met, 1993).

The Language Immersion method can be classified in different ways. First it can be classified by the starting year of the Language Immersion method (Baker, 2011):

- Early immersion programmes begin in kindergarten or from Year 1 in primary school.
- Middle immersion programmes start from Year 4.
- Late immersion programmes are offered in secondary school (from Year 6 or 7 on).

In terms of immersion intensity, the Language Immersion method can be divided into two categories (Gebauer, Zaunbauer, & Moller, 2013):

- Partial immersion programmes in which most classes in the curriculum are taught in the target language.
- Total immersion programmes in which all the classes are taught in the target language.

Language Immersion aims to develop a high proficiency level in the target language, especially oral proficiency. It also helps develop a positive attitude towards the target language and the culture. Language Immersion is effective for developing the target language proficiency as it provides students with an intensive exposure to the target language. The academic outcomes from Language Immersion programmes are significant. Due to the extensive target language exposure, students in Language Immersion programmes have higher target language skills than students who study in conventional second or foreign language learning programmes (Gebauer et al., 2013; Genesee & Jared, 2008; Gottardo & Mueller, 2009). “Students in (early, middle, and late) partial and total immersion programs have continuously demonstrated higher levels of achievement in all L2 skills than have students receiving conventional language arts instruction in the L2” (Gebauer et al., 2013, p. 67).

However, Language Immersion is not applicable in every language learning environment. Many students find it difficult to learn all subjects in the target language, and each immersion class needs to have an immersion teacher, which is hard to attain and financially not a viable option (Met, 1993).

### **2.2.9 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)**

Over the years the CLT approach raised a number of teaching and learning issues such as how to organise a syllabus. In traditional language teaching methods, grammar topics or texts were taken as a basis for organising a syllabus. However, with the increasing emphasis on communicative skills as CLT methodologies suggest, the traditional syllabuses could no longer satisfy the increasing demand on communicative skills. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) are considered new approaches underpinned by CLT methodology. They are both influencing the construction of language teaching policy in many countries and regions (Carless, 2008; Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Van den Branden, 2006; Zhang, 2007).

TBLT was first proposed by (Prabhu, 1987) in language teaching in secondary school classrooms. The essence of TBLT is to ask students to fulfil meaningful tasks by using the authentic target language, and the tasks serve as the basic units of the curriculum. It is believed that language development is driven and formed by language use (Prabhu, 1987). Therefore, communicative tasks are crucial to form the basis of daily and long-term lesson planning (Breen, 1987; Long, 1985; Nunan, 1989; Prabhu, 1987).

Many researchers defined “task” from different aspects (Breen, 1987; Coughlin & Duff, 1994; Long, 1985; Smith, 1971). Oxford (2006) summarized the definition of “task” as follows:

In L2 teaching and learning, task is now often viewed as an outcome-oriented instructional segment or as a behavioral framework for research or classroom learning. Most often it still has the connotation of being externally imposed on a person or group, although the connotation of being burdensome or taxing is no longer emphasized. (p. 97)

According to Willis (1996), TBLT offers a task cycle which consists of the following components:

- Pre-task - introduction to the topic and task
- Task cycle
  - Task planning
  - Doing the task
  - Preparing to report on the task
  - Presenting the task report
- Language focus - analysis and practice.

In TBLT classrooms, teachers take roles as selector/sequencer of tasks, preparer of learners for task, pre-task consciousness raiser about form, guide, nurturer, strategy-instructor, and provider of assistance (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella

& Oxford, 1992). Learners take roles as group participant, monitor, risk-taker/innovator, strategy-user, goal-setter, and self-evaluator (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is another popular language teaching approach used around the world. CLIL is an umbrella term for languages education developed in Europe in mid 1990s (Ruiz De Zarobe & Jimenez Catalan, 2009). It encompasses different kinds of activities in which the target language is used as a tool to learn both the target language and non-language subjects. No particular emphasis is given to the target language or the non-language subject.

The characteristics of CLIL are summarized as follows:

- CLIL is about using a foreign language or a lingua franca, not a second language (L2). That is, the language of instruction is one that students will mainly encounter in the classroom, given that it is not regularly used in the wider society they live in.
- The dominant CLIL language is English, reflecting the fact that a command of English as an additional language is increasingly regarded as a key literacy feature worldwide.
- CLIL also implies that teachers will normally be non-native speakers of the target language. They are not, in most cases, foreign language experts, but instead content experts.

- CLIL lessons are usually timetabled as content lessons (e.g., biology, music, geography, mechanical engineering), while the target language normally continues as a subject in its own right in the shape of foreign language lessons taught by language specialists.
- In CLIL programs, typically, less than 50% of the curriculum is taught in the target language.
- Furthermore, CLIL is usually implemented once learners have already acquired literacy skills in their first language (L1), which is more often at the secondary than the primary level. (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, pp. 183-184)

## **2.3 History of discouraging the first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms**

As a result of the Reform Movement, which started in the 1880s, the exclusive usage of the target language became a near consensus among foreign language or second language teachers and scholars. It was widely believed that the target language could be better taught and learned through itself without resorting to the students' first language (Howatt, 1984; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This belief reflected the notion of the "monolingual principle" (Howatt, 1984) which gained popularity more than 100 years ago. The monolingual principle advocated that foreign language or second language teachers should avoid the students' first language or minimise the use of the first language. According to Howatt (1984), "the monolingual principle, the unique

contribution of the twentieth century to classroom language teaching, remains the bedrock notion from which the others ultimately derive” (p. 289).

For much of the last century, the monolingual principle dominated foreign language and second language classrooms and became a norm of language teaching. As Mitchell (1988) described, teachers who mixed first language usage into target language teaching “seemed almost to feel they were making an admission of professional misconduct ‘confessing’ to low levels of foreign language use” (p. 28). Foreign language or second language teachers felt guilty if they incorporated students’ first language usage into their teaching.

The monolingual principle as a core belief among teachers also received strong backing in national policies concerning foreign language or second language teaching in many countries. For example, the UK National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (in England and Wales) urged language teachers to remember that the target language was the normal means of communication, “the natural use of the target language for virtually all communication is a sure sign of a good modern languages course” (Department of Education and Science, 1990, p. 58). Another policy statement included that “from the outset, the foreign language rather than English should be the medium in which classwork is conducted and managed” (Department of Education and Science, 1988, p. 12). Similarly, the 2013 National curriculum in England (Department for Education, 2013) states that:

A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. (p. 1)

These target language guidelines reflect the extent to which the monolingual principle was deeply embedded into the minds of language education specialists and teachers. In a report of a survey of advice offered by 19 Local Education Authority advisors in the UK, Macaro (1997) noted that “not a single respondent expressed any pedagogical value in a teacher referring to the learner's own language” (p. 29). France had a similar position on language choice in foreign language teaching. As Macaro (2001) noted, the Department of National Education of France stipulated that the learner should be “led gradually towards distancing himself/herself from the mother tongue” (p. 53).

In some Asian countries, the monolingual principle was also incorporated into the guidelines for foreign language teaching. For example, exclusive English usage was expected when teaching English as a second language in Hong Kong or as a foreign language in South Korea. In Hong Kong, the most recent English Language Curriculum Guide for primary schools urged teachers to create “a language-rich environment [which] incorporates, for example, the use of English in all English lessons and beyond: teachers should teach English through English and encourage

learners to interact with one another in English” (Curriculum Development Council, 2004, p. 109). In South Korea, the 1999 revision of the National Curriculum for English emphasised that English will be the only instruction medium in elementary and secondary school English classrooms (Jeon, 2008; Kang, 2008; Kim, 2002), that is, a policy of “Teaching English through English”.

## **2.4 Debate on the first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching**

A negative attitude towards first language usage has been embedded in the history of language teaching as it was believed that the target language should be the only medium of instruction. Many theorists (Asher, 1977; Cook, 1991; Turnbull, 2000; Weinreich, 1968) advocated the total elimination of students’ first language in the foreign language teaching processes. However, the total exclusion of the first language usage is hard to achieve in actual teaching practices. The validity of the monolingual principle has been increasingly questioned and challenged by specialists and language teachers in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Some language educationists (Macdonald, 1993; Polio & Duff, 1994) have suggested that teachers should minimise the amount of the first language and use as much as possible of the target language. Other researchers (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001) have argued that using students’ first language had some positive values in foreign language classrooms. Some researchers (Cohen, 1998; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2000, 2001; Moore, 2002; Nation, 1997; Skinner,

1985) have claimed that the first language usage should not be excluded from foreign language or second language teaching. In the next section, arguments against first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching will be outlined, and then arguments for first language usage will be presented.

#### **2.4.1 Arguments against first language usage**

The most influential arguments against first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching are based on the rationale that target language acquisition should resemble first language learning. A monolingual child is exposed to various kinds of the first language input; s/he listens, imitates and responds to the surrounding environment. The extensive exposure to first language leads to a successful mastery of the language. Foreign language or second language acquisition was believed to be successful when extensive exposure was ensured, as exposure was vital in the learning of the target language (Cook, 2001). Therefore, foreign language or second language teachers should maximise foreign or second language usage.

This assumption of resemblance between first language acquisition and target language acquisition echoed Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis. Krashen claimed that learners should be exposed to sufficient meaningful and comprehensible target language input to ensure the successful target language acquisition. This hypothesis was highly supported by researchers such as Day (1985):

It is widely assumed that the use of the target language is one of the crucial

variables in the successful acquisition of the target language – the more often students use or practice the second or foreign language; the more likely they are to learn it. (p. 257)

Researchers began to emphasise the importance of target language input. Ellis (1984) claimed that language teachers should maximise their target language use, using it for a range of functions, including classroom management, so that learners were exposed to authentic language communication. Kim and Elder (2005) agreed that teachers should maximise exposure to the target language input, particularly since the classroom is often the only opportunity for learners to be exposed to the target language. Polio and Duff (1994) also suggested that teachers should use the target language as much as possible to facilitate the target language comprehension. Wong Fillmore (1985) believed that listening to teachers' target language input was an important part of the target language acquisition processes. Therefore successful target learning could only occur in classrooms where the teacher provided sufficient target language input, not only drill practice but also activity instruction and classroom management (Chaudron, 1988).

The anti-first language researchers believed that first language input would inevitably reduce the amount of the target language and be detrimental to the target language acquisition. Ellis (1984), for example, argued that first language input would “deprive the learners of valuable input” (p. 133) in the target language. Turnbull (1999, 2000)

expressed the same concern, arguing that the decline of target language input was the major disadvantage of teachers' relying on the first language, especially when the teacher was not fluent in the target language.

The teaching techniques which applied to the first language, such as translation from the target language into the first language, were severely attacked. Krashen (1981) reported that "a high amount of first language influence" (p. 66) was found in situations where translation exercises were frequent. Many researchers opposed translation between the target language and the first language in the teaching and learning processes. Cummins (2007) emphasised this opposition as the "no translation assumption":

[...] use of translation as an instructional strategy is typically equated with the concurrent translation method that utilized immediate translation across languages, with the result that students 'tuned out' their weaker language and consequently learned very little of that language. (p. 222)

Arguments against first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching also came from the assumption that the first language would interfere with the target language acquisition. Duff and Polio (1990) argued that first language usage sometimes caused misunderstandings when the teacher did not have a high level of proficiency in the students' first language. Valuable class time was thus wasted solving the misunderstanding caused by first language expressions. Use of the first

language was considered a negative factor in foreign language or second language learning. If the first language was used, learners might become dependent on their first language, and thus ignore the target language input, which would finally result in a failure in the target language learning (Wong Fillmore, 1985).

Weinreich (1968) argued that the first language and the target language formed two distinct systems in bilinguals' minds. When the first language was used in the target language teaching, interference would inevitable occur and be the main impediment to the target language acquisition.

In addition to the interference assumption, opponents of first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching also found support from Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis. Long claimed that interactions in language learning made in the target language could help enhance target language comprehension. Interaction was the process of meaning exchange and negotiation through which learners could have more chance to make the language input comprehensible and hence facilitate language learning. It was believed that all interactions in the target language classroom, conducted only in the target language, could show the significance of the target language in satisfying learners' communicative needs. According to Littlewood (1981):

Many learners are likely to remain unconvinced by our attempts to make them accept the foreign language as an effective means of satisfying their

communicative needs, if we abandon it ourselves as soon as such needs arise in the immediate classroom situation. (p. 45)

If students wanted to learn the target language, they needed to communicate through the target language. As Willis (1996) stated, "... explain to students that if they want to communicate in the target language they need to practice" (p. 49). Using the target language for communicative purposes was believed vital for language learning: "Only through the learner using L2 can s/he achieve strategic communicative competence" (Macaro, 2001, p. 183). Speaking activities were essential for language learning, especially for enhancing oral proficiency. If interactions were not carried out in the target language, students' oral proficiency would not develop efficiently or effectively.

Polio and Duff's (1994) study also showed that learners could have more opportunity to learn how to negotiate the meaning and interact with other learners in the target language when the teacher's discourse was in the target language. If the teacher used the first language for interactions, students might lose the chance to learn how to express themselves, how to negotiate language meanings, and how to solve problems occurred in the learning processes. Thus first language usage would be a hindrance to successful target language acquisition. However, some teachers resorted to using students' first language because they were concerned that students might not comprehend the meaning of their statements, and the teachers wanted to make sure students understood what they were talking about in the classroom. Polio and Duff

(1994) and Chambers (1991) pointed out that students did not need to understand every word said by their teachers, as in the real language environment people did not need to understand everything told to them.

#### **2.4.2 Arguments for first language usage**

In recent years increasing attention has been given to first language usage in foreign language or second language teaching and numerous studies give judicious reasons for incorporating the first language in foreign language or second language teaching (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001; Moore, 2002; Nation, 1997; Obler, 1982; Skinner, 1985). Some researchers changed their attitudes from banning the first language to admitting its merits in second or foreign language learning and teaching, as Willis (1996) summarised: “Don’t ban mother-tongue use but encourage attempts to use the target language” (p. 130).

As outlined in the previous section, the arguments against using the first language were, firstly, that target language learning should resemble first language acquisition, thus sufficient target language input should be ensured; and, secondly, that the first language and the target language were two languages that formed distinct systems in the mind, therefore all interaction in the target language was a must for successful language learning; and the first language should be avoided, otherwise the first language would produce interference. It was believed that the target language should be taught solely, and the first language should be avoided (Chaudron, 1988; Duff &

Polio, 1990; Ellis, 1984; Kim & Elder, 2005; Krashen, 1985; Polio & Duff, 1994; Weinreich, 1968).

Others found these arguments ill-grounded: foreign language or second language acquisition could not resemble first language learning (Cook, 2001). Additionally, the first language and the target language were interdependent on each other rather than interfering with each other (Atkinson, 1987; Beauvillain & Grainger, 1987; Cohen, 1998; Cook, 1994; Krashen, 1985; Locastro, 1987; Obler, 1982; Stern, 1992).

Cook (2001) pointed out that foreign language or second language learning could not be equivalent to the first language acquisition. Foreign language or second language learners had more mature mental status, more cognitive development, and higher social skills; hence these learners could express themselves more efficiently than first language learners. He stated that foreign language or second language meanings did not exist separately from the first language meanings in the learner's mind in terms of vocabulary, syntax, phonology and pragmatics. Cook (2001) warned:

Learning an L2 is not just the adding of rooms to your house by building an extension at the back: it is the rebuilding of all internal walls. Trying to put languages in separate compartments in the mind is doomed to failure since the compartments are connected in many ways. (p. 407)

Cook (2001) also argued that the teacher could provide sufficient target language

input in foreign language or second language classrooms, but there was no need to deny the first language in teaching. He suggested that teachers could incorporate the first language into teaching when sufficient comprehensible target language input existed. Therefore, a failure of comprehension in the target language would lead to the failure of language learning, so using the first language helped to elicit meanings and avoid misunderstandings.

Nation (1997) had the same opinion and believed that first language usage was positive for target language acquisition, as “some learning goals can be achieved and even enhanced if learners use the first language during some parts of an activity” (p. 4). Macaro (2001) argued that the avoidance of the first language resulted in increased usage of input modification (e.g. repetition, speaking more slowly, substituting basic words for more complex ones, and simplifying syntax) and this in turn might bring about negative effects in any interaction, making the discourse less realistic.

From a cognitive perspective, researchers found that the first language could not be excluded from foreign language or second language learning (Cohen, 1998; Macaro, 2000, 2001; Moore, 2002; Skinner, 1985): “The L1-L2 connection is an indisputable fact of life, whether we like it or not the new knowledge is learnt on the basis of the previously acquired language” (Stern, 1992, p. 282). Skinner (1985) stated that excluding the first language from target language learning was harmful for concept development as students could not connect thoughts and ideas that they had already

developed in the first language. In Cohen's (1998) self-reported study of advanced learners, many students reported that they still used the first language when thinking even though they were encouraged to think in the target language. Macaro (2000) reported the same finding and suggested that teachers should incorporate the first language into their teaching as the first language could help associate the two languages and reduce students' memory constraints. Moore (2002) suggested that the first language usage could help enhance students' linguistic awareness regarding differences between two linguistic structures. By bringing attention to the differences between the two languages the first language usage could result in new insights into the previous knowledge. According to Atkinson (1987), "Although the mother tongue is not a suitable basis for a methodology, it has, at all levels, a variety of roles to play which are at present consistency undervalued" (p. 247).

Numerous studies have supported first language usage for different purposes. Cook (2001) suggested that the first language could be applied to explain grammar, particularly when grammatical rules in the target language were not present in the first language, and to explain tasks and activities to the students in the first language if it was more expedient. Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) even suggested that first language usage could also help improve the quality of target language input. When the first language was used for translation or contrast, the comprehension of the target language could be improved, and facilitated the target language learning.

Atkinson (1987) outlined the ways in which L1 can be used positively in L2 teaching: eliciting language, checking comprehension, giving instructions and promoting cooperation among learners. Cook (2001) has also identified three main areas where L1 may be used positively in the classroom:

- Teachers can use L1 to convey meaning, for example, checking the meaning of words or sentences or explaining grammar.
- Teachers can use L1 for classroom organisation purposes such as organising tasks, maintaining discipline or communicating with individual students.
- Students can use L1 in their group work or pair work learning activities to provide scaffolding for each other. (Song, 2009, p. 31)

Some researchers (Bolitho, 1983; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Guest & Pachler, 2001; Klapper, 1997, 1998; Schweers, 1999; Van Lier, 1995) have argued that first language usage could help create a learner-friendly environment in which target language learning could be facilitated. In traditional target language teaching a total exclusion of the first language was accepted as a guideline for teachers. However, banning the first language might contribute to students' negative feelings toward the target language, especially among students with low language proficiency levels (Klapper, 1997, 1998). If the teacher applied students' first language in the target language teaching, students might feel more confident and motivated. Van Lier (1995) reported that when the first language was used, a supportive foreign language learning environment could be created. Moreover, the first language could be used as a

resource in target language teaching to promote students' confidence in the classroom and to make "learning meaningful and easier" (Brooks-Lewis, 2009, p. 234). Use of the first language represented perhaps a more realistic multilingual environment rather than pretending that neither the teacher nor the students spoke the first language (Guest & Pachler, 2001). Bolitho (1983) argued that the use of the first language permitted students to express what they really wanted to say in the target language. Schweers (1999) also suggested that the first language usage could improve classroom dynamics: "Starting with L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves. The learner is then willing to experiment and take risks with English" (p. 34).

## **2.5 Empirical studies on first language usage**

A number of research studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Macaro, 2001; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002; Schweers, 1999; Turnbull, 1999) have been conducted in different contexts to investigate first language usage. The questions addressed in these studies include: How much of students' first language do teachers use in foreign language classrooms? When do teachers use the first language and what were students' and teachers' attitudes towards the first language usage?

### **2.5.1 The amount of first language usage**

Duff and Polio (1990) investigated instructors' use of foreign language (13 different

languages including East Asian languages such as Korean, Japanese, Mandarin; Near Eastern languages, such as Arabic, Berber, Hebrew; and Germanic languages, such as Dutch, German, Swedish) and the first language (English) in 13 different language classes at the University of California. They tape recorded two 50-minute class sessions for each language. The technique applied in their study for calculating the target language and the first language input amount was the 15-second technique, which means that they noted which language was used every 15 seconds, and then calculated the percentage of the target language and the first language usage amount. They found that instructors' first language use varied widely from 0% to 90%. One noticeable result was that six out of 13 instructors used less than 10% of the first language in their teaching.

A great divergence in usage of first language usage amount was reported in several other studies. Kim and Elder (2005) examined language choices made by seven secondary-school teachers in four foreign language (French, German, Japanese, and Korean,) classrooms in five Auckland secondary schools in New Zealand. There were two teachers for French, German, Korean respectively, and one teacher for Japanese. Two of the teachers had only three years of teaching experience at the time of the research; the other teachers had more than seven years' teaching experience. The student participants were all 13 or 14 years old. Most of them had very little contact with the target language communities and were native speakers of English. A few non-English native speaking students were not the native speakers of the foreign

languages to be taught. The class size was between 16 to 26 students. The results showed that the seven teachers, who were native-speaker of Japanese, Korean, German and French, used exclusively between 12% and 77% of the students' first language (English) 10% and 66% of the time in their classrooms. Five of the seven teachers used the first language more than 30% of the time; four of the seven used the first language more than 40% of the time; and two of them used the first language more than 60% of the time.

Turnbull (1999) did not directly quantify the amount of first language usage, but he quantified the target language (French) used by four Grade-9 teachers from four different schools in a core French programme in eastern Canada where English was the first language. All of these four teachers were native speakers of English and had between ten and 22 years of teaching experience. Student participants were purposively selected from intact classes of the participating teachers. Most of the 81 student participants in these four classes had been exposed to at least five years (approximately 540 hours) of core French at the beginning of the research. The researcher conducted an in-depth observation over eight weeks. He did not report directly the amount of the first language used by teachers but his results showed that four teachers used the target language (French) exclusively 89%, 54%, 28% and 9% of the time.

A lower percentage of first language usage was found in other studies. Macaro's

(2001) study examined the amount of the first language (English) usage by six student teachers of French who taught students aged from 11 to 14 years in four secondary schools in southern England. Students had learned French for one, two and three years respectively at the time the research was conducted. The researcher video-recorded 14 lessons and interviewed the six student teachers. The researcher coded the content of video-recordings at each 5 second intervals, then the 5-second sampling data were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 9.0 program (SPSS Version 9.0, 1999). The results indicated that the highest amount of first language usage by the six student teachers was 15.2% and the lowest was 0%, with an average of 4.8% of the total lesson time. In only two lessons, the teacher's (the same teacher in the two lessons) first language usage amount was more than 10%.

De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) conducted a study in two classes of the same second-year German as a foreign language course at an Anglophone university in Canada. Each class contained 18 students aged from 18 to 55. The classes were taught by two native German teachers. One was an experienced teacher who had taught for 20 years at the time the study was conducted, the other was a novice teacher with very little teaching experience. The course was designed for students, who wanted to improve their oral skills in German. The researchers collected three sources of data: video and audio recordings of the German classes, teachers' interviews, and stimulated recall sessions immediately following the class recordings. To determine the amount of the first language (English) and the second language (German) usage

by the two teachers, the researchers used a word count of both languages. The results showed that the overall usage of the first language (English) by the two German teachers was 11.3%. The experienced teacher used slightly less first language than the novice teacher: 9.3% compared to 13.2%. In addition, no significant difference was found by a Chi-square test.

Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) reported similar findings. They examined the first language (English) usage of four foreign language (French) teachers in five classes at the University of Queensland in Australia. The study was carried out in the first semester of the beginners' course in French. Two French teachers were native speakers of English, and the other two were French native speakers. Most students were English native speakers, and a small number of overseas students who had high English proficiency levels were also included into this study. The researchers chose the method of counting the number of words in both English and French to calculate the amount of these two languages used due to the syntactic similarities between English and French. Their findings showed that one teacher did not use the first language at all; the other three teachers used the first language respectively 4.32%, 12.75% and 18.15%.

### **2.5.2 First language usage contexts**

Studies were also conducted to reveal in what contexts the first language was used by teachers in foreign language or second language classrooms. For example, Polio and

Duff (1994) identified eight contexts in which teachers use the first language: administrative vocabulary items, grammar instruction, and classroom management, indexing a stance of empathy/solidarity, asking students for help, helping students with comprehension problems, negotiation, and translation.

By using Polio and Duff's (1994) classification of the contexts, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) modified the categories and produced their own first language usage context categories. They developed three main categories which included fifteen sub-categories of the first language use:

- Translation
  - Translation of items from lessons
  - Translation of other items, usually from instructions
- Metalinguistic uses (e.g., comment and contrast)
  - Comment on the target language form (such as spelling), comment on culture
  - Contrast between the target language and the first language (such as spelling, and cultural practices in two languages)
- Communicative uses
  - Managing the class (such as giving feedback, checking comprehension, providing activity objectives)
  - Teacher reaction to students' requests in the first language (such as answering students' questions in the first language about the target

language, translation upon students' requests)

- Teacher expressing state of mind (joking or expressing emotion).

(Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002, pp. 409-410)

They found that Translation (30.94%), Metalinguistic uses (20.44%), and the first two sub-categories of Communicative uses, (Managing the class 33.70% and Teacher reaction to students' requests in the first language 6.63%) had high frequencies.

Based on a modified version of the coding scheme developed by Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002), De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) created their scheme of the first language usage contexts. Fourteen usage contexts of the first language (L1) in the second language (L2) classes were classified in this scheme, with a sub-classification of the 14<sup>th</sup> usage context:

- Translation: L1 utterances that translated a previous L2 utterance.
- L1-L2 contrast: L1 utterances used to contrast L2 forms or cultural concepts with L1 forms or concepts.
- Evaluation: L1 utterances used to evaluate students' contributions.
- Activity instruction: L1 utterances that provided activity instructions.
- Activity objective: L1 utterances that described the objective of an activity.
- Elicitation of student contribution: L1 utterances that elicited student contributions.
- Personal comment: L1 utterances that expressed the instructor's personal take

on events.

- Comprehension check: L1 utterances that checked students' comprehension.
- Classroom equipment: L1 utterances that dealt with classroom equipment.
- Administrative issues: L1 utterances related to administrative issues (e.g., exam announcements).
- Repetition of student L1 utterance: L1 utterances spoken by a student and repeated by the instructor.
- Reaction to student question: L1 utterances the instructor produced in response to a student question.
- Humor: L1 utterances in which the instructor made a joke intended to make the students laugh.
- Instructor as bilingual: instances of code-switching.
  - Arbitrary code-mixing: L1 utterances containing instances of the instructor mixing L1 and L2 words randomly, including false starts.
  - L1 words from L1 culture: L1 words from L1 cultural context that the instructor incorporated into L2 speech. (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009, pp. 747-748)

De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) calculated the percentages of different first language usage contexts; they found that *Translation* was the most frequent usage context, 41.8% for the experienced teacher and 21.6% for the novice teacher. Personal comment was the second most frequent first language context (19.9%) for the experienced teacher,

while the novice teacher used much less of the first language in this context (4.6%). Significant differences were found between the experienced teacher and the novice teacher under two contexts of the first language usage: *Instructor as bilingual* (that is, when the instructors were code-switching) and *Administrative issues*. Under the context of *Instructor as bilingual*, the experienced teachers used more of the first language than the novice teacher (15.4% vs 5.0%). In the context of *Administrative issues*, the novice teacher used more of the first language than the experienced teacher (12.5% vs 1.2%).

### **2.5.3 Students' and teachers' attitudes towards first language usage**

Duff and Polio's (1990) study showed that teachers acknowledged the effectiveness of the first language use when restricted to teaching grammar; and most students were satisfied with their teachers' first language use, regardless of the amount of actual first language usage.

Schweers (1999) examined the attitudes of teachers and students in the English classrooms at a Spanish university, where the first language was Spanish and the foreign language was English. Results from his questionnaires showed that all of the 19 teacher participants and 88.7% of student participants (no exact number of student participants was given) admitted the necessity of the first language use, 86% of students liked that their teachers used the first language to explain some difficult concepts. In Macaro's (2001) study, one teacher who was interviewed claimed that

first language usage was natural and sometimes inevitable, and the majority of the students reported that teachers' first language usage helped them understand their teachers.

Varshney and Rolin-Ianziti (2006) conducted a research study at the University of Queensland to reveal students' (n=286) attitudes toward first language usage in foreign language classrooms and compared their attitudes with teachers' (n=9) attitudes. The student participants were studying the first semester of the first year in four foreign language (French, German, Japanese and Spanish) classrooms. The researchers used a questionnaire with two levels to collect data: 21 were closed-questions involving belief statements concerning the first language, and two open-ended questions asking students to list three or more advantages and three or more disadvantages to using the first language in foreign language classrooms. This study found that students considered the first language usage as "a double-edged sword, viewing it as both help and hindrance" (p.78). Students admitted both advantages and disadvantages of the first language usage in foreign language classrooms. Teachers and students shared the same opinions towards advantages of students' first language usage in foreign language classrooms.

#### **2.5.4 Reasons why teachers use the first language**

Macaro (2001) suggested some reasons why the first language was used by teachers in foreign or second language classrooms. These reasons are listed as follows:

- The L1 was used mostly for procedural instructions for complex activities, relationship building, control and management, teaching grammar explicitly, and providing brief L1 equivalents or vice versa;
- Learner ability (or level of competence) was a major factor in how much L1 was used;
- Time pressures (e.g., exams) were a major factor in how much L1 was used. (p. 535)

De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) examined reasons why teachers used the first language and determined what factors contributed to their use of students' first language by qualitatively analysing two data sources: teachers' interviews and stimulated recall sessions. The researchers analysed and extracted 10 categories of reasons as to why teachers used students' first language from the teachers' interviews; and they extracted 13 categories of reasons from the stimulated recall sessions. They then put these categories of reasons together into a comparison table.

From this comparison the researchers developed 16 categories of reasons from the teachers' interviews and stimulated recall sessions. In these 16 categories, seven reasons were mentioned in both the teachers' interviews and the stimulated recall sessions. These categories were: "foreign language context, students' low level of language proficiency, setup of German classes at the university, class composition, necessity of explaining problem areas, student motivation, and facilitative role of L1

use” (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009, p. 752). Three out of the 16 reasons were only found in the teachers’ interviews: “students’ objectives for learning German, personal language learning experience, and L1 as brainstorming tool” (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009, p. 753). In addition, six of the reasons that were mentioned in the stimulated recall sessions did not appear in the teachers’ interviews: “the acoustic layout of the classroom, speed of discourse, interpretation of student reaction, bilingual context, humor, and expression of displeasure” (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009, p. 753). De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) concluded that teachers were aware of some of the factors that affected their use of students’ first language, but they also overlooked some other factors. Therefore, the differences between the reasons mentioned in the teachers’ interviews and the reasons mentioned in the stimulated recall sessions were significant for teacher training:

These findings may have implications for instructor training [...] because they indicate that while instructors may know why L1 could be used in L2 classes in general, they can become more aware of the specific beliefs that underlie their practices if they get an opportunity to watch themselves and examine their own teaching. (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009, p. 753)

## **2.6 Research studies in relation to EFL in Mainland China**

There is a nationwide demand for learning English from all levels of society in Mainland China. However, as Liu (2003) has pointed out, the syllabi for all levels in

China have not described or prescribed the ultimate goal of teaching English as a Foreign Language accurately and scientifically. Liu (2003) argued that the objective of EFL teaching should be to develop students' intellectual communicative competence, namely to make EFL students "both bilingual and bicultural" (Liu, 2003, Foreign language teaching is for intercultural communicative competence, para. 3). However, this objective of EFL teaching has not been clearly described in any syllabus. The intellectual communicative competence only appears in College English Syllabus for English Majors where it is described as one of the principles of English teaching rather than the ultimate goal (Liu, 2003, Curriculum design, para. 3). He has suggested that intellectual communicative competence should be described and prescribed as the ultimate goal of EFL teaching in all syllabi at all levels; cultural instruction should be given due attention in syllabus design to ensure effective and productive EFL teaching.

From the 1980s, English has been increasingly accepted by most people as "the global language" (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997, 2006). For example, Pan and Block (2011) discussed issues related to language beliefs held by EFL students and teachers in Mainland China. They examined the status of English, the learners' expectations of English and the focus of English teaching and learning in China. They made an attempt to find out how Chinese learners and teachers of English think about the status and the significance of English in China; what motivates students to learn English; and what the current focus is in the teaching and learning of English in

classrooms.

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. As part of a large project aiming to “investigate English language ideologies in China” (Pan & Block, 2011, p. 394), this study focused only on seven items in the questionnaires related to the research questions. The questionnaires were distributed to 53 university teachers and 637 students majoring in different majors in six universities in Beijing. 77% of the teachers returned the answered questionnaires and all the students returned the questionnaires valid. The researchers interviewed one EFL teacher and one student to “provide a more in-depth exploration into what the questionnaire responses might mean” (Pan & Block, 2011, p. 394).

Responses to the questionnaires indicated that 74.1% of the teachers and 72.7% of the students agreed that English was the dominant global language. 63% of the teachers and 68.5% of the students believed that English was necessary for China’s economic development. When asked about their motivation for learning English, 75.6% of the students thought that English could bring about career opportunities. 58.3% of the students thought that English could open a window to the world for them. It is “... the instrumental value of English that most attracts these students” and it is believe that “a good command of English is necessary for acquiring social prestige” (Pan & Block, 2011, p. 396). The majority of students (56.7%) and teachers (71.5%) also believed that EFL education in schools and universities was still exam-oriented, although

English was considered very important for the development of the whole country and individuals. 69.1% of teachers and 69.3% of students indicated that the command of English grammar was the focus of English. Only 20.8% of the students agreed that the EFL education they received could meet their expectations and needs, while 53.7% of the students disagreed with this question. 62.7% of teachers believed that the current EFL education could meet students' expectations and needs, while a very small proportion of teachers disagreed with this statement (6.7%).

The one student interview was carried out with a Year 2 student majored in economics in one university in Beijing. He acknowledged the importance of English and even gave a higher status to English than his first language Mandarin. He believed that a good command of English could bring about social mobility and professional development. One lecturer of English was also interviewed. Both the lecturer and the student believed that the current EFL education was exam-centred and showed concerns about the teaching practice of "put exams first" (Pan & Block, 2011, p. 399). The lecturer was also concerned about the reality that English learning was regarded more "as a process of accumulating knowledge than as a practical process of constructing and using knowledge for immediate purposes" (Pan & Block, 2011, p. 400).

In their article, Pan and Block (2011) discussed the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) in Mainland China, a national standardised proficiency test administered by

the National College English Testing Committee on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of Education. The oral test has been excluded from the CET-4 test system from the implementation of CET-4 in 1987 to 1999. Although an optional oral test has been added into the test system in some provinces and big cities from 1999, only a small number of students have participated in the oral test (p. 400). However, students' oral proficiency in English has now become a new focus of EFL education in Mainland China (Zhu, 2003).

Chen and Goh (2011) investigated difficulties that university EFL teachers may encounter in teaching oral English in China and the training programme that EFL teachers desired for improving their knowledge about oral English instruction to university students. Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires were distributed to 331 EFL teachers from 44 universities in 22 cities across China. 58.9% of the respondents were from big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai; while the remaining EFL teachers were from less developed cities. Thirty of the EFL teachers who responded to the questionnaires were interviewed. The questionnaire responses and interviews were analysed qualitatively through the data analysis software package NVivo 8.

From the questionnaire responses and interviews, three sources were identified as the sources of difficulties that EFL teachers might encounter in teaching oral English in EFL classrooms in universities:

- The teacher:
  - developing students' motivation,
  - low self-efficacy,
  - planning oral activities,
  - implementing oral activities,
  - balancing students' needs,
- The students:
  - inactive participation,
  - low English proficiency,
- The context:
  - lack of conducive environments,
  - large class sizes,
  - limited teaching resources,
  - insufficient teaching time. (Chen & Goh, 2011, p. 336)

Self-efficacy refers to “individuals’ perceived capabilities to attain designated types of performances and achieve specific result” (Pajares, 1996, p. 546). The teacher’s self-efficacy beliefs can be explained as “teacher’s individual beliefs in their capabilities to perform specific teaching tasks at a specified level of quality in a specified situation” (Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, & Ellett, 2008, p. 752).

Chen and Goh (2011) found that EFL teachers were concerned about their deficient

English proficiency levels and inadequate pedagogical knowledge; therefore they had a low self-efficiency. The EFL teachers found it difficult to motivate their students in oral practice and to choose good topics to rouse students' interest. Facing various students' English proficiency levels, EFL teachers could not successfully plan oral activities, or implement oral activities. Students' reticence and low English proficiency levels were also regarded as a hindrance to successful oral teaching in EFL classrooms in universities in China. Lack of an authentic English language environment; shortage of teaching resources (such as textbooks or multimedia equipment); large class size and insufficient class time were all identified as difficulties in oral teaching practice.

28 of the 30 EFL teachers interviewed expressed their expectations for receiving training on teaching methods to improve their pedagogical knowledge on oral English teaching. 22 EFL teachers aspired to get training to promote their own English proficiency levels, such as training programmes in English speaking countries. Chen and Goh (2011) argued there is an urgent need to provide adequate professional trainings to EFL teachers; speaking and listening in EFL classrooms should be given more importance; students should engage more actively into oral practice through various ways, such as TV dramas or radio programmes from English speaking countries; relevant syllabus, teaching materials and textbooks should be designed accordingly; and finally the due attention should be given to oral English in the testing system.

Because of the difficulties EFL teachers are facing in their teaching activities, they often choose to resort to their first language to make teaching more effectively (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009; Tang, 2002; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). These studies concerning the first language usage (Mandarin) have been conducted in the context of universities in Mainland China where students' official language is Mandarin. In these studies, researchers used the term "Code-switching", which refers to the act of alternating between two languages in either spoken or written expressions (Auer, 1999).

Song (2009) examined EFL teachers' perspectives about the first language usage (Mandarin) in classrooms in a tertiary institution in Mainland China. A total of 61 EFL teachers in the participating institution answered questionnaires: 21 taught English major students and 40 taught non-English major students. The study aimed to find EFL teachers' beliefs about first language use in EFL classrooms; whether there was any difference between English major EFL teachers' beliefs and non-English major EFL teachers' beliefs about first language usage; and whether EFL teachers' beliefs about first language were consistent with their actual practices in EFL classrooms. After the data collected from the questionnaires had been analysed by using SPSS 10, four EFL teachers with different attitudes towards the first language usage were selected and their Mandarin usage in classrooms was quantified by using Duff and Polio's (1990) 15-second technique (see Section 2.5.1). Teachers' utterances in each 15-second interval were coded into categories:

- L1: utterance is completely in L1;
- L1c: utterance is in L1 with one word or phrase in target language;
- Mix: utterance is approximately an equal mixture of L1 and target language;
- L2c: utterance is in target language with one word or phrase in L1;
- L2: utterance is completely in target language;
- Pause: no speech;
- ? (shown as a question mark): utterance not clear enough to be coded.

(Song, 2009, p. 32)

It was found in Song's (2009) study that EFL teachers held a neutral attitude (with a mild tendency to the negative) towards first language usage in EFL classrooms in general, which suggested that "... the teachers did not consider L1 to be a completely impeding factor, as the monolingual approach implies" (p. 33). There were discrepancies in the EFL teachers' attitudes towards Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. It was also found that although EFL teachers agreed with the necessity of using the first language in EFL classrooms as a "supplementary medium" (p. 34), they did not consider the first language as the major medium of instruction in EFL classrooms. EFL teachers were neutral (with a mild tendency to the negative) about the first language usage in general.

Although the students' English proficiency levels differed, no significant difference

was found between English major EFL teachers' and non-English major EFL teachers' attitudes towards first language usage. Song (2009) suggested that students' English proficiency levels might not be a factor influencing EFL teachers' attitudes towards the first language usage.

Two EFL teachers with positive attitudes and two other EFL teachers with negative attitudes towards the first language usage participated in class recording sessions. Quantitative analysis showed that all the four EFL teachers used the first language in their teaching: 10.5%, 20.3%, 21.5% and 32.2%. Song (2009) concluded that EFL teachers' attitudes towards the first language usage was not necessarily consistent with their actual practice in classrooms. One EFL teacher, with positive attitudes towards first language usage, used the first language the least; while two EFL with negative attitudes towards first language usage still used the first language in their teaching (20.3% and 21.5% respectively). One EFL teacher's attitude was consistent with her actual practice: she had a positive attitude towards first language usage and used the most Mandarin. One EFL teachers with a negative attitude towards the first language usage used the first language for teaching text and vocabulary very infrequently; but she used the first language frequently for teaching exercises. Her attitude towards first language usage was consistent with her actual practice concerning text and vocabulary teaching, but not the exercise teaching.

Song (2009) also suggested that students' English proficiency levels could not

influence EFL teachers' attitudes (whether they use or do not use the first language); but students' English proficiency levels could influence the amount of the first language used by EFL teachers. In the study, one teacher who taught the English major students levels used the least Mandarin. Song (2009) believed that this English EFL teacher did not need to resort to first language as much as the non-English major EFL teachers because his students had comparatively higher English proficiency.

Cheng (2013) also examined the beliefs and attitudes of Chinese college English teachers towards classroom code-switching. Thirty-two EFL teachers from 28 universities and colleges throughout China were selected as participants to answer semi-structured questionnaires. At the time of research, 13 participants were English major EFL teachers, 15 were non-English major EFL teachers, and the remaining four teachers taught both English major and non-English major students. Seven EFL teachers were interviewed.

According to EFL teachers' responses to the questionnaires, it was found that EFL teachers' target language (English) usage varied from less than 50% to 100%, with the mean of about 83%. 19 teachers (about 60% of all the participants) reported that their English usage amount was more than 80%. One teacher reported that English usage was less than 50% and one teacher used 100% English in classrooms. Their responses to the questionnaires implied that their first language usage amount varied from 0% to about 50%; and their average first language usage amount was about 17%. With

regard to their ideal English usage amount, 30 teachers (about 94% of all the participants) thought it should be more than 80%; four EFL teachers thought 100% should be the ideal; and two EFL teachers thought it should be between 70% and 80%. It can be understood that the majority of these EFL teachers thought the first language should be limited with the range from 0% to 20%.

Cheng (2013) found that 94% of the EFL teachers considered students' English proficiency levels as the most significant factor in EFL teachers' language choice in classrooms. Two EFL teachers interviewed claimed that they used less than 60% English because of their students' limited English proficiency levels: these students could not "even follow or understand simple teaching formulas, let alone unfamiliar subjects explained in English" (p. 1280). 66% of all the teachers thought the second most important factor in EFL teachers' language choice was the EFL teachers' own English proficiency levels. Cheng (2013) has suggested that this "reflects a stereotypical belief upheld by some Chinese foreign language teachers that English can only be effectively taught in English, and teachers' resorting to the mother tongue implies low language proficiency" (p. 1280). According to Cheng, the factors related to EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin include:

- students' ability (94% of the teachers);
- teachers' foreign language learning (66% of the teachers);
- lesson content, mainly translation class (56% of the teachers);
- belief about teaching (44% of the teachers);

- teaching activities conducted (41% of the teachers);
- Department or school policy (38% of the teachers);
- students' behaviour and attitude (38% of the teachers);
- teaching methods used (22% of the teachers);
- class size (16% of the teachers);
- peer influence (6% of the teachers). (p. 1281)

The first language was found to be used for different functions. Cheng (2013) coded these first language usage functions as:

- teach grammar and abstract words (69% of the teachers);
- highlight important points (38% of the teachers);
- save time and energy (31% of the teachers);
- check comprehension (28% of the teachers);
- establish teacher-student rapport (25% of the teachers);
- organise tasks and class (16% of the teachers);
- maintain discipline in class (13% of the teachers). (Cheng, 2013, p. 1281)

Of the seven EFL teachers interviewed, two EFL teachers stated that all English grammar and abstract words should be taught in English if time permitted. One EFL teacher held the opposite opinion, "it is not bad to resort to Chinese to explain grammatical knowledge and abstruse concepts for the purpose of reducing students' cognitive load" (Cheng, 2013, p. 1281). When asked about their understanding about

the maximal target language input, three teachers thought that the ideal English input amount should be 100%, which was however unrealistic in their actual teaching practice. This perspective was consistent with the EFL teachers' beliefs reflected in their responses to the questionnaires: teachers' language choice would influence students' language choice. These EFL teachers' believed that the more English teachers used, the more frequently students would use English. 59% of the teachers did not feel upset about using Mandarin in EFL classrooms as they thought Mandarin goals. Two EFL teachers even mentioned their concern about the marginalisation of EFL students with comparatively lower English proficiency levels if teachers did not use the first language at all, while some other EFL teachers admitted that they felt embarrassed if they spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms. As for the reasons why these EFL teachers did not want to incorporate Mandarin into EFL teaching, Cheng (2013) summarised their explanations as follows:

- their students expect them to speak English;
- (if EFL teachers use Mandarin), their English competence will be doubted;
- (if EFL teachers use Mandarin), they break the school regulation;
- (if EFL teachers use Mandarin), their students become dependent on Mandarin. (p. 1281)

Cheng (2013) has suggested that “classroom code-switching still tends to be regarded as an undesirable practice” (p. 1282) and most of the EFL teachers still “hold negative attitude(s) toward it” (p. 1277); however, it exists in EFL classrooms. She has

recommended that the first language can be temporarily used in EFL classrooms for teaching grammatical knowledge and abstruse concepts as the first language input could facilitate students' understanding. While other teaching and learning activities such as comprehension check, emphasising important language points and class management should avoid the first language usage, because "they constitute activities frequently involved in authentic social communication" (Cheng, 2013, p. 1282) in English. EFL teachers can use "paralanguage such as repletion, ellipsis (L2 strategy), facial expression and gesture" (Cheng, 2013, p. 1282) to help students understand their English articulation.

Liu (2010) conducted an investigation to find out the general situation of EFL teachers' switching to Mandarin in both English major and non-English major EFL classrooms in three universities in Mainland China. The aim of the study was to find out: 1) students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers switching to Mandarin; 2) the dominant pattern of teachers switching to Mandarin; 3) the factors which influenced teachers switching to Mandarin; 4) the functions of teachers switching to Mandarin; 5) the influence of teachers switching to Mandarin on EFL learning and teaching.

261 undergraduates from three universities were selected as student participants. The student participant pool included undergraduate students from different majors, different universities and different areas in Mainland China so that a wide range of variations was ensured. 60 EFL teachers who taught students of different majors were

involved in the study (Liu (2010) did not specify the number of English major EFL teachers and the number of non-English major EFL teachers). These EFL teachers had received training in English pedagogy and had teaching experience from five to twenty years at the time of the research study. They taught students of different majors and different levels.

In her study, Liu (2010) conducted both qualitative and quantitative research. Based on the previous studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Levine, 2003; Macaro, 1997), two questionnaires designed for students and teachers respectively were used to collect quantitative data on the study of teachers' code-switching to Mandarin. Eight classes (each of the length of 50 minutes) for both English major and non-English major students were audio-recorded for collecting the data on the dominant patterns and functions of code-switching to Mandarin and "enrich the data from the questionnaires in these two aspects as well" (Liu, 2010, p. 14). The class recording sessions were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

She found that EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin existed in EFL classrooms. She reported the frequency of teachers' code-switching to Mandarin according to students' and teachers' responses in two questionnaires. Students and teachers shared "the same view on the frequency of code-switching" (Liu, 2010, p. 15). 75% of students and 70% of teachers shared the same opinions that teachers "sometimes" (she did not clarify the meaning of "sometimes") used Mandarin. None

of the students, or teachers, reported that EFL teachers never code-switched to Mandarin.

As for the consciousness of code-switching from English to Mandarin, Liu (2010) found that students were more conscious than their EFL teachers. 85% of the teachers were “sometimes or occasionally” (Liu, 2010, p. 15) conscious of code-switching from English to Mandarin. By contrast, more students (94.2%) were conscious of their EFL teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin. Liu (2010) believed that teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin might occur automatically or unconsciously.

When examining students and teachers’ attitudes towards EFL teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin, Liu (2010) found that the majority of the students and teachers agreed with EFL teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin: 80% of the teachers and 66% of students agreed with the code-switching from English to Mandarin. Only a small percent of students (7%) and teachers (8.3%) held negative attitudes towards EFL teachers’ code-switching to Mandarin. 11.7% of the teachers and 27% of the students had the neutral views on the code-switching.

Liu (2010) concluded that the main reasons that teachers chose to switch from English to Mandarin in EFL classrooms related to:

- students’ English proficiency,

- teachers' English proficiency,
- the distance between English and Mandarin,
- department policy on target language use (Liu did not clarify what department it was, the national Department of Education or the university department),
- pedagogical materials,
- lesson contents and objectives. (p. 17)

Students' English proficiency levels were found to be the most significant factor related to EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin. The second most important factor was the linguistic distance between English and Mandarin.

Liu (2010) has suggested that EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin is beneficial to EFL teaching and learning. The main Mandarin usage context categories can be understood as follows:

- Translating unknown vocabulary items;
- Explaining grammar;
- Class managing;
- Emphasizing some points;
- Expressing a stance of empathy or solidarity towards students;
- Facilitating students' understanding by quoting others' words. (p. 19)

Similar studies examining the first language (Mandarin) usage in the higher education

in Mainland China have been conducted. Tang's (2002) study aimed to find out whether Mandarin was used in EFL classrooms at the higher education level in Mainland China; the frequency and purposes of Mandarin usage; and students and teachers' attitudes towards Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. One hundred first year university students in one university located in Beijing were selected as student participants in the study. Twenty EFL teachers from the same university were selected as teacher participants. The students had intermediate levels of English at the time of the study. The EFL teachers had teaching experience ranging from one to thirty years.

Both qualitative and quantitative studies were included in Tang's research. Data were collected through class recording sessions and classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires:

- Three reading classes taught by three different EFL teachers for first year students were observed and recorded. Each of these classes lasted about 50 minutes. Data collected from classroom observations and class recording sessions were used to find out how frequently and on what occasions Mandarin was used by teachers.
- Three interviews were carried out with the same three EFL teachers who provided the three class recording sessions. The interviews were designed to find out reasons why EFL teachers chose to use Mandarin in classrooms.
- 100 students' questionnaires (98 returned valid) and 20 teachers' questionnaires (18 returned valid) were used to reveal students and teachers'

attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms, especially the occasions in which they thought Mandarin could be used and the effectiveness of teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms.

From the class recording sessions Tang (2002) identified categories of occasions on which EFL teachers used Mandarin in classrooms as: giving instructions; explaining meanings of words; explaining complex ideas; and explaining complex grammar rules. Tang concluded that Mandarin is used as “a supportive and facilitating role in the classroom” (p. 39).

These results indicated that all three EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain the meanings of words. Explaining the meaning of words was also the most frequent occasion in which the three EFL teachers used Mandarin. Tang (2002) explained that all the three teachers first tried to use English to explain words, grammar points, and meaning of some complex ideas in English. However, when the students could not understand them, EFL teachers resorted to using Mandarin to “explain abstract or culturally-specific words” (Tang, 2002, p. 38). One EFL teacher used Mandarin most frequently (9 times) for giving instructions. On five occasions, this teacher used Mandarin after giving instructions in English. On four other occasions, this teacher used Mandarin directly to hold students' attention because of the noise outside the classrooms.

In the teachers' interviews, the three EFL teachers were asked to comment on their own Mandarin usage in classrooms in the class recording sessions; to respond to the common criticism that Mandarin usage would reduce the students' English input amount. Teacher 1 believed that using Mandarin in classrooms was effective and time-saving when explaining a word or idea to students considering the constraint of class time. This teacher also thought using Mandarin occasionally would not reduce students' English input; on the contrary, occasional Mandarin usage by EFL teachers could provide students more time to practise in English. Teacher 1 mentioned students' English proficiency levels as the decisive factor to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage. With high English proficiency level students, Mandarin usage was not needed. Teacher 2 also pointed out that students' low English proficiency levels were the main reason that EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain the meaning of the text or to give instructions in classrooms. Teacher 3 often used Mandarin to explain abstract words, ideas or grammar in complicated sentences when the English explanations failed to work. Teacher 3 also believed that using Mandarin was more effective to keep order in classrooms when it was noisy.

Based on the responses of questionnaires, 70% of the students and 72% of the teachers thought it was necessary to use Mandarin in classrooms. 97% of the students liked their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. For students, it was most necessary for EFL teachers to use Mandarin to explain complex grammar points (72% of the students) and to help define new vocabulary (69% of the students). For teachers,

Mandarin usage was most necessary to practise the use of some phrases and expressions (56% of the teachers) and to explain difficult concepts or ideas (44% of the teachers).

The reasons why students thought EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was necessary were:

- Mandarin usage by teachers could help students understand difficult concepts better. (69% of the students).
- Mandarin usage by teachers could help students understand new vocabulary items better (42% of the students).
- Mandarin usage by teachers could make students feel at ease, comfortable and less stressed (8% of the students).
- Mandarin usage by teachers could make students feel less lost (6% of the students). (Tang, 2002, p. 40)

For EFL teachers, the reasons were:

- Teachers' Mandarin usage could help students' comprehension (39% of the teachers).
  - Teachers' Mandarin usage was effective (44% of the teachers).
  - Teachers' Mandarin usage was less time-consuming (28% of the teachers).
- (Tang, 2002, p. 40)

When asked about the preferred Mandarin usage amount by their EFL teachers, 63%

of the students thought it should be limited in the range from 5% to 10% of the class time. 30% of the students answered that it should range from 20% to 30% of the class time.

Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) examined teachers' code-switching frequency; students' view on teachers' code-switching frequency; whether code-switching was commonly used; whether teachers had an accurate perception of their own code-switching; whether students and teachers shared the same views on teachers' code-switching frequency; and finally whether the course type, teachers' English proficiency levels, and students English proficiency levels influenced teachers' code-switching frequency.

Forty EFL teachers who are all native speakers of Mandarin from two universities in China were selected as teacher participants to answer the teachers' questionnaires. These teachers taught one or more courses to English major students, these courses were: Reading, Listening, Oral English, Grammar, Writing, Translation, Literature, Linguistics, Method, and British Culture. Eight of these 40 EFL teachers participated in class recording sessions. Of these 40 EFL teachers, 12 thought their English proficiency was good and 8 teachers thought their English proficiency was excellent. However, Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) provided no explicit explanation about the meaning of "average", "good" and "excellent".

401 students, including 30 males and 371 females, answered the students' questionnaires. 167 students were in Year 1, 141 in Year 2, 93 in Year 3. Year 3 students took all the courses listed above. However, Year 1 and Year 2 student might not attend courses such as Writing, Translation, Literature, Linguistics, or Method.

Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) applied Wilcoxon's matched-pairs signed-ranks tests to discover the presence of a statistically significant difference within the same group (i.e., teacher group or student group) for believed and desired code-switching. They also used this test to analyse the influence of course type on teachers' code-switching. When comparing the differences between students and teachers concerning believed and desired code-switching, the researchers used the Mann-Whitney U-test.

The researchers divided the code-switching from English to Mandarin into short and long code-switching: long code-switching consisting of two minutes or longer of Mandarin talk; short code-switching consisting of Mandarin talk less than two minutes. They found that short code-switching to Mandarin was 11% of a 45-minute lesson, while long code-switching was 27% of the lesson time. In one class recording sessions, short code-switching was not used; while in three other sessions, long code-switching did not occur. In the remaining five class recording sessions, both short and long code-switching occurred.

According to the teachers' responses in the questionnaires, it was found that EFL

teachers thought their actual short and long code-switching in classrooms “converges with what they consider optimal” (Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010, p. 400). EFL teachers thought that there was no discrepancy between their believed and desired code-switching. Teachers also thought short code-switching from English to Mandarin was common and occurred infrequently. However, teachers’ code-switching was considerably more often and longer in their actual practice lessons than what they believed. By contrast, students’ responses indicated there was a discrepancy between students’ believed and desired Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers: students desired more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers.

It was also found that EFL teachers were not aware of their code-switching from English to Mandarin. EFL teachers seriously underestimated their actual amount of code-switching from English to Mandarin in their teaching. Students’ estimated EFL teachers’ actual code-switching was more frequent than teachers’ estimations. Teachers seemed to be satisfied with their actual amount of code-switching from English to Mandarin, while students desired more code-switching from their EFL teachers, which indicated that students were not satisfied with EFL teachers’ actual amount of code-switching.

In their study, neither teachers nor students thought that students’ or teachers’ English proficiency levels were influential to EFL teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin: “they shared the view that proficiency plays no role in code-switching”

(Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010, p. 405). Code-switching to Mandarin did not and should not “co-vary with the proficiency of either teacher or student” (Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010, p. 405). However, with regard to the influence of course type, students and teachers held the opposite views. For students, the course type greatly influenced the amount of EFL teachers’ code-switching from English to Mandarin; but, for teachers, course type was not significantly related to their code-switching from English to Mandarin in classrooms.

## **2.7 Summary**

The methods for teaching and learning of a foreign or second language have changed greatly in response to the Reform Movement (from 1880 to 1890), resulting in the use of first language being treated as a negative factor for foreign or second language learning. Exclusive use of the target language as a pedagogic principle dominated foreign language or second language classrooms for about a century.

More recently, whether or not teachers should use students’ first language in foreign language or second language classrooms has become a controversial issue. Some theorists (Asher, 1977; Cook, 1991; Turnbull, 1999, 2000; Weinreich, 1968) advocated the elimination of students’ first language usage in the foreign language teaching processes. However, the total exclusion of the first language is rarely achieved in the actual daily classroom teaching practices. Some language

educationists (Macdonald, 1993; Polio & Duff, 1994) suggested that teachers should minimise the amount of first language usage and use the target language as much as possible. Other researchers (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001) reported that using students' first language has some positive values in foreign language classrooms.

There is a great difference in the amount of teachers' first language usage found by various studies. Duff and Polio (1990) were concerned that the amount of first language usage was high and they suggested that teachers should try to maximise the target language input. In contrast, De La Campa and Nassaji (2009), Macaro (2001) Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) found a small amount of first language usage, and they believed such a limited amount of first language input would not impede target language learning.

Similar functions of first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms have been found in previous studies. Polio and Duff (1994) identified eight contexts in which teachers' code-switched to the first language: classroom administrative vocabulary items, grammar instruction, classroom management, asking students for help, indexing a stance of empathy/solidarity, helping students with comprehension problems, negotiation, and providing translations for unknown vocabulary in target language. By using Polio and Duff's (1994) classification of the contexts, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) modified the classification and produced three categories: translation, metalinguistic uses, and communicative uses. De La

Campa and Nassaji (2009) developed a 14-category scheme of the first language usage upon a modified version of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) scheme.

Studies have also been carried out to investigate students' attitudes towards L1 use. Duff and Polio (1990) found that most students were satisfied with teachers' L1 use, regardless of the amount of actual L1 input. In Macaro's (1997) study, the majority of the students reported that L1 input helped them understand their teachers. Varshney and Rolin-Ianziti (2006) found that students admitted both advantages and disadvantages of the L1 use in foreign language classrooms.

As for reasons as to why teachers used the first language, De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) categorised 16 reasons from teachers' interviews and stimulated recall sessions, including foreign language context, students' low level of language proficiency, setup of German classes at the university, necessity of explaining problem areas, and speed of discourse. Some reasons were mentioned by teachers in both teachers' interviews and stimulated recall sessions, while other reasons appear in either teachers' interviews or stimulated recall sessions. These differences indicated that teachers were not aware of all factors that contributed to their usage of students' first language.

In the context of tertiary education in Mainland China, several studies about EFL teachers' usage of Mandarin in classrooms have been conducted (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009; Tang, 2002; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). Mandarin usage was

found to be positive to EFL teaching and learning in some contexts such as explaining grammar, translating new vocabulary, teaching abstruse concepts and building rapport with students (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002). Some researchers have believed that EFL students' English proficiency levels are related to the amount of Mandarin used by teachers in classrooms (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009); while other researchers (Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010) did not agree with this assumption. With regard to students and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage, there are discrepancies between the results of previous research studies. While some studies found that the majority of students and teachers held positive attitudes towards EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin (Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002); others found that the majority of EFL teachers held neutral attitudes towards EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin (Song, 2009); and others again found that the majority of EFL teachers held negative attitudes towards EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin (Cheng, 2013). One interesting result was that EFL teachers were not always aware of their code-switching; whereas their students were more conscious about EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin (Liu, 2010; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). Therefore, EFL teachers often underestimated their actual Mandarin usage amount (Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010).

However, these research studies were carried out in a variety of EFL classrooms. There have been very few studies concentrating specifically in non-English major EFL classrooms in higher education university environments. Some research studies

were conducted in EFL classrooms for English major students (Tang, 2002; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010); other studies were carried out concerning both English major and non-English major EFL students and/or teachers (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009). In addition, the amount of Mandarin used by EFL teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms was not quantified in these studies. Only in one study (Song, 2009) was the actual EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms quantified. However, English and non-English major EFL teachers and/or students were selected to be the participants in Song's (2009) study. Students' low English proficiency levels were taken as one major reason that teachers used Mandarin in EFL classrooms (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Song, 2009). The mixture of both English and non-English major EFL teachers and/or students might lead to an underestimation of the actual amount of teachers' Mandarin usage because of the comparatively higher English proficiency levels that English major EFL students bring to their university studies. Furthermore, the relationship between students' language proficiency levels and their attitudes towards Mandarin used by teachers has also not been investigated. Thus this study was designed to investigate classrooms of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses for non-English major students in two universities in Southeast Mainland China, where students' first language is Mandarin. This study aims to:

- calculate EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms;
- investigate students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes;
- investigate when Mandarin is used by EFL teachers; and

- explore reasons why teachers resort to using Mandarin in EFL classes.

Many of the studies reported in this chapter have involved second language learning with English being the first language and a variety of languages as the second language: these studies have involved English and European languages. However, the situation in relation to EFL in Mainland China is still a much under-researched issue. EFL education has been undertaken for more than 100 years in Mainland China. People's perceptions towards EFL in Mainland China have experienced changes during the course of these years. EFL teaching and learning in Mainland China has specific characteristics compared with EFL teaching in other countries or regions. To more fully understand EFL in Mainland China it is important to specifically contextualise the historical socio-political changes that have occurred in China. In Chapter 3, I provide some insights into the EFL teaching and learning in Mainland China.

## **Chapter 3**

### **China Context**

This study is contextualised in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms of non-English major students who were studying EFL in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. To understand the changing nature of the learning and teaching of English in Mainland China it is important to have an appreciation of the historical context related to the introduction of EFL in China. This chapter focuses specifically on the teaching and learning of English in Mainland China and the EFL policies which guide such teaching practices. The following sections provide a brief overview of some of the major changes influencing the introduction of English in China. First, the history of EFL education in Mainland China is introduced; then the education system and the national policy for EFL in Mainland China are outlined; and then the teaching and learning styles in Mainland China are briefly discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary.

### **3.1 History of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Mainland China**

#### **3.1.1 EFL education before the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC)**

Chinese people began to study English language in China more than a century ago (Adamson & Bolton, 2004). In the late Qing Dynasty, the last imperial dynasty in China, Western missionaries from Europe and USA came to this ancient country which had closed its door to the Western world for centuries.

The very first contact between English speakers and Chinese of which we have an extended record occurred in 1637, when an expedition of four ships under the command of Captain John Weddell arrived in Macau and Canton, and it is this expedition that gives us the first detailed account of the British in South China. (Bolton, 2002, p. 183)

In its long history, China kept isolated from the outside world for centuries until the defeat in the First Opium War (1839-1842) and the Second Opium War (1856-1860). In 1842, the Qing Dynasty signed the Treaty of Nanjing with Britain. China was forced to open up five ports including Shanghai to foreign trade and missionaries and ceded Hong Kong Island to Britain (until the year 1997). From then on, China signed a series of treaties with Western countries, and the government of Qing Dynasty

unwillingly began to have economic and commercial exchange with the outside world. Missionaries were allowed to reside within China and mission schools were protected by the treaties (Pletcher, 2011).

English speaking missionaries opened mission schools and provided EFL education to Chinese people. Robert Morrison, a British missionary, opened the first mission school in 1835 in Macau (Ford, 1988). Missionaries considered English as a necessary means to spread the religious beliefs to Chinese people. In mission schools, the medium of instruction was English. By 1925, more than 250,000 children studied in 7,000 Christian elementary schools, and around 26,000 in middle schools run by missionaries (Deng, 1997).

The Imperial Examination was the civil service examination system in Imperial China to select candidates for the state bureaucracy for more than 1000 years. However, in 1905, the Imperial Examination was abolished. With this abolition, more students went to the mission schools for the business opportunities that English learning could bring, especially in the coastal cities (Deng, 1997). For example, they could easily find lucrative jobs in foreign companies, customs service or telegraph service as “English-speaking compradores” (Adamson & Bolton, 2004, p. 26).

The reformers of the Qing Dynasty also began to provide EFL education with the intention of realising technological improvement. For them, English was a useful tool

to learn about advanced science and technologies from the Western countries. In 1862, the first government foreign language school was founded in Beijing, which was known as *Tongwen Guan*, or Interpreter's College in the English (Adamson & Bolton, 2004; Dzau, 1990; Sun, 1996). The opening of *Tongwen Guan* was the indication of the Qing Dynasty's first attempt to learn from Western world after years of reluctance and resistance. Two other institutions were founded in the following years: *Guang Fangyan Guan* (School for Dispersing languages) was founded in 1863 in Shanghai; and the *Jiangnan Arsenal* was founded in 1868 also in Shanghai (Adamson & Bolton, 2004). In 1903, English became a recognised subject in the secondary school curriculum; it then became mandatory and remained a mandatory subject for a long period thereafter (Cleverley, 1985).

Figure 1 summarises the features of EFL education in Mainland China during the period from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the year of 1911.

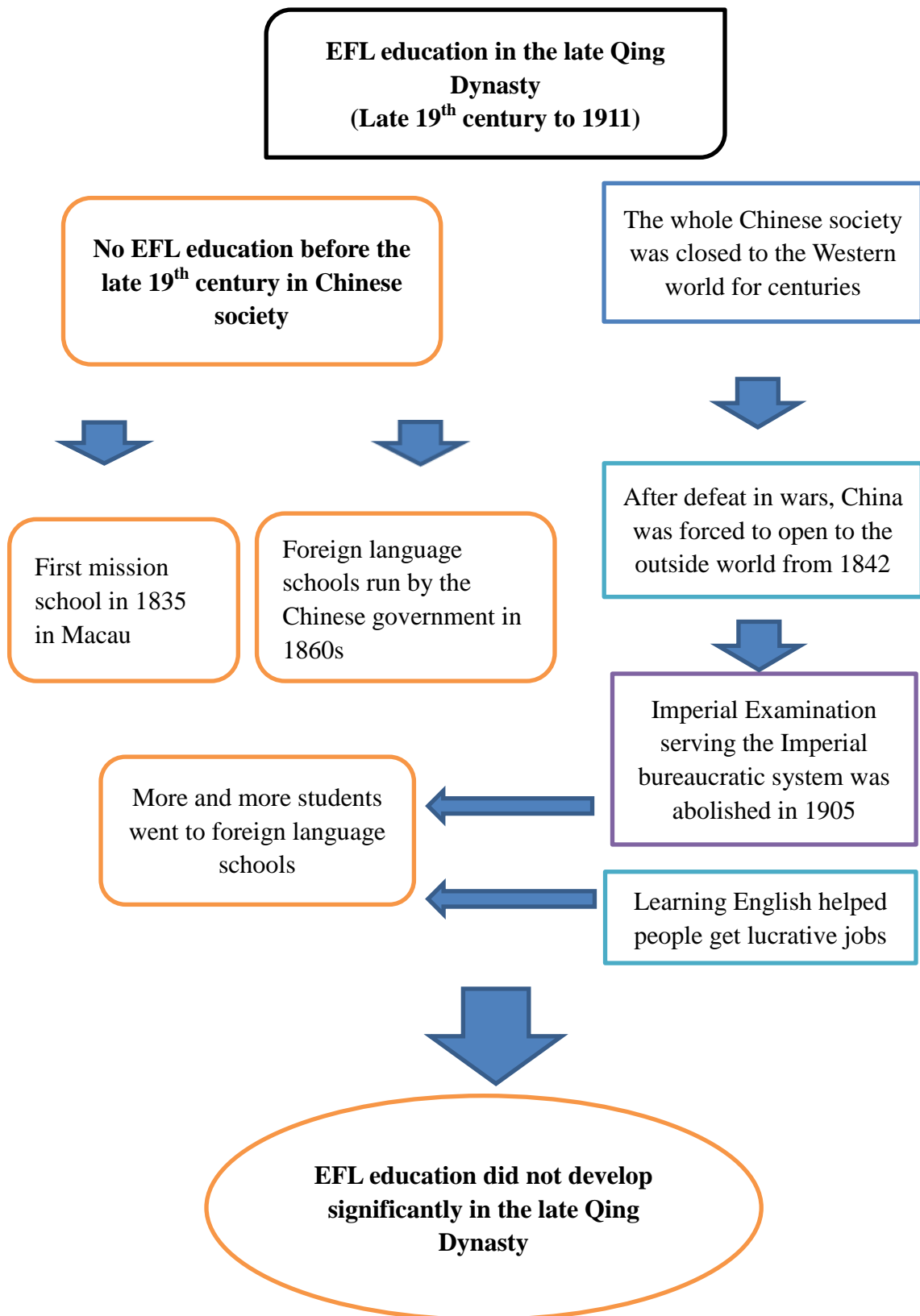


Figure 1. EFL education in the late Qing Dynasty (late 19th century to 1911)

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese students began to study abroad (Adamson & Bolton, 2004). After the World War I, the Chinese government signed the Treaty of Versailles, which allowed Japan to receive territories in Shangdong province. The Japanese expansion in Asia triggered the large scale student protestation against Japanese imperialism and the Chinese government at the time. The anti-Japan sentiment reached the peak at the May Fourth Movement in May 4<sup>th</sup> 1919 (Pletcher, 2011). Many students turned to English speaking countries for their pursuit of education. USA then gained increasingly popularity as the destination for Chinese students to study abroad (Adamson & Bolton, 2004). After the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement, many Western educators came to China, such as John Dewey, E. P. Cubberly, W. H. Kilpatrick, Von Driesch, Bertrand Russell, Paul Monroe, and Rabindranath Tagore (Cleverley, 1985).

Chinese people started to gain access to the Western ideas of democracy through learning foreign languages (usually English). In coastal cities, English was the language of business, commerce, finance and education. Reading newspapers in English or seeing English language movies in cities like Shanghai was fashionable (Fu, 1986). Also a foreign language was already a subject required in the college entrance examination in that period (Yeh, 1990). The Kuomintang (KMT) government in that period issued four foreign language syllabi between 1913 to 1948 before their defeat in 1949 (Zhang & Shen, 2001). English was required to be taught in secondary schools based on the time allocation of four to five hours a week.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese society experienced chaos and havoc caused by wars, including Second Sino-Japanese war and the Chinese civil war. Due to the unrest of the society and the limited living condition of masses of the population, EFL education did not make much progress in the whole country, especially in the rural areas. However, in urban areas, EFL education still flourished, people were still willing to allocate money and time to learning English for the economic opportunities and financial benefits (Ross, 1993).

Figure 2 provides a summary of the events that happened in EFL education under the rule of Kuomintang government from 1911 to 1949 in Mainland China.

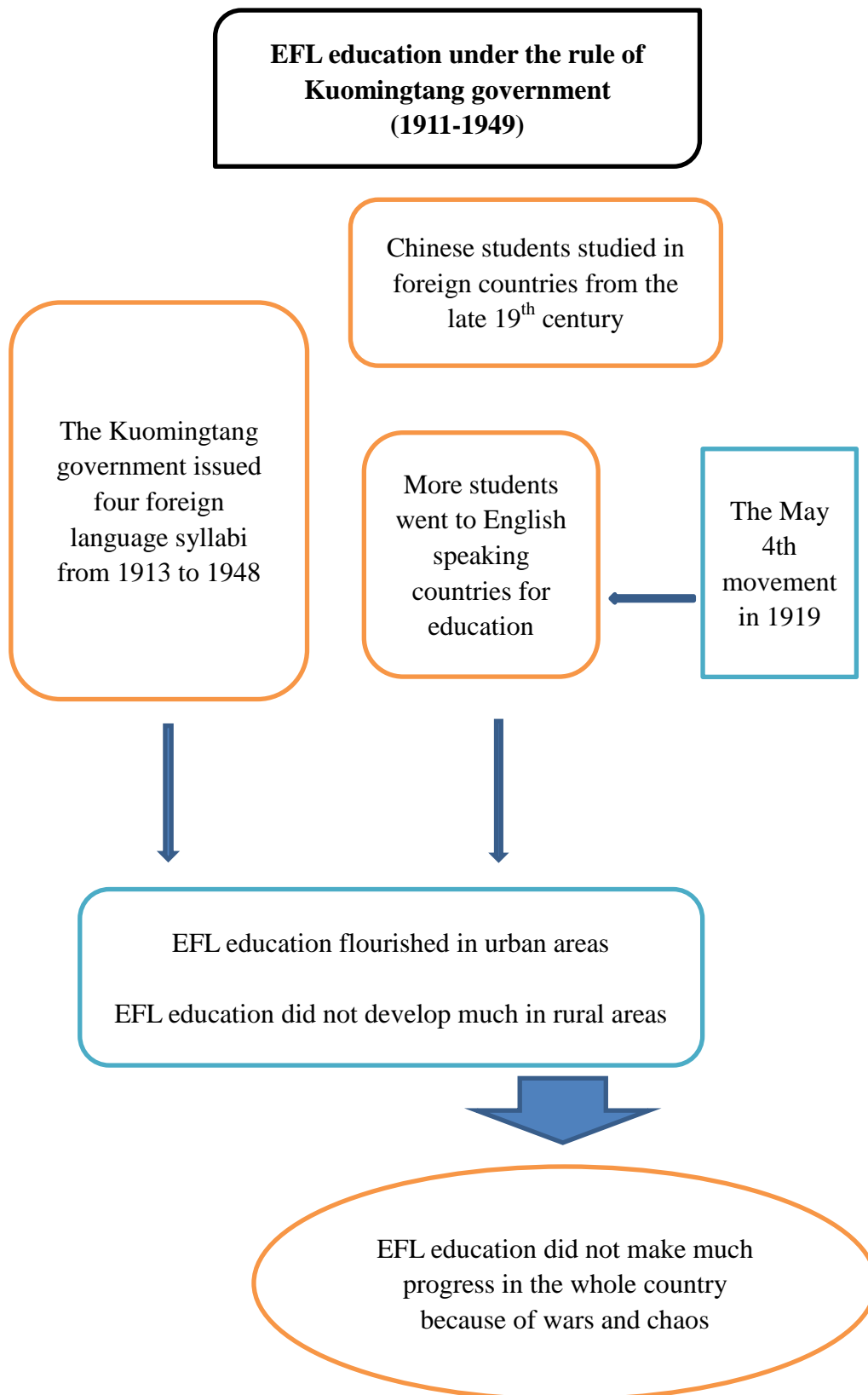


Figure 2. EFL education under the rule of Kuomintang (KMT) government

### **3.1.2 EFL education in the first three decades in the PRC (1949-1977)**

The victory of the Communist Party in the Chinese civil war (1945-1949) led to the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949. After the founding of the new country, it was important for the Communist government to reconstruct the political, social, economic, educational and cultural systems.

In the first years, English teaching curriculum, materials and methods in the period of Nationalist government of China (led by the Kuomintang Party) were adopted by the new government of the PRC. However, EFL education policy and Chinese people's attitudes towards English learning quickly changed under the political and ideological influence which required that language education should serve the people and the proletariat. The government took over mission schools and all foreign-run schools and institutions, and mission schools were accused of serving "imperialist and colonialist ends" (Cleverley, 1985, p. 118). Religion was even considered by the new government as "the opiate of the people" (Cleverley, 1985, p. 118). Many foreign educators left the PRC and most foreign companies moved out of Mainland China.

With the breakout of the Korea War in 1950 and the Cold War between the West and The East, the PRC was faced with Western attempts to isolate the new Communist country. The government of the PRC found it was equally important to find an ally in the international arena. The PRC built an intimate relationship with the Soviet Union

immediately after the founding of the country (Lam, 2005; Pletcher, 2011). This rapidly developed union between the PRC and the Soviet Union influenced the economic, political, cultural and educational systems in Mainland China from the early 1950s (Adamson & Morris, 1997; Chen, 1989).

The Communist government of the PRC and the Soviet Union signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance in 1950. This alliance with the Soviet Union strongly influenced the foreign language teaching in schools. Secondary schools and institutions began to provide Russian teaching from 1952 (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996b; Ross, 1992); Russian replaced English, becoming the most taught foreign language in secondary schools and institutions. Many teachers of English started to learn Russian in short term training or by self-learning; and they then taught Russian to students (Chen, 1981). English was removed from junior secondary curriculum in 1954 partly due to the lack of teachers (Tang & Gao, 2000).

This situation did not last long after the breakdown of the political relationship between the PRC and the Soviet Union. The worsening of political and ideological relations between the PRC and the Soviet Union resulted in the Sino-Soviet Split. The PRC then put an emphasis on self-reliance and independence. Rather than borrowing and learning from the Soviet Union, the PRC started to “learn from all the advanced experiences of the world” (Dzau, 1990, p. 19). In 1957, English was put back into the junior secondary curriculum (Ross, 1992). Foreign language education developed

towards a more academic orientation. Foreign language (usually English) became a compulsory subject in the National Higher Education Entrance Examination in 1962 (Ross, 1993).

The first years of 1960s saw a revival and expansion of English language education in the PRC. This is a period of innovation and experimentation in EFL education. In this period, a range of Western language teaching methodologies were consulted and experimented with in Mainland China, including the Direct method, the Audio-lingual method and the Grammar Translation method (Fu, 1986). People began to realise the importance of speaking and listening skills in English language learning. The aim of EFL education in secondary schools was changed accordingly to obtain basic knowledge and basic skills.

In 1966, Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution which interrupted formal education in Mainland China. Mao believed that the best schooling took place outside the school. Participation in labour on the farm, or in the factory, was a practical part of education which made education closer to the needs of society. Secondary schools and universities were shut down for years. In the *Down to the Countryside Movement*, millions of urban young people were driven to remote rural areas to receive the “open door schooling” (Chen, 1981). They spent their youth in labour on the farm instead of studying in schools.

During the Cultural Revolution, Chinese people were forbidden to listen to foreign language broadcasts, see foreign language movies and read foreign language newspapers or books. By 1970, less than half of secondary schools taught any foreign languages in Mainland China (Ross, 1993). The whole country remained isolated from the outside world.

The Cultural Revolution came to the end with the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. In the first 30 years of the PRC, EFL education did not yield significant results with regard to students' English proficiency levels due to the dominance of politics and communist ideology. From 1978 to date, Chinese society has seen a series of political and economic reforms and EFL education has developed rapidly towards the new orientation of economic growth and national modernization.

The Open Up Policy announced in 1978 has become the turning point of economic development and the realization of the Four Modernizations policy in Mainland China. The government of PRC has emphasised the importance of learning advanced technologies and sciences from Western countries. Proficiency in foreign languages, especially in English, is believed to be the way to gain access to advanced technologies and sciences. For individuals, language ability in English is considered as the way to gain access to social mobility and career opportunities. The move towards proficiency in foreign languages (especially English) has become a nationwide driver. Figure 3 gives a snapshot overview of EFL education development

from 1949 to 1977, the three decades after the establishment of the PRC.

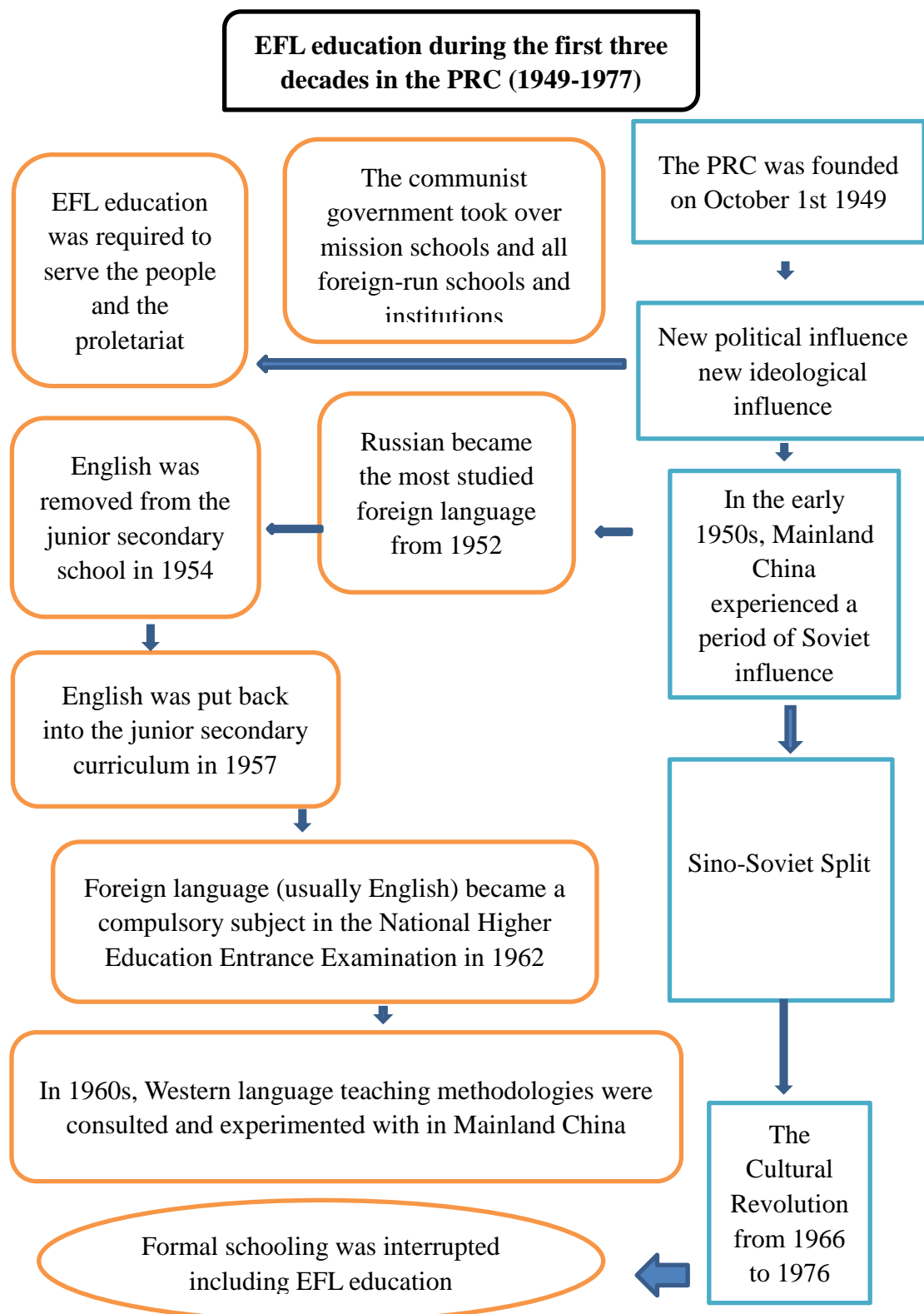


Figure 3. EFL education during the first three decades in the PRC

### **3.1.3 EFL education after Mainland China's Open Up Policy (1978 to date)**

After the death of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping rose to the power as the new leader of the PRC. In December 1978, Deng Xiaoping announced the official launch of the Four Modernizations policy. In the same year, also initiated by Deng Xiaoping, the Open Door Policy took effect (Pletcher, 2011; Wright, 2011). The government asserted that the Open Door Policy was vital to the economic development and realization of the Four Modernizations policy: "The histories of various countries show that a closed-door policy harms national development. For socialist construction we need to absorb and utilize the rich knowledge accumulated by the capitalist countries, their advanced technologies and ways of management" (cited in Cleverley, 1985, p. 264).

In Mao's era, English was provided universally to students as Mao was firmly opposed to stratification and elitism in education. However, Deng Xiaoping put a priority on the quality of education and the egalitarian approach in education now was abandoned. Stratification was believed necessary for the preparation of various types of personnel needed in the economic development (Tsang, 2000) by "recreating a highly selective and elitist system of higher education" (Pletcher, 2011, p. 340). As Burton (1990) argued, "Maoist utopianism was replaced by Dengist pragmatism" (p. 1) . Deng Xiaoping had a famous saying which reveals his pragmatism: 'It does not matter if a cat is white or black as long as it catches mice' (Burton, 1990). Deng was convinced that the advanced technologies and science were vital to the realization of

the Four Modernizations policy (Adamson & Morris, 1997). To access advanced technologies and science, a large number of specialists with high foreign language proficiencies were required. This change in policy resulted in a need for the promotion of quality in foreign language education:

A foreign language is an important tool for interacting with other countries and plays an important role in promoting the development of the national and world economy, science and culture. In order to meet the needs of our Open Door Policy and to accelerate socialist modernization, efforts should be made to enable as many people as possible to acquire command of one or more foreign languages. (1993 English syllabus, cited in Adamson & Morris, 1997, p. 21)

As a result of the economic orientated foreign language education policy, the political and ideological content in English textbooks declined gradually, and content about class struggles or slogans like “Long live Chairman Mao” were removed (Lin, 1990). Foreign languages were considered to be linked to scientific, progressive, and creative thinking which was definitely needed for the realization of the Four Modernizations policy (Ross, 1992). People became interested in Western language education theories and approaches and explored better ways to teach foreign languages. Western educational philosophies were discussed heatedly in journals and magazines (Lin, 1990). In 1981, the National Foreign Language Teaching and Research Association (NAFLTRA) was established which provided a forum for research and data related to

foreign language education.

The National Higher Education Entrance Examination resumed in late 1977 after the Cultural Revolution. From 1978 to 1982, the test score of a foreign language did not formally enter the requirement for college admission; it was only used as a partial reference. In 1983, the test of a foreign language (predominantly English) was formally required and remained a core subject in the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (Wang, 2007).

EFL education developed steadily after the announcement of the Open Door Policy except for several short periods of twists and turns in the social environment, such as the suppression of the student movement in 1989. Considered as an important tool for the study of cultural and scientific knowledge and the promotion of international relations, EFL education was emphasised in the 1982 Secondary School English Syllabus (Wang, 2007). However, EFL education did not achieve significant improvement; many students' English competence did not reach the required standards due to "the grammar-based audio-lingual teaching method, rigid written examination requirements, shortage of qualified teachers, and extremely limited resources" (Wang, 2007, p. 90).

In the autumn of 1986 the Secondary School English Syllabus was revised; aiming at training students' proficient reading ability, certain listening and translation ability and

elementary writing and speaking ability:

English does not only have instrumental utility, but more importantly, communicative and educational values. Therefore, English teaching should not only focus on developing students' knowledge about the language but also on developing students' cognitive ability, positive attitude, and personality. As far as pedagogy is concerned, it is stated that teaching should focus more on the students' ability to use the language. (Wang, 2007, p. 90)

Also in 1986, the Compulsory Education Law was issued which postulated the equal right of each school aged child or adolescent to access to formal education. With the social and educational changes, the 1986 Secondary School English Syllabus could no longer meet the developmental needs of students and it was revised in 1993. In this 1993 syllabus students' English oral competence were seen as the top priority in English teaching:

Language form has to be combined with its meaning and with what the students think and want to say. Special attention should be paid to turning the language skills acquired through practice into the capacity of using the language for the purpose of communication. When the students realize that they can communicate in English, they will go on learning with more interest and motivation. (Adamson & Morris, 1997, p. 22)

In 1985, the College English Syllabus was published, aiming at training proficient

reading ability, certain listening and translation ability, and elementary writing and speaking ability (Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China, 1985). In 2001, English was introduced into primary school curriculum from Year 3 (Wang, 2007).

Learning English became a nationwide craze. By 2000, the number of English teachers in secondary schools reached 500,000, this was 600 times higher than the number in 1957 (Bolton, 2002). Foreign staff were invited to teach in universities and colleges. Foreign trained Chinese specialists and scholars were increasingly respected. Students and scholars were sent to foreign countries for study and research. English language TV shows and broadcast programmes gained popularity throughout the country. The longest-run English learning programme *Follow Me* had millions of followers during the 1980s (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002). English became one of the three mandatory subjects for the National Higher Education Entrance Examination. A specialised foreign language test, usually an English text, was and still, is required for university academic staff who want to become senior professors or above; and people who want to become engineers also need to pass an English test. Universities students need to pass College English Test Band 4 (CET-4), a national English proficiency test for university students, to obtain the bachelor's degree. With the economic development and social changes, more foreign companies flooded into the PRC. People started to see English as a tool to gain better paid jobs in these foreign companies. More and more students participated in the various English examinations such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English

Language Testing System (IELTS), the Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE), the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), and the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002). Their purpose for undertaking these types of examinations was to seek educational opportunities in English speaking countries.

### **3.2 Overview of the education system in Mainland China**

Mainland China has a large population of 1.36 billion people (World Population Review, 2014). Approximately 91% of the population are Han Chinese, the largest ethnic group in Mainland China; and the remaining 9% are from 55 ethnic minorities. Han Chinese people have numerous types of dialects, which cannot be mutually understood by other Han Chinese (World Population Review, 2014). But all Han Chinese share the same written form of Chinese, standard simplified Chinese in Mainland China. Ethnic minorities maintain their languages; some even have both spoken and written forms of the language. Ethnic minorities also have bilingual education to help preserve their languages. The official language for all Chinese citizens is Mandarin; it is referred to as *Putonghua* in Mainland China, which means the common spoken Chinese. Mandarin is the language of instruction at all levels of schooling from primary school to the tertiary education.

Mainland China has the largest education system in the world. The Ministry of Education (MOE) of the People's Republic of China runs this large and complicated

public education. It takes on the responsibility for carrying out related laws, regulations, guidelines and policies of the central government; planning development of the educational sector; integrating and coordinating educational initiatives and programs nationwide; maneuvering and guiding education reform (China Education and Research Network, 2004a).

The Chinese context is almost impossible to describe; the scale of ELT is extensive and the circumstances are changing. This is a huge, rapidly developing country with an enormous population... There are significant differences in language teaching developments between the major cities and small cities, between rural towns and countryside, between coastal and inland areas, between north and south, between key and non-key schools/universities. There is wide variation in teaching quality, though there have been marked improvements. We should not expect all classrooms to be the same; every generalization will have important exceptions. (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996b, p. 61)

Aiming to provide equal educational opportunities, The Compulsory Education Law was promulgated in July 1986, and was amended in June, 2006. It calls for nine years of schooling for each child in Mainland China (China Education Center Ltd, n.d.-a). According to this law, each school aged child and adolescent with PRC citizenship (6 to 15 years) has the equal right to receive nine years of the formal education that is six years of primary school and three years of junior secondary school; or five years of

primary school and four years of junior secondary school. The first option is more commonplace in most parts of Mainland China. The state guarantees the compulsory education as part of public welfare. No tuition fees and miscellaneous fees are charged during the nine years of compulsory education.

The Chinese education system can be divided into three parts: basic education, higher education and adult education (China Education and Research Network, 2004b). Basic education consists of preschool education, primary education and regular secondary education.

Preschool education offers instruction to children of the age from three to six years before they can be enrolled into the primary school. In urban areas, children can enjoy one to three years of preschool instruction in kindergartens. Preschool instruction can be provided by state, collective bodies and individuals through different forms. Because of the disparities in economic development, the quality of preschool in different areas is not of the same standard, especially between urban and rural areas. In some rural areas, preschool education involves nursery classes for children or some seasonal kindergartens. The state formulated a series of laws aiming at enhancing the standards of preschool education, such as management of kindergartens, the qualification and training of kindergarten teachers. Preschool has rapidly developed in Mainland China and made significant progress in recent years. In 2010, 15,468,596 children were enrolled in 138,209 kindergartens in Mainland China (China Education

Center Ltd, n.d.-b).

According to the Compulsory Education Law, when children turn six years old, they should start primary school. The primary school starts from Year 1 and processes through to Year 5 or Year 6 based on different systems. The academic year for primary and secondary schools is divided into two semesters, each consisting of 19 weeks, with a total of 38 weeks of instruction for the year and one additional week for reserve. In 2010 there were in total 280,184 primary schools with an enrollment of 17,388,465 students, and there were 87,655 secondary schools in Mainland China. The enrollment rate of primary school reached above 99% in 2010, and more than 99% of primary school graduates continued their secondary school education (China Education Center, n.d.)

Subjects in primary school curriculum are Chinese, mathematics, science, moral education, social studies, arts, music, health, and physical education. Chinese and mathematics are taught through primary education from Year 1. English was introduced as a recognised subject from Year 3 in September 2001.

After six years or five years of primary schooling, depending on the system, primary school graduates start secondary school at the age of 11 or 12. They have three to four years of formal instruction in junior secondary school depending on the system division. After junior secondary education, there is another three years of senior

secondary schooling. In the majority of cases, the division of primary and secondary schooling system makes a 6-3-3 system instead of a 5-4-3 system. Junior secondary school students have more subjects to learn compared to the primary school curriculum. For example, general junior secondary school students start to learn physics from Year 8, and chemistry from Year 9. English is a compulsory subject. After nine years of studies, students should sit the Senior Secondary School Entrance Examination. Their academic performance in this examination is decisive in determining their further schooling.

Upon the completion of nine years of compulsory education, junior secondary school graduates can choose to continue their studies in senior secondary schools or in vocational and technical secondary school stream depending on their academic achievements and preferences. Vocational secondary schools provide programmes ranging from two years to four years, aiming at training a medium-level labour force for the job market, such as skilled workers, farmers, managerial and technical personnel. The typical length of vocational and technical senior secondary school is three years, the same length as the general senior secondary school.

Another choice of schooling after graduation from junior secondary school, if a student succeeds in the Senior Secondary School Entrance Examination, is to study in a general senior secondary school. Students receive three years of academic instruction in a senior secondary school, in preparation for higher education. Subjects

taught in a general senior secondary school are Chinese, mathematics, foreign language (English in a vast majority of cases), physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, and politics. At the end of the three years of study, students can sit for the National Higher Education Entrance Examination, which is the prerequisite for studying in almost any institution of higher education in Mainland China. Although it is called a national examination, the National Higher Education Examination is not uniform across Mainland China, each province or direct-controlled municipality administers the examinations for the local senior secondary graduates of the province of the city. The examination content, requirements and forms differ from province to province and have changed several times; however, the mandatory subjects across the whole country are Chinese, mathematics and a foreign language (usually English).

If a senior secondary student succeeds in the competitive National Higher Education Entrance Examination, s/he will have the chance to enter an institution of higher education to pursue his/her studies. The length of undergraduate programmes varies from two years to five years. A college diploma requires two years of studies in the higher education system. In most cases, students need to study four years and complete all the credits required to obtain a Bachelor's degree. However, some majors, such as medicine, require five years of undergraduate studies. Students can choose different disciplines and majors based on their scores obtained in the National Higher Education Entrance Examination. All non-English major university or college students have English as a compulsory course in their first two years of study.

After completing a Bachelor's degree, a small number of graduates choose further study for a Master's degree, which requires another two to three years. A smaller number will move onto doctoral studies which lasts three to four years.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to understand the classifications of institutions or universities in Mainland China. In Chinese higher education system, some universities are classified as National key universities. The key universities are recognised as prestigious and they receive more support from the state than other universities. Key universities have more facilities, qualified staff, and more competent students than ordinary universities.

Along with the classification of national key universities, Project 985 was announced in May 1998 with the intention of promoting the development and reputation of top universities in Mainland China. The name of Project 985 comes from the date of the project announcement. Thirty-nine universities in Project 985 are assigned funding from the state.

Project 211 is another important classification of institutions and universities nationwide in Mainland China. It was initiated by the MOE in 1995 in Mainland China, aiming at raising the research standards of high-level universities and cultivating strategies for socio-economic development. China now has more than 1,700 standard institutions of higher education, 118 of them are designated as

institutions of Project 211. These institutions should meet certain scientific, technological and human resource standards to be incorporated in Project 211. Project 211 universities are responsible of training 4/5 doctoral students and 2/3 graduate students. The name of Project 211 is the abbreviation of 21st century and 100 universities.

### **3.3 National policy for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Mainland China**

The Ministry of Education (MOE) is the supreme education administration body in Mainland China. It has responsibility for the overall planning, coordinating and management of all forms of education at all levels. MOE formulates the standards for the setting up of schools of all types; guides educational reforms and teaching methods; and takes charge of the statistics, analysis, and release of basic educational information. MOE is in charge of supervision of compulsory education and equitable education; provides the macro-guidance and coordination of compulsory education; and directs the regular senior secondary education, pre-school education, and special education. It is also responsible for the overall management and allocation of educational funds; supervises and manages the National Higher Education Entrance Examination; administers teachers' work by formulating and supervising the implementation of the standards for qualification for teachers of various types and at various levels (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, n.d.).

English is a major subject in middle school education and a compulsory subject in the National Higher Education Entrance Examination in Mainland China. According to the experimental English syllabus for full-time senior high school English classrooms published in 2000, English teachers should use English “as much as possible in the English classroom”, but it recognises that the first language may be used for purposes “such as explaining or translating abstract English words and expressions, or special English structures” (Ministry of Education of the PRC, 2000, p. 4). The Ministry of Education urges senior high school English teachers to use English expressions that had been taught when explaining or introducing new content in English so that a realistic language environment can be created for students. In the College English curriculum requirements (Department of Higher Education of Ministry of Education of P.R.China, 2007), the teaching objective states: “to develop students’ ability to use English in a well-rounded way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future studies and careers as well as social interactions they will be able to communicate effectively” (p.1). However, there is not any requirement concerning teachers’ language choice in English teaching.

### **3.4 Teaching and learning styles in Mainland China**

Whether myth or reality, students from Mainland China and students are often portrayed as silent and passive learners in foreign language classrooms compared to Western learners (Tsui, 1996). Confucian Heritage Culture was believed to be related

to students' silence and passiveness in EFL classrooms in Mainland China (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995). Most students in Mainland China prefer less speaking and more listening to their teachers at school (Liu & Littlewood, 1997). In learning and teaching practices in classrooms in Mainland China, Chinese students are silent and obedient while teachers are dominant. Chinese students are accustomed to a didactic and teacher-centred styles of teaching in which teachers dominate the learning activities; and students have limited questioning or discussion (Chan, 1999; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996a).

Confucian reverence for education is deeply embedded in the whole society in Mainland China, which gives great importance to education, from well educated people to people with little schooling (Cheng, 2000). Education is believed to be an effective means to realise upward social mobility for individuals and the strengthening of a nation (Zhu, 1992). Education also has the utilitarian functions for individuals based upon Confucian thinking, that is education can bring about social recognition and financial rewards (Llasera, 1987).

Confucian education philosophy places importance on both intellectual development and the cultivation of moral virtues. The cultivation of moral virtues is a major component of education (Bastid, 1987; Llasera, 1987). Confucian moral education cultivates the moral virtues, such as loyalty, fidelity, altruism, modesty and conformity, which teaches people how to behave with relation to other people in the society (Paine,

1992). According to Confucian ethics, juniors should owe their seniors reverence in the relationships among individuals (Yang & Tamney, 2011). Students should show respect to their teachers, and should not challenge their teachers by asking many questions to maintain a hierarchical but harmonious relation between teacher and student. Students are also expected to keep silent to show modesty to other students. The typical learning style of Chinese students is listening to their teachers with minimal speaking opportunities in classrooms (Liu & Littlewood, 1997).

In addition to students' learning styles, teachers' lack of training and knowledge about foreign language teaching methodologies is a second factor related to EFL classroom practices. In Mainland China, English teachers at universities are urgently needed after the expansion of enrollment of students in universities (An, 2011). The number of the students has steadily increased while the number of the teachers remained the same. The teacher-student ratio has grown from 16.22:1 to 17.28:1 (Zhu & Xu, 2010, p. 139) , which indicates a deteriorating lack of educational resources. There are many underqualified EFL teachers, who usually have not received special training before becoming university academic staff members (Wu, 2001). The lack of training for EFL teachers is one of the factors related to the problems in EFL teaching and learning: "In general, a majority of the teachers (53% for the ordinary schools and 69% for the key schools) had never received any formal professional training" (Hu, 2005, p. 12). An (2011) explains that:

English teachers in China are relatively young with a low-grade diploma and

little teaching experience. Because of the expansion of the enrollment of students in universities, teachers are urgently needed. So some university English major students learning English as their specialty without a postgraduate or a doctoral degree become teachers of English after they graduate. (p. 200)

University teachers' research capacity is also very limited in Mainland China (Hu, 2005) although it is widely recognised that research studies can improve their teaching practices and self-development (Yang, Zhang, & Xie, 2001). EFL teachers in universities in Mainland China have a heavy teaching load, especially after the expansion of student enrollment. They usually have fourteen to sixteen teaching hours a week, or even more. The class size is also very large, often over sixty to eighty (An, 2011). Also, many EFL teachers consider teaching rather than research as the priority in their academic work (Yang et al., 2001). Due to their limited competence in research, they know very little about recent developments in foreign language teaching methodologies both at home and abroad. Many EFL teachers "only know the grammar-translation method, for they had been taught with the grammar-translation method since they entered university" and they have "no competence of controlling the class in a flexible way in quite an open manner" (An, 2011, p. 200). The Grammar Translation method is widely applied in English classrooms in Mainland China (Cowan, Light, Mathews, & Tucker, 1979; Parry, 1996; Rao, 1996; Zhang, 1997) because the Grammar Translation method is the most acceptable way for EFL teachers

to feel confident and secured (An, 2011). Teachers of English do not have solid knowledge and understanding in pedagogy.

### **3.5 Summary**

In Mainland China, English has been considered important for the construction of an economically strong nation, self-development, professional promotion, and to facilitate educational opportunities:

There is a widespread perception that speaking English confers prestige on individuals and opens doors to academic, professional and business success. However, many students also learn the language for personal reasons, such as the desire to travel or study abroad. At the national level, English has been progressively linked to China's open-door policy, the modernization and rapid development of the economic system, China's burgeoning international trade and the recognition of China's significant role in world affairs. (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002, p. 53)

From the initiating of the market reforms, the Open Up Policy, to the 2008 Beijing Olympics and beyond, Mainland China has experienced rapid economic development. It has become the second largest economy by nominal GDP (World Bank, 2014) after the United States. It remains the fastest growing major economy in the world, GDP Annual Growth Rate in China averaged 9.10 percent from 1989 until 2014 (Trading

Economics, n.d.). The fast paced economic development contributes to more commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges with the whole world. English language education has hence gained more and more attention from all levels of people in Mainland China, from policy makers to ordinary citizens. For the government in Mainland China, English is believed to be important for its national economic reform and the modernization programme (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996b; Maley, 1995; Ross, 1992). For ordinary people, English is considered as a useful means to get better education or jobs (Ng & Tang, 1997). English Language Teaching (ELT) was given more importance not only from school English teachers and learners, but also the whole society in Mainland China. “ELT in China is thus characterised by scale and enthusiasm. There is a widespread perception that speaking English confers prestige on individuals and open doors to academic, professional and business success” (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002, p. 53).

All this increased emphasis on learning English in China has caused educationists to ask questions about teaching and learning techniques to maximise efficient and effective EFL language acquisition at all levels of schooling. This has also raised the question of the advantages and disadvantages of Mandarin (L1) and English (L2) usage in EFL classes, especially in higher education with university students.

The significance of understanding effective and efficient principles for the teaching and learning of EFL in China cannot be underestimated. The importance of

investigating EFL strategies in what context, how often, when and why is fundamental to improving EFL teaching by teachers to students. In Chapter 4 I firstly describe the research design of this study. The research questions and methodology are followed by the context of the study which details the processes of locating participants, the selection of locations and participants. The quantitative and qualitative data collection and data analysis procedures are then introduced followed by an outline of the RMIT research processes which involve the ethical procedures and PhD candidature expectations. A concise summary concludes the chapter.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **4.1 Research design**

This chapter describes the methodology and methods applied in this study. First, the six main research questions and the research methodology adopted in this study are outlined. Secondly, the context of the research is provided, describing the procedure of locating participants, research locations and research participants. In the following sections, the procedures of data collection, data analysis, and the steps implemented to ensure reliability and validity of the results, and the RMIT research processes are described.

##### **4.1.1 Research questions**

In this study, Mandarin as the official language in Mainland China was regarded as the first language (L1) of all the participants, and English was the foreign language (EFL) for all student and teacher participants. The study aimed to quantify the amount of Mandarin (L1) used by four EFL teachers in non-English major EFL classes at two universities in the context of Southeast Mainland China. I also investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms. In order to describe the contexts when Mandarin was used by the four

EFL teachers in their EFL classes I created a scheme of usage context codes. Finally, the research study probed further the reasons why these four EFL teachers resorted to using Mandarin when they were teaching EFL classes. The six main research questions directing this study are:

1. How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?
2. What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes?
3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
4. When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms?
5. Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
6. Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?

#### **4.1.2 Methodology**

This study used a Mixed Methods approach (Creswell, 2009) in which both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed. The rationale for using a Mixed Methods is that it can draw upon the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research. Also, the use of either quantitative or qualitative approaches by

themselves can be inadequate to address complex social problems; and “more insight” is “gained from the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research than either form by itself” (Creswell, 2009, p. 203).

In a Mixed Methods approach, researchers build knowledge on pragmatic grounds (Creswell, 2009; Maxcy, 2003). Researchers choose approaches, as well as variables and units of analysis, which are most appropriate for finding answers to their research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Quantitative and qualitative methods are compatible in a Mixed Methods design. Thus, quantitative and qualitative data can both help better understand the research issues under investigation. In this particular study both quantitative research questions (research questions 1, 2, 3 and 6) and qualitative research questions (research questions 4 and 5) were constructed. Thus the choice of a Mixed Methods approach was appropriate.

The Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods (Creswell, 2009) design was used in this study. This design is a two-phase Mixed Method approach. It is characterised by a collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by a collection and analysis of qualitative data. The purpose of this combination is to use the qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of the quantitative component of the study.

Furthermore, a number of previous research studies related to this topic have applied both quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect and analyse data (Cheng, 2013; De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Liu, 2010; Macaro, 2001; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002; Tang, 2002). There are however, other research studies which tended to concentrate on quantitative methodology to collect and analyse data (Song, 2009; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). From an analysis of the previous research studies, it seems that the studies applying both quantitative and qualitative methodologies can provide a more in-depth insight into the issue concerning the first language usage in foreign or second language teaching practice.

The rationale for this Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods approach is that the initial quantitative data and results provided a general picture of the research problem, while qualitative data and their analysis, building on the results of the quantitative results, refined and explained those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth (Creswell, 2009).

In the first phase, quantitative data collection and analysis procedure was applied to answer the research questions as follows:

- Research question 1. How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?
- Research question 2. What are the students' attitudes towards teachers'

Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes?

- Research question 3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
- Research question 6. Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?

Quantitative analysis could provide statistic information about:

- EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount (the percent of teachers' Mandarin utterances in all their utterances),
- students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage (analysis obtained from students' and teachers' responses to the questionnaires with a Likert scale),
- the relationship between students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in and students' English proficiency levels (by statistical comparisons of different English level students' responses to the students' questionnaires).

However, quantitative analysis could not explain why teachers resorted to using Mandarin and when they used it. Through a qualitative analysis approach, teachers' EFL teachers' Mandarin utterances were divided into different contexts. The four EFL teachers' interviews further provided the in-depth information about the four teachers' attitudes towards their Mandarin usage and the reasons why they incorporated

Mandarin in their teaching.

Qualitative approach was applied to answer the following research questions:

- Research question 4. When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms?
- Research question 5. Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?

Qualitative data analysis also provided supplementary information to:

- Research question 3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?

By combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, this study could provide more complete and reliable information about the phenomenon of EFL teachers' resorting to Mandarin in their teaching.

For this study, in the first phase, empirical, statistical data were collected through students' and teachers' questionnaires and eight audio-recorded class sessions provided by four EFL teachers in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. Class audio-recording sessions were used to quantify EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms. Students' and teachers' questionnaires were also analysed quantitatively in the first phase to reveal students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL

teachers' usage of Mandarin in classrooms, and examine the relationship between students' attitudes and their own English proficiency levels.

In the second phase, class audio-recording sessions were first analysed quantitatively. The usage contexts were classified to indicate when teachers used Mandarin in EFL classrooms. These Mandarin usage contexts codes (e.g., *Translation*, *Grammar*, *Culture*, *Encouragement*, etc.) are discussed in Section 4.1.2.3. A qualitative case study approach was used to collect text data through individual semi-structured interviews with four teachers who were involved in the class audio-recordings.

#### ***4.1.2.1 Class audio-recording sessions for quantitative analysis***

Class audio-recording sessions were first analysed quantitatively to answer the research question 1: How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use? Four EFL teachers each provided two EFL class audio-recording sessions. Class audio-recording sessions were used to calculate the actual amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage (L1) during EFL classes. A 15-second sampling technique from Duff and Polio's (1990) study was applied in this study to the quantification of EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage. Each 15-second audio-recording was taken as an audio-recording unit, each audio-recording unit comprising teachers' utterances were considered as a checkpoint unit for the statistics. The audio-recording sessions were first transcribed verbatim. As this study focused on EFL teachers'

Mandarin usage, only EFL teachers' utterances were noted. A detailed description of teachers' utterances is provided in Section 5.2.

When an audio-recording unit did not contain EFL teachers' utterances, a code of N/A was used as an indication. After transcribing and coding all four EFL teachers' utterances, the totals of audio-recording units (RU), and the total numbers of checkpoint units (CU) for each EFL teacher which contained EFL teachers' utterances were first calculated. For example, Teacher C's first class audio-recording session lasted 41 minutes, from which I elicited:

- 164 audio-recording units (RC): each of which was 15 seconds long.
- 149 checkpoint units (CU): 149 of the 164 audio-recording units contained Teacher C's utterances, these 149 audio-recording units were used as checkpoint units.
- 15 units of N/A: in these 15 audio-recording units, Teacher C did not speak anything.
- 75 units of Category *E*: in these 75 checkpoint units, Teacher C spoke only English.
- 26 units of *Em*: in these 26 checkpoints, Teacher C spoke English with one word or one phrase in Mandarin.
- 21 units of *E-M*: in these 21 checkpoints units, Teacher C's utterances were an equal mixture of English and Mandarin.
- 1 unit of *M*: in this checkpoint unit, Teacher C spoke Mandarin.

- 26 units of *Me*: in these 26 checkpoint unit, Teacher C spoke Mandarin with one word or one phrase in English.

The percentages of Teacher C's utterance categories of her first class audio-recording session were then derived by the division of number of each category with the number of the total checkpoint units:

- Category *E*: 50.34%
  - It meant that 50.34% of Teacher C's utterances in her first class audio-recording session were in English.
- Category *Em*: 17.45%
  - It meant that 17.45% of Teacher C's utterances in her first class audio-recording session were in English with one word or one phrase in Mandarin.
- Category *E-M*: 14.09%
  - It meant that 14.09% of Teacher C's utterances in her first class audio-recording session were an equal mixture of English and Mandarin.
- Category *M*: 0.67%
  - It meant that 0.67% of Teacher C's utterances in her first class audio-recording session were in Mandarin.
- Category *Me*: 17.45%

- It meant that 17.45% of Teacher C's utterances in her first class audio-recording session were in Mandarin with one word or one phrase in English.

Category *E* and *Em* were considered as English utterances; Category *M* and *Me* were considered as Mandarin utterances; while Category *E-M* was considered half English and half Mandarin. Thus the percentages of English and Mandarin usage amount of each EFL teacher in each class audio-recording session were calculated. For example, in Teacher C's first class audio-recording session, her English usage amount was 74.84%, while her Mandarin usage amount was 25.16%.

#### ***4.1.2.2 Questionnaires for quantitative analysis***

Students' questionnaires and teachers' questionnaires were used to analyse quantitatively the following research questions:

- What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 2)
- What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 3)
- Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels? (research question 6)

Based upon previous studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Levine, 2003; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002) I created questionnaires for both student and teacher participants in this study. Students' questionnaires and teachers' questionnaires were first piloted and then modified to collect data on students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms (see Appendix 4, Student Questionnaire; and Appendix 5, Teacher Questionnaire). Students' questionnaires and Teachers' questionnaires both contained four sections of questions. In the first section, questions sought student and teacher participants' demographic information, such as age, and gender. Questions in the other three sections were used to examine student and teacher participants' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms.

In Section two (see Appendix 4, Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2), a Likert Scale with numbers from 1 to 7 was given to show the degrees from very strongly disagree to very strongly agree, with the number 4 meaning neither agree nor disagree. Students and teachers were requested to give a number to each statement concerning their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in general and EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts. Students and teachers were asked the same questions. For example, the first question in Section two asked students to give a number to the statement, "In general, it is beneficial for my English learning if my teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms" (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Question 1). While teachers were asked to give a number to the statement, "In general, it is beneficial for my English teaching if I speak Mandarin in EFL classrooms" (see

Appendix 5, Section 2, Question 1).

In the third and fourth sections participants were asked to indicate the number that best represented their estimations about how much Mandarin their EFL teachers' used in classrooms in different contexts. A scale of five numbers was given to participants: 1 meant 0% to 20% of class time, 2 meant 21% to 40%, 3 meant 41% to 60%, 4 meant 61% to 80% and 5 meant 81% to 100%. For example, students were asked to estimate and choose the appropriate code to the question, "When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin does your teacher speak?" (see Appendix 4, Section 3, Question 6). Teachers were asked to estimate and choose the appropriate code number to the similar question, "When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests), how much Mandarin do you speak?" (see Appendix 5, Section 3, Question 6).

In the fourth section of the students' and teachers' questionnaires, the same scale of numbering was applied as appeared in the third section. A scale of 1 meant 0% to 20% of class time, 2 meant 21% to 40%, 3 meant 41% to 60%, 4 meant 61% to 80% and 5 meant 81% to 100%. Both student and teacher participants were asked to give a number to represent their desired amount of Mandarin that EFL teachers should use in classrooms in the future. For example, students were asked to give a number to the statement, "How often should your teacher translate previous English words, phrases

or sentences into Mandarin in EFL classes?” (see Appendix 4, Section 4, Question 2), and teachers were asked to give a number to the statement of “How often should you translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin when you teach EFL classes?” (see Appendix 5, Section 4, Question 2).

After transcribing the raw data, descriptive statistics such as *percent*, *mean*, *standard deviation*, *t*-value and *p*-value were applied to describe students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards EFL teachers’ Mandarin usage in classrooms, and also to examine the relationship between students’ attitudes towards EFL teachers’ Mandarin usage in classrooms and students’ own English proficiency levels. The data are fully analysed in Chapter 5.

#### ***4.1.2.3 Class audio-recording sessions for qualitative analysis***

In the second phase of this study, class audio-recording sessions were analysed qualitatively to find out answers to the research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms? The four EFL teachers’ utterances during eight class audio-recording sessions were transcribed verbatim. Their speaking in Mandarin was put into Han Yu Pin Yin, the official system to transcribe Mandarin characters into Latin scripts in Mainland China. For facilitating the processes of analysis, the same technique as in the study of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) was used in this study. Transcriptions of eight class audio-recording sessions were divided into discourse passages. Based on the coding schemes of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie

(2002) and De La Campa and Nassaji (2009), I created a coding scheme for this study with 12 contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin, students' first official language, in the classroom. These contexts were coded as:

- Translation
  - *EFL teachers switched from English to Mandarin to give the translated version of their English articulation.*
- Grammar
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar to students.*
- Culture
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to introduce the culture of English-speaking countries.*
- Objective
  - *EFL teachers provided students with objectives of teaching activities.*
- Instruction
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to give instructions.*
- Encouragement
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to encourage students to respond in English.*
- Evaluation
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English.*
- Responses to students' questions

- *EFL teachers used Mandarin to respond to students' questions raised in Mandarin*
- Comprehension checks
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to check if students understood the teaching content.*
- Good rapport
  - *EFL teachers used Mandarin to build up a good rapport with students.*
- Administration
  - *EFL teachers announced administrative items in Mandarin, such as exam plans.*
- Other
  - *Other usage contexts.*

The total number of Mandarin usage contexts was first calculated, and then numbers of each usage context were calculated. Frequency of each usage context was thus derived; examples of each usage context were also given.

#### ***4.1.2.4 Teachers' interviews for qualitative analysis***

A qualitative case study approach (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) was used to collect text data through individual semi-structured interviews (Galletta, 2013; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995) with four EFL teachers who were involved in the class audio-recording sessions. Data collected from teachers' interviews were first used to

provide complementary information to the research question 3: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? Data from teachers' interviews was also analysed to answer the research question 5: Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?

I created teacher interview questions (see Appendix 6) based on previous studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Levine, 2003; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002). The teacher interview questions had five sections. In the first section, questions were about teachers' backgrounds. For example, the first question asked: "Please tell me something about your academic background in terms of your teaching discipline/s. Please expand." (see Appendix 6, Section1, Question 1). The second section was called University department policy or requirements (see Appendix 6, Section 2). In this section, teachers were asked questions about their university department policy or requirements on language choice and EFL teaching. In the third section "Teachers' spoken English" (see Appendix 6, Section 3), the four EFL teachers were asked to state about their oral English ability in EFL classrooms. Question 7 asked: "Do you feel comfortable to talk in English exclusively during EFL classes? Why or why not?" (see Appendix 6, Question 7 In the fourth section, "Teacher's philosophy of teaching" (see Appendix 6, Section 4), EFL teachers were asked about their understanding of EFL teaching philosophy. For example, "What is the ideal way do you think to teach and learn English in EFL classes? Why?" (see Appendix 6, Question 9) In the last section, EFL teachers were asked to evaluate their actual teaching practices in EFL

classrooms. For example, they were invited to answer the question, “Do you use Mandarin in your teaching in EFL classes? For what purposes do you use Mandarin?” (see Appendix 6, Section 5, Question 11)

The four EFL teachers’ answers to the questions were transcribed verbatim. Their answers to the semi-structured questions were analysed and used to address two of the research questions:

- What are the teachers’ attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 3)
- Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 5)

In the process of qualitative analysis, the procedure identified by Creswell (2009) “Data Analysis in Qualitative Research” (p. 185) was strictly followed. The teachers’ interviews and the observation notes of class audio-recording sessions were transcribed verbatim. These transcriptions were then read and reread carefully to elicit overall information and then coded. From the codes, a theme scheme was then established. The most important themes were selected and analysed as to how they were related to each other. Finally the findings from this study were compared with the results of previous research studies. A detailed description of qualitative analysis procedure is outlined in Section 4.4.2.

## **4.2 Context of the study**

### **4.2.1 Locating participants**

I received my PhD Confirmation of Candidature from RMIT in July 2011 (see Appendix 7), and approval to conduct this study from the RMIT College Human Ethics and Advisory Network (CHEAN) in September 2011 (see Appendix 8). A detailed description of RMIT processes and procedures is given in Section 4.5.

From July 2011, I began to look for universities in Mainland China which would be willing to participate in this study. As I had already studied in a Foreign Language School for a Bachelor's degree, a number of my classmates were working as EFL teachers in universities in Southeast Mainland China. I used my personal networks to get in touch with these old classmates. I introduced my research to them and briefly explained the purpose of this study via e-mail and telephone. Three of them gave me positive responses. They all agreed to introduce my research to the Head of School of the Foreign Language School at their respective universities. Having obtained the contact details for these Heads of Schools, I then wrote e-mails to them with a brief outline of the proposal of this research. I also sent a copy of the required RMIT Ethics Consent Form and Plain Language Statement (PLS) which clearly explained the main research features, expectations and confidentiality procedures (see Appendix 1; Appendix 2; and Appendix 3).

One university quickly declined my request as the Head of School felt uncertain as to whether the students would be willing to provide their English exam marks, which were essential for this study. The students' English exam results were an essential part of the research design of this study as they were used to ascertain the English proficiency levels of the students. The exam results were part of the quantitative component of the methodology and necessary in relation to addressing the research question 6, "Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?"

In August 2011 I received an e-mail from the second university (in this study, University A) in which the Head of School welcomed me warmly. He explained that they provided diverse kinds of English courses to all the students at their university, and they had a large number of experienced EFL teachers. He believed that the results of my research would also help them to enhance their EFL teaching performance in the future.

For the third university (in this study called University B), it took a longer time to get in touch with the Head of School. In July 2011, I approached my classmate, and obtained the contact information for the Head of School and sent an e-mail to her. At that time she was busy with conferences and student recruitment. She told my classmate that she would consider my request later. In October 2011, I finally received a positive response from this Head of School. The Head of School agreed that I could

conduct my research in one of their university campuses and told me to contact my classmate directly to arrange the data collection.

Having obtained the agreement of the two Heads of Schools at University A and University B, I asked for the contact information details of the EFL teachers. I sent e-mails to these teachers inviting them to participate in my research, including a copy of the teacher questionnaire, class audio-recording procedure and interview questions. A Teacher Questionnaire, a Consent Form and a Plain Language Statement were sent to each teacher who agreed to participate (see Appendix 1; Appendix 3 and Appendix 5). Four teachers agreed to have class audio-recording sessions and teachers' interviews. Before the class sessions, the purpose of this study was explained to the student participants (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). When both the EFL teacher and students gave their consent, a class session was recorded. A Student Questionnaire with a Consent Form and a Plain Language Statement were sent to each student participant who agreed to answer the Student Questionnaire (see Appendix 1; Appendix 2; and Appendix 4) and provide their scores in the final English exam of the second semester in the 2011/1012 academic year.

#### **4.2.2 Locations**

The study was conducted among non-English major students at two universities in Southeast Mainland China (called University A and University B in this study). These two multi-disciplinary universities are both located in urban areas in Southeast

Mainland China. At the time of the data collection, University A had about 50,000 enrolled students, while University B had 30,000 students.

University A is an urban multidisciplinary university in Southeast Mainland China. It is part of the Chinese Ministry of Education's Project 211, and an important comprehensive university of the province where University A is located. It was ranked as one of the top 5% research universities in Mainland China in 2013. University A consists of three campuses. The majority of the students are citizens of the PRC, with a small number of international students. At the time of this study there were about 50,000 students, including 25,000 full-time undergraduate students, 14,000 graduate students and about 11,000 part-time students.

University B is another urban university in Southeast Mainland China. As a multidisciplinary university it offers wide range of graduate and postgraduate programmes. It is a national key university and also a Project 211 university. It had about 3,000 faculty and staff and more than 30,000 students at the time of this study. It was ranked as one of the top 50 universities in Mainland China in 2003.

EFL teachers at these two universities in Southeast Mainland China, like all other university teachers, usually have not received special teaching training before becoming university academic staff members. All the students and their EFL teachers are native Mandarin speakers. Non-English major EFL courses are designed for Year

1 and Year 2 non-English major students. These courses are planned to develop students' English skills in: reading, writing, speaking, listening and translating. All non-English major students need to attend and pass the final EFL exam each semester to complete their university studies. A score of 60 and above is considered a *Pass*, a score of below 60 is considered a *Failure*. Students who fail the exams in Year 1 or Year 2 have to enroll in these courses again to get enough credit in order to graduate. Thus a small number of Year 3 and Year 4 students still attend EFL classes.

The two universities apply different learning systems. University A provides two levels of EFL courses, Level 1 for Year 1 students and Level 2 for Year 2 students. University B provides four levels of EFL courses for all students of Year 1 and Year 2 according to their scores obtained in their students' English proficiency level exam after their enrolment at University B. From high to low these courses are called: Level 4, Level 3, Level 2 and Level 1. According to their scores, the top 20% students will start in a Level 4 course in the first semester of their university study. Students from 21% to 50% will start in a Level 3 course; students from 51% to 80% will start in a Level 2 course; and the bottom 20% students will start in a Level 1 course. Students begin the course in a certain level from their first days at University B, they enter a higher level course when they pass the exam, and they will continue the courses until they pass the final exam of Level 4. In this study only Level 1, Level 3 and Level 4 were selected as students of Level 2 were studying on another campus of University B and I had not been given permission to collect data from that campus.

### **4.2.3 Participants**

From 18749 non-English major EFL students at University A and 11252 non-English major EFL students at University B, a total of 417 student participants were selected at different levels from University A and University B. 184 students from University A and 233 students from University B participated in the students' questionnaires. They were all students of the four EFL teachers who participated in class recording sessions and the teachers' interviews in this study. All the students were aged from 18 to 23. They majored in Liberal Arts, Science and Engineering, Economics and Business, and Design (see Table 1, 2, 3).

**Table 1. Description of all student participants**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Distribution of the participants by university</i>		
University A	184	44.12%
University B	233	55.88%
Total	417	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by major</i>		
Liberal Arts	155	37.17%
Science and Engineering	92	22.06%
Economics and Business	100	23.98%
Design	70	16.79%
Total	417	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by gender</i>		
Male	112	26.86%
Female	305	73.14%
Total	417	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by year level</i>		
Year 1 students	207	49.64%
Year 2 students	207	49.64%
Year 3 and Year 4 students	3	0.72%
Total	417	100%

**Table 2. Student participants from University A**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Distribution of the participants by major</i>		
Liberal Arts	108	58.70%
Science and Engineering	51	27.72%
Economics and Business	10	5.43%
Design	15	8.15%
Total	184	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by gender</i>		
Male	60	32.61%
Female	124	67.39%
Total	184	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by year</i>		
Year 1 students	66	35.87%
Year 2 students	118	64.13%
Year 3 and Year 4 students	0	0%
Total	184	100%

**Table 3. Student participants from University B**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Distribution of the participants by major</i>		
Liberal Arts	47	20.17%
Science and Engineering	41	17.60%
Economics and Business	90	38.63%
Design	55	23.60%
Total	233	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by gender</i>		
Male	52	22.32%
Female	181	77.68%
Total	233	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by year</i>		
Year 1 students	141	60.51%
Year 2 students	89	38.20%.
Year 3 and Year 4 students	3	1.29%
<i>Distribution of the participants by level</i>		
Level 1 students	39	16.74%
Level 3 students	103	44.21%
Level 4 students	91	39.05%
Total	233	100%

There were 147 EFL teachers at University A and 50 EFL teachers at University B at the time of this study. All teachers were sent the questionnaires; a total of 22 EFL teachers aged from 35 to 58, from University A and University B, answered the teachers' questionnaires (see Appendix 5). The teachers had at least eight years of teaching experience with EFL courses. The most experienced teacher had taught EFL classes for 32 years. The average teaching experience was 16 years. Half of the teachers had taught EFL courses for between 10 and 20 years. Details of the EFL teachers who participated in this study are showed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Description of teacher participants**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Education background</i>		
Ph.D	0	0%
M.A.	15	68.18%
B.A.	7	31.82%
Total	22	100%
<i>Distribution of the participants by gender</i>		
Male	3	13.64%
Female	19	86.36%
Total	22	100%
<i>Years of teaching experience</i>		
Less than 10 years	6	27.27%
10-20 years	11	50%
More than 20 years	5	22.73%
Total	22	100%

Four EFL teachers participated in class audio-recording sessions, and they were also interviewed. Teacher A, Teacher B and Teacher D came from University A; and Teacher C came from University B. Teacher A and Teacher C's major teaching activity was explaining the texts to students; while Teacher B and Teacher D's major teaching activity was going through exercises in relation to the textbooks with students.

All four interviewed teachers were female teachers. They all had majored in English when they studied for their own Bachelor's degree. Teacher B majored in English for Special Purposes and she was the only teacher who had only a Bachelor's degree. The other three EFL teachers each had a Master's degree. Teacher A and Teacher D each had a Master's degree and had majored in English literature; Teacher C had a Master's degree and had majored in English linguistics. As English teachers for non-English major students, they often gave priority to teaching rather than research. According to the EFL teachers interviewed, most of EFL teachers at these two universities had not received relevant training before becoming EFL teachers and had not conducted much research in the area of EFL teaching. Therefore, their knowledge about EFL teaching pedagogies and methodologies were limited.

At the time of the teachers' interviews, Teacher B had already taught EFL classes for about 15 years. She had also two years' experience of teaching Business English prior to teaching EFL classes. As a teacher of English, she had more than 17 years of

experience. As an EFL teacher, she taught both Year 1 and Year 2 students at the campus where she worked.

Teacher A, Teacher C and Teacher D graduated from Foreign Language Schools and obtained Master's degrees in the same year. After graduation, they began to work as EFL teachers and each of them had nine years' experience. At the time of the teachers' interviews, Teachers A and B taught both Year 1 and Year 2 students at University A; while Teacher D taught only Year 1 students at University A. Teacher C taught students of Level 1, 3 and 4 at University B (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Interviewed EFL teachers' backgrounds**

	<b>Degree</b>	<b>EFL Experience</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Students' levels</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	Master (majored in English literature)	9 years	University A	Year 1 and Year 2
<b>Teacher B</b>	Bachelor (majored in English for special purposes)	15 years	University A	Year 1 and Year 2
<b>Teacher C</b>	Master (majored in English linguistics)	9 years	University B	Level 1, 3, and 4
<b>Teacher D</b>	Master majored in English literature	9 years	University A	Year 1 only

### 4.3 Data collection

All of the data in this study was collected through a three-phase process: class audio-recording sessions; questionnaires; and teachers' interviews. Table 6 shows the timeline of the data collection.

**Table 6. Timeline of data collection**

<b>Data collection phase</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Date day/month/year</b>	<b>Location</b>
Class audio-recording sessions	Teacher A	17/05/2012	University A
	Teacher B	24/05/2012	University A
	Teacher C	31/05/2012	University B
	Teacher D	12/06/2012	University A
Teacher and students' questionnaires	184 EFL students 12 EFL teachers	From May 2012 to the July 2012	University A
	233 EFL students 10 EFL teachers	From May 2012 to the July 2012	University B
Teachers' interviews	Teacher A	25/06/2012	University A
	Teacher B	24/05/2012	University A
	Teacher C	31/05/2012	University B
	Teacher D	12/06/2012	University A

#### **4.3.1 Class audio-recording sessions**

Four EFL teachers were selected for class audio-recording sessions. The class size in the class audio-recording sessions ranged from 18 to 42 students. As the EFL classes are still teacher-centred, there are generally two major kinds of teaching or learning activities in these EFL classrooms: teachers' explanation of the textbooks to students and students' doing exercises. Different teaching content might be a decisive factor in the amount of teacher's Mandarin usage and usage contexts. In Teacher A and Teacher C's class audio-recording sessions, the major teaching activity was explaining the textbooks to the students. They explained important expressions and sentences to students, analysed the structure of the text taught; and no exercises were practised in the classes. Teacher B and Teacher D spent most of class time doing exercises related to the textbooks with students.

Eight classes of about 40 minutes each, delivered by these four teachers, were audio-recorded using a high quality digital recorder. As the researcher in this study, I was a non-participant observer in these sessions and therefore was not involved in any teaching activities so as not to interfere with any class interactions, or put any undue pressure on the teachers or students. Before each audio-recording the teachers and students were informed about the purpose of the class audio-recording sessions. Each teacher was recorded during two class sessions. To indicate each class and each teacher, they were given a number or/and a letter, for example Class A1 refers to Teacher A audio-recording session 1; Class C2 refers to Teacher C audio-recording

session 2.

For each audio-recording, class number, date, duration and a pseudonym for the teacher was documented as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. EFL class audio-recording sessions**

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b> day/month/year	<b>Location</b>	<b>Duration</b> minutes: seconds	<b>Data Collection</b> <b>Instruments</b>
Teacher A	Class A1	17/05/2012	University A	43:59	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher A	Class A2	17/05/2012	University A	36:14	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher B	Class B1	24/05/2012	University A	39:51	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher B	Class B2	24/05/2012	University A	36:37	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher C*	Class C1	31/05/2012	University B	41:00	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher C*	Class C2	31/05/2012	University B	41:12	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher D	Class D1	12/06/2012	University A	40:07	Audio-recordings; Observation notes
Teacher D	Class D2	12/06/2012	University A	40:27	Audio-recordings; Observation notes

\*Teacher C provided two class sessions without a pause. The whole duration of one hour 22 minutes and 12 seconds was divided into two class sessions.

Only the teachers' speaking was transcribed verbatim for each audio-recording unit as this study was aimed at analysing teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. Their Mandarin speaking was transcribed into Han Yu Pin Yin, the official system to

transcribe Mandarin characters into Latin scripts in Mainland China. Words or sentences in Han Yu Pin Yin were transcribed in italics. Words or expressions that these four EFL teachers used as examples or quotes in their teaching were put into quotation marks, shown as "...". If teachers did not finish a sentence for some reason, what they omitted was also put into brackets as (...) to help me better understand what they were talking about. And all words in brackets were not calculated when I quantified these four EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage. A sample of the transcription from the class audio-recording is provided as follows, it is from the line 80 to 89 from the transcription of Teacher A's second class audio-recording (Class A2) session (17/05/2012):

Before that let's have the main plot. *zai wo men kan, kan zhe ge ren wu de ju ti de xing ge wai mao zhi qian, wo men xian ba zhe ge zhu yao de qing jie lai guo yi xia. ni men kan guo le ma?* English or Chinese, have you read this story? This is the main event, something happened to this Lenny when he went to Edward for help. Right? So what (happened to this Lenny)? *zhe ge Lenny zen me le?* Went broke *shi bu shi?* Was down and out. And what did he ask Edward for? *ta wen zhe ge Edward yao bang zhu de shi shen me?* Ask for a job. *yin wei zhe ge Edward ta shi yi ge business man, suo yi Lenny asked for a job. What is Edward's reaction? What is Edward's answer? ta qi shi you yi ge bian hua, ta de tai du you yi ge bian hua. Yi kai shi shi shen me?* Yes, at first he refused, but later he offered something. What is it?

During EFL class audio-recording sessions, observation notes, as shown in Table 8 were documented. I recorded personal observation notes so as to be able to reflect back on the context of what had happened in the classes observed. These notes provided additional data context when I transcribed verbatim the verbal content of each class audio-recording.

**Table 8. EFL class audio-recording observation notes to establish contexts**

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Time</b> <b>minutes: seconds</b>	<b>What happened?</b>
Teacher A	Class A1	5:49	One student arrived late.
Teacher B	Class B2	37:05	Teacher B repeated her question three times, but no one answered.
Teacher C	Class C1	40:38	Teacher C wrote down the new phrase onto the blackboard.
Teacher D	Class D1	23:07	Teacher D shook her head when she heard the wrong answer given by the student.

#### **4.3.2 Students' and teachers' questionnaires**

Two questionnaires (see Appendix 4 and Appendix 5) were designed for student and teacher participants respectively. They were used to collect data on students' and teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. Prior to completing the questionnaires all student and teacher participants had received a Plain Language Statement (PLS) and had signed a Consent Form, which thoroughly explained the research and stated the rights of participants (see Appendix 1; Appendix 2; and Appendix 3).

At the time of this study, 18749 non-English major EFL students studied at University A and 11252 non-English major EFL students studied at University B. 300 students' questionnaires were given to students at University A in May 2012. By the end of July 2012, 219 questionnaires had been returned, and 185 of them were valid. 300 students' questionnaires were given to students at University B in June 2012. 267 questionnaires were returned, and 234 out of them were valid. 34 EFL teachers returned questionnaires, and 22 questionnaires were valid. Two kinds of questionnaires were regarded as invalid: first, the participants did not finish all the questions; second, the participants ticked more than one answer for a single survey question.

#### **4.3.3 Teachers' interviews**

The data collection strategy of interviewing is one of the most frequently used research methods in the social science disciplines to gather data from individuals. Patton (1990) has suggested that interviewing allows one to enter the other person's perspective. Therefore, interviewing was selected as the qualitative data collection method in this study. Four of the EFL teachers who participated in class audio-recording sessions agreed to be interviewed and answer five sections of open-ended questions.

Open-ended questions, also called open, unstructured or qualitative questions, refer to those questions for which the response patterns or answer categories

are provided by the respondent, not the interviewer. [...] Thus, respondents can provide answers to open questions in their own terms or in a manner that reflects the respondents' own perceptions rather than those of the researcher. (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2004b, p. 768)

Seventeen open-ended questions concerning teachers' attitudes towards Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms and reasons for their Mandarin usage were asked. Table 9 is the timetable of the teachers' interviews. At the teachers' request, Teacher A and C were interviewed after the class audio-recording sessions; while Teacher B and D were interviewed before the class audio-recording sessions.

**Table 9. Teachers' interviews**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Date</b> (day/month/year)	<b>Location</b>	<b>Instruments</b>
Teacher A	25/06/2012	University A	Audio-recordings; notes
Teacher B	24/05/2012	University A	Audio-recordings; notes
Teacher C	31/05/2012	University B	Audio-recordings; notes
Teacher D	12/06/2012	University A	Audio-recordings; notes

All interviews were recorded using the same high digital recorder that had been used for the class audio-recording sessions. The purposes of recording the interviews was to ensure the accuracy of data collection procedure and to permit me to revisit the interviewees' comments to clarify meaning (Patton, 2002).

After each interview, I immediately transcribed the interview data to maintain the rigour and validity of the research and guarantee the quality of data (Patton, 2002) “the mere act of transcription of an interview turns it into a written text” (Silverman, 2000, p. 825). All four of the interviews were transcribed verbatim, transforming teacher participants’ words into a written text for referral throughout the study (Seidman, 1991).

Tapes and transcripts also offer more than just ‘something to begin with’. In the first place, they are a public record, available to the scientific community in a way that field notes are not. Second, they can be replayed and transcriptions can be improved and analyses take off on a different tack unlimited by the original transcript. (Silverman, 2005, p. 184)

The four teachers’ interview transcripts varied in length, ranging between five to eight single spaced pages. All interview transcripts were verified against the audio-recordings for accuracy. After the first transcription of the teachers’ interviews, I listened to the audio-recordings of the teachers’ interviews twice more; verifying the transcriptions against the audio-recordings to ensure the accuracy and validity as:

The production of accurate and high-quality verbatim transcripts is integral to establishing the credibility and trustworthiness (rigor) of qualitative research. Errors that reverse or significantly alter the meanings of what was said are the most problematic because they may lead the researcher to misinterpret and

misquote respondents. (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2004a, p. 1136)

## **4.4 Data analysis**

### **4.4.1 Quantitative analysis**

In this study, quantitative data collected from teachers' questionnaires, and students' questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS program version 20.0 (Kirkpatrick & Feeney, 2013). SPSS is a widely used computer application in social science research that provides statistical analysis of data. It allows for in-depth data access and preparation, analytical reporting, graphics and modeling (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009; Punch, 2005).

Descriptive statistics such as percent, mean, standard deviation, *t*-value and *p*-value were used to describe the quantitative data for this study. Percent was used to describe the amount of Mandarin and English used by each EFL teacher participating in the class audio-recording sessions. Mean and standard deviation were calculated from the Likert type scale in students' and teachers' questionnaires, and described students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. T-tests were not run for the comparison of means between students and teachers due to the low number of teacher participants. T-tests were run for comparison of means between students of two different English proficiency levels to examine the relationship between students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage and students' English

proficiency levels.

*T*-values and *p*-values were reported in this study to show the differences between students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage, students' estimated EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage, and students' desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in the future.

At the first stage, I considered reporting effect size (ES) in this study. However, for the reason of the unequal sample sizes of the participants in this study, and in discussion with my Senior Supervisor and the RMIT Statistical Consulting Unit consultant I have not added ES, or specifically *r* values into the quantitative analysis section in the thesis. Most effect size estimates assume equal groups (Rosnow, Rosenthal, & Rubin, 2000). However, the sample sizes are all different in each table in this thesis. Therefore, the results of *r* values would involve considerable work for little additional value compared to *t* values or *p* values reported in the thesis. However, I have provided all the standard deviations in the tables. This is an important statistic for calculating effect sizes.

This quantitative analysis was used to address the following research questions:

- How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?

(research question 1)

- What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 2)
- What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 3)
- Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels? (research question 6)

#### **4.4.2 Qualitative analysis**

For the qualitative analysis in this study I applied the "Data Analysis in Qualitative Research procedure" suggested by Creswell (Creswell, 2009, p. 185). Six steps were strictly followed in the process of qualitative data analysis:

1. In the first step, data gathered from eight class audio-recording sessions and four teachers' interviews was organised for qualitative analysis. The class audio-recording sessions and teachers' interviews were transcribed verbatim. Observation notes during class audio-recording sessions were also transcribed.
2. In the second step, I read through all the data. First I quickly browsed through all transcripts as a whole to gain a general sense of the information and reflect on the overall meaning. I made notes about my first impressions of the overall depth, credibility and use of the information. Then I read each transcript very

carefully again, one-by-one, line-by-line.

3. In step three, I began detailed analysis with a coding process. For coding, I labeled relevant words, phrases, sentences, or sections. These labels could be about actions, activities, concepts, differences, or whatever I thought was relevant to my research. I paid more attention to some particular information when it was repeated several times in the transcripts, or it surprised me, or the interviewees explicitly stated that it was important, or it had something similar to previous research, or it echoed some concepts.
4. In step four, I used the coding process to create categories or themes for analysis by bringing several codes together. I went through all the codes created in the previous step and created new codes by combining two or more codes. I kept important codes and grouped these codes in the way relevant to my research, and then categories or themes were created. In this step I conceptualised my data.

For example, the contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin in EFL classrooms were coded according to the 12 different Mandarin usage contexts, such as using Mandarin to translate English words or expressions into Mandarin, teach English grammar, introduce the culture of English-speaking countries, etc. These 12 context codes have all been previously detailed in

#### Section 4.1.2.3.

5. In step five, I decided which were the most important categories or themes and how they were connected to each other. And I used “the most popular approach”, “a narrative passage, to convey the findings of the analysis” (Creswell, 2009, p. 189). I described the connections between categories or themes which were the main result of my research.
6. In step six, I interpreted the data and compared the findings in this study with the findings from previous studies.

#### **4.4.3 Reliability and validity**

To ensure the reliability of this study, I followed the reliability procedures suggested by Gibbs (2007). First, I checked transcripts for teachers’ interviews and class audio-recording sessions to make sure that they did not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription. Second, I checked all codes made during the coding process to make sure that the coding system was consistent and no shifting of meaning had occurred.

Validity is an important aspect of qualitative research (Patton, 2002). Several validity strategies were applied in this study. The first one was triangulation (Creswell, 2009), “the combination of different methods, methodological perspectives or theoretical

viewpoints” (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 326), it was the strategy “for reducing systematic bias in the data” (Patton, 1980, p. 332). “The type of triangulation most commonly found is some combination of ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ approaches” (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 327). I collected data both quantitatively and qualitatively; compared data gathered from student and teachers’ questionnaires with interview data; and compared the perspectives of students and teachers from different points of views. I triangulated “different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes” (Creswell, 2009, p. 191) to improve the likelihood that insights, results, and conclusions were consistent throughout the study.

Member checking (Creswell, 2009) was employed as the second strategy in this study to ensure the validity of interview transcripts. Member checking is a procedure in which “a researcher submits materials relevant to an investigation for checking by the people who were the source of those materials” (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004b, p. 633). I returned to the four teacher interviewees the data derived from them and with my tentative interpretations made from their interviews. All four teachers’ interviews were invited to provide confirmation, clarification, adjustments or any additional information related to transcriptions or interpretations where they thought it was necessary. Minor editorial changes were made upon the requests of the teachers’ interviews during the process of member checking.

I also used the peer debriefing procedure (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) through my Senior Supervisor's reflecting on the consistency of my theme development. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that peer debriefing is useful technique for establishing validity in qualitative research as it is "a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytical session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind" (p. 308). My Senior Supervisor reviewed and asked questions during the qualitative data collection and analysis; through this reiterative process, the accuracy of the account has been enhanced.

The last strategy to establish the validity was reached through thick description (Creswell, 2009), "this description may transport readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences" (pp. 191-192). To accomplish this, throughout this study, I provided as much as feasible detailed descriptions about the setting, participants, and perspectives of different participants. The results derived from the data became "more realistic and richer" (p. 192) to the reader.

#### **4.5 RMIT research processes**

RMIT requires that all Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) candidates should first undergo a Candidature Confirmation procedure. I wrote a 10,000 word proposal of this study and presented a one hour seminar at the HDR Conference within the School

of Education at RMIT in May 2011. This seminar involved two independent reviewers, an independent chairperson and the attendance of my supervisors. My application for Confirmation of Candidature was approved and finalised in July 2011 (see Appendix 7).

Prior to searching for potential participants for this study, I applied for Human Research Ethics Approval from the Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) committee at RMIT. RMIT abides by the National guidelines on ethical conduct in human research (National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council, & Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, 2007 updated March 2014), therefore, all research at RMIT involving human participants requires written approval of the College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) or, where appropriate, the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

All human interaction, including the interaction involved in human research, has ethical dimensions. However, 'ethical conduct' is more than simply doing the right thing. It involves acting in the right spirit, out of an abiding respect and concern for one's fellow creatures. This National Statement on 'ethical conduct in human research' is therefore oriented to something more fundamental than ethical 'do's' and 'don'ts' – namely, an ethos that should permeate the way those engaged in human research approach all that they do

in their research. (National Health and Medical Research Council et al., 2007 updated March 2014, p. 3)

In September 2011, I received the approval from the CHEAN committee with a low risk classification; the register number was CHEAN B-2000550-08/10. This CHEAN approval allowed me to collect data for this study from September 2011 to October 2014 (see Appendix 8).

All participants and the universities in this present research study were coded to maintain their right to confidentiality and anonymity, as explained in National statement on ethical conduct in human research: “Researchers and their institutions should respect the privacy, confidentiality and cultural sensitivities of the participants and, where relevant, of their communities. Any specific agreements made with the participants or the community should be fulfilled” (National Health and Medical Research Council et al., 2007 updated March 2014, p. 11).

Each of the participants was given a Plain Language Statement (PLS) (see Appendix 2) to provide information about the present research and their rights in the data collection procedure. “The guiding principle for researchers is that a person’s decision to participate in research is to be voluntary, and based on sufficient information and adequate understanding of both the proposed research and the implications of participation in it” (National Health and Medical Research Council et al., 2007

updated March 2014, p. 16). I was aware of the privacy principles and respected participants' privacy and kept them anonymous in the data collection. After reading the PLS, all participants voluntarily signed a Consent Form (see Appendix 3). All the raw data gathered from participants were stored on a password protected computer and only used for the purpose of this study.

## **4.6 Summary**

This chapter discusses the research design in terms of the Mixed Methods research methodology and why this was chosen to address the six main research questions guiding this study. The specific data collection methods chosen have been described in detail and a rationale has been provided to justify their selection and relationship to the research questions. Data in this study were collected from four sources: class audio-recording sessions; students' questionnaires; teachers' questionnaires; and teachers' interviews. The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The procedures for data analysis and procedures for reliability and validity have also been outlined in this chapter. RMIT research processes have been detailed to give information about the processes of HDR Candidature Confirmation and Ethics approval processes which were required at RMIT prior to conducting this study.

In Chapter 5, the quantitative analysis of data collected from eight class audio-recording sessions, students' questionnaires, and teachers' questionnaires are

presented to address the following research questions:

- Research question 1: How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?
- Research question 2: What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes?
- Research question 3: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?
- Research question 6: Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?

Chapter 6 contains the qualitative analysis of the eight class audio-recording sessions addressing the research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms? Chapter 7 contains the qualitative analysis of the teachers' interviews addressing the research question 5: Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? The analysis in Chapter 7 also provides complementary information about the research question 3: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?

## **Chapter 5**

### **Quantitative Analysis of Class Audio-recording Sessions and Students' and Teachers' Questionnaires**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents two parts of the statistical results and findings: 1) The quantitative analysis of data collected from class audio-recording sessions delivered by the four EFL teachers (see Section 4.1.2.1); 2) The quantitative analysis of data collected from the teachers' questionnaires and students' questionnaires (see Section 4.1.2.2). First, I present and provide discussion of the Mandarin usage amount of the four teacher participants in class audio-recording sessions. I then compare and discuss teachers' attitudes and students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms. A series of comparisons is also presented to show the similarities and differences of students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms when students' English proficiency levels, genders and majors were taken into consideration.

## 5.2 The amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage

Data collected from eight audio-recorded class sessions provided by the four EFL teachers (see Section 4.1.2.1) were used to quantify the amount of Mandarin usage by the four EFL teachers in their sample EFL classes. A 15-second sampling technique from Duff and Polio's (1990) study was adopted to quantify these four EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage. In this method, when the teacher started a new class session, the recorder was set at 0:00, the recorder operated until the teacher ended the class session. From the beginning, a digital watch was set and only the utterances made by the teacher were noted every 15 seconds. Each 15-second recording was considered a recording unit (RU), and each recording unit containing teachers' utterances was considered a checkpoint unit (CU) for the statistical analysis of the four EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage. The utterances made by teachers were first transcribed as showed in Table 10. The four EFL teachers' Mandarin utterances were transcribed in Han Yu Pin Yin, the official system to transcribe Mandarin characters into Latin scripts in Mainland China. Each word, phrase or sentence in Mandarin was transcribed italics, italicised and put in a bracket, shown as <...>. The words, phrases or sentences teachers used as examples were all put into a quotation mark as "...". If teachers did not finish a sentence for some reason, what they omitted was also put into brackets as (...). Words in brackets were not used when I quantified the four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount.

Based upon previous research studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Kim & Elder, 2005), I created five categories of teachers' utterances as shown in Table 10.

**Table 10. Teachers' utterance categories**

<b>Utterance categories</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Example</b>
<i>E</i>	The utterance is completely in English.	I think it's time for us to begin our class
<i>Em</i>	The utterance is in English with one word or a phrase in Mandarin	We can also use an infinitive structure after "enough", <bu ding shi>.
<i>E-M</i>	The utterance is, approximately, an equal mixture of English and Mandarin.	<ta wen zhe ge> Edward <yao bang zhu de shi shen me>? Ask for a job. <yin wei zhe ge> Edward <ta shi yi ge> business man, <suo yi> Lenny asks for a job. What is Edward's reaction?
<i>M</i>	The utterance is completely in Mandarin	<ni jiu shuo, dui wo lai shuo, wo xi huan zhu zai xiang xia>.
<i>Me</i>	The utterance is in Mandarin with one word or phrase in English.	<shi qian mian di er ce, shin a ge> Book Two <li mian de, bus hi wo men zhe yi ce de>.

Table 11 documents the raw data of the class audio-recording sessions. In Table 11, teachers were presented as Teacher A, B, C, and D; the classes were presented as Class A2, which referred to Teacher A's second class audio-recording session. Teacher C provided two class sessions without a pause. The whole duration of 1:22:12 was divided into two class sessions by the researcher. The first half was coded as C1, and the second half was C2. When each recording unit contained the teachers' utterances,

the number of RU equaled the number of CU. When a recording unit did not contain the teacher's utterances, then a code of N/A was used to show that the teacher did not speak in this recording unit. *Class Time* showed the length of each class audio-recording session.

**Table 11. Raw data of the EFL teachers' utterance categories**

Teacher	Class	<i>E</i>	<i>Em</i>	<i>E-M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Me</i>	N/A	RU	CU	Class Time (minutes: seconds)
Teacher A	Class A1	24	33	36	4	79	0	176	176	44:00
Teacher A	Class A2	4	17	31	12	81	0	145	145	36:15
Teacher B	Class B1	8	18	30	3	74	26	159	133	39:43
Teacher B	Class B2	33	19	29	5	50	11	147	136	36:37
Teacher C	Class C1*	75	26	21	1	26	15	164	149	41:00
Teacher C	Class C2*	48	31	20	8	33	25	165	140	41:12
Teacher D	Class D1	83	7	7	2	6	55	160	105	39:57
Teacher D	Class D2	125	3	0	0	1	31	160	129	39:51

\*Teacher C provided two class sessions without a pause. The whole duration of 1:22:12 was divided into two class sessions by the researcher.

For example, Teacher B's first class audio-recording session Class B1 (see Table 11) contains:

- eight utterances that were in English only (8 *E*);
- 18 utterances were made that were mainly English but with a few Mandarin words or phrases (18 *Em*);

- 30 utterances were approximately an equal mixture of English and Mandarin.  
(30 *E-M*);
- 3 utterances were in Mandarin only (3 *M*);
- 74 utterances were mainly in Mandarin with a few English words or phrases  
(74 *Me*);
- In 26 recording units of Class B1, Teacher B did not speak at all (26 N/A).

The number of the total recording units was 159, and the number of the total checkpoint units was 133. The length of this class audio-recording session was 39 minutes 43 seconds.

In this study, only teachers' utterances were analysed. Hence the percentages of each EFL teachers' utterance category were derived by the division of the number of each category with the number of the total checkpoint units (see Table 12).

**Table 12. Percent of utterance categories of the four EFL teachers**

Teacher	Class	<i>E</i> %	<i>Em</i> %	<i>E-M</i> %	<i>M</i> %	<i>Me</i> %
Teacher A	Class A1	13.64	18.75	20.45	44.89	2.27
Teacher A	Class A2	2.76	11.72	21.38	8.28	55.86
Teacher B	Class B1	6.02	13.53	22.56	2.26	55.64
Teacher B	Class B2	24.26	13.97	21.32	3.68	36.76
Teacher C	Class C1*	50.34	17.45	14.09	0.67	17.45
Teacher C	Class C2*	34.29	22.14	14.29	5.71	23.57
Teacher D	Class D1	79.05	6.67	6.67	1.90	5.71
Teacher D	Class D2	96.90	2.33	0	0	0.78

\*Teacher C provided two class sessions without a pause. The whole duration of 1:22:12 was divided into two class sessions by the researcher.

Category *E* and *Em* were both considered as English utterances; Category *M* and *Me* were Mandarin utterances; while Category *E-M* was considered half English and half Mandarin. Therefore, the percent of Mandarin utterances was the total of *M*, *Me* and the half of *E-M*.

For example, in the second class audio-recording session of Teacher A:

- *M* was 55.86%,
- *Me* was 8.28%,
- *E-M* was 21.38%.

The percent of Mandarin usage in Class 2 of Teacher A was the total of *M*, *Me* and the

half of E-M. Therefore, the Mandarin usage amount equals to:

$$55.86\%+8.28\%+(21.38\%/2)=55.86\%+8.28\%+10.69\%=74.83\%$$

Table 13 shows the results of the percent of English and Mandarin utterances by the four EFL teachers by class. EFL Teachers' Mandarin usage varied widely from 0.78% (Teacher D) to 74.83% (Teacher A). The average Mandarin usage amount of eight class audio-recording sessions of these four EFL teachers was 40.73%. It is noticeable that three teachers used more than 25% of Mandarin in their teaching (Teacher A, B and C), and two of them used over 50% of Mandarin (Teacher A and B). Only Teacher D used a small amount of Mandarin in her teaching: 10.95% and 0.78% for two class audio-recording sessions.

**Table 13. Percent of Mandarin/English utterances by teacher and by class**

Teacher	Class	Mandarin %	English %
Teacher A	Class A1	57.39	42.62
Teacher A	Class A2	74.83	25.17
Teacher B	Class B1	69.18	30.83
Teacher B	Class B2	51.10	48.89
Teacher C	Class C1*	25.17	74.84
Teacher C	Class C2*	36.43	63.58
Teacher D	Class D1	10.95	89.06
Teacher D	Class D2	0.78	99.23
Average		40.73	59.28

\*Teacher C provided two class sessions without a pause. The whole duration of 1:22:12 was divided into two class sessions by the researcher.

### **5.3 Students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage**

In the students' and teachers' questionnaires, survey questions from Section 2 to 4 were designed to collect data from the teacher and student participants about their attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms (see Appendix 4; Appendix 5). Section 2 was designed to reveal students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage: the total amount of Mandarin usage and Mandarin usage in different contexts in EFL classrooms. Survey questions in Section 3 were designed to record students' and teachers' estimations about the actual amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. Section 4 survey questions were designed to record students' and teachers' attitudes about the desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future.

#### **5.3.1 Students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts**

The differences between students and teachers were examined in two ways. The *means* of responses for each survey question and the *standard deviations* for each survey question were first presented. Then by presenting comparisons of the percentages of each response given by students and teachers for each survey question, differences between students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts were analysed.

M refers to *mean*, SD refers to *standard deviation*. *Mean* is the average of all the numbers given by the participants for each statement in the questionnaires, represented as  $\mu$ . In statistics, the *standard deviation* (SD) measures the amount of variation or dispersion from the average. It is represented by the Greek letter sigma,  $\sigma$ . A low *standard deviation* indicates that the data points tend to be very close to the *mean*; a high *standard deviation* indicates that the data points are spread out over a large range of values.

#### **5.3.1.1 Means and standard deviations**

Table 14 shows the statistical findings from students' and teachers' answers to the Survey questions in Section 2 in the questionnaires (see Appendix 4, Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2). In this section, a Likert Scale with seven numbers was given, from 1 to 7 showing the degree: 1 meant very strongly disagree, 2 strongly disagree, 3 disagree, 4 neither agree nor disagree, 5 agree, 6 strongly agree, and 7 very strongly agree. The Survey questions in the questionnaires were coded as 2.1, which meant Section 2, Survey question 1. The *mean* and the *standard deviation* were used in this table and in the following tables in this chapter. Due to the low number of teacher participants (less than 30), the t-tests was not applied as it could not provide meaningful results (Newcastle University, n.d.).

In Table 14, the survey question 2.1 for students was: "In general, it is beneficial for my English learning if my teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms" (see

Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 1). The *mean* of the students' responses for the survey question 2.1 was 4.57. The seven numbers of responses from 1 to 7 in the Likert scale refer to the meanings very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7). Therefore, the greater the *means* were, the more likely that participants agreed on the statements in the questionnaires.

As shown in the Appendix 4 and Appendix 5, all the statements in questionnaires were about the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the classroom. The greater the *means* were, the more likely that the participants agreed on the positive effect of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the classroom. For example, for the survey question 2.2, the statement for the student participants was "In EFL classes, if my teacher translates previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, I usually understand them better" (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 2). The similar statement for teacher participants was "In EFL classes, if I translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understand them better" (see Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 2). The students' *mean* for survey question 2.2 was 5.09; the teachers' *mean* for survey question 2.2 was 4.73 (see Table 14). The number 4 in the Likert scale meant "neither agree nor disagree", the number 5 in the Likert scale meant "agree". From the comparison of the *means*, it was found that students agreed that they could understand their EFL teacher better if their EFL teachers translated previous words or expressions into Mandarin; while teachers neither agreed nor disagreed that if they translated English words or expressions into

Mandarin, students could understand better.

**Table 14. Students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts**

Survey question (Appendix 4 , Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2)	Students (n=417)		Teachers (n=22)	
	M	SD	M	SD
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	4.57	1.17	4.77	0.75
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	5.09	1.03	4.73	1.16
2.3 Explaining English grammar	5.15	1.07	5.32	0.99
2.4 Introducing English culture	4.76	1.20	4.18	1.22
2.5 Providing activity objectives	4.77	1.17	4.45	1.26
2.6 Providing activity instruction	4.51	1.17	4.59	1.14
2.7 Encouraging students	3.90	1.37	2.82	1.37
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.26	1.14	3.77	1.19
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.67	1.22	3.86	1.25
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.81	1.26	3.55	1.10
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	3.91	1.30	3.45	1.06
2.12 Announcing administrative items	5.06	1.10	5.00	0.76

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

In Table 14, there are eight survey questions to which students gave higher responses than teachers (survey question 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12). These results indicate that students were more likely to agree with the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in these following eight situations:

- In EFL classes, if teachers translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understood them better (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 2; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 2).
- Students usually understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries, such as historical events, holidays, and customs (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 4; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 4).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to provide the objectives of the teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 5; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 5).
- Students were more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teachers encouraged students in Mandarin than in English (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 7; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 7).
- Students usually understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 8; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 8).
- Students gave more feedback to EFL teachers when they spoke Mandarin to

check if students understood the content of the class (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 10; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 10).

- It was more effective if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to build up close rapport with students during EFL classes (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 11; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 11).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 12; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 12).

Teachers gave higher responses for only four survey questions (see Table 14, survey question 2.1, 2.3, 2.6 & 2.9) which meant that teachers were more likely to acknowledge the positive effects of these four statements in the questionnaires:

- In general, it was beneficial for English teaching and learning if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 1; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 1).
- If EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to explain English grammar, students understood the English grammar better (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 3; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 3).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to provide instructions for the teaching activities, such as exercises, practice and tests (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 6; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 6).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to answer students'

questions asked in Mandarin (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 9; Appendix 5, Section 2, Survey question 9).

In the questionnaire responses, 68.27% of the participants' responses were within the range of  $(\mu - 1\sigma, \mu + 1\sigma)$ ; while 95.45% of the participants' responses were with the range of  $(\mu - 2\sigma, \mu + 2\sigma)$ .

For example, the statement of survey question 2.3 for students was "If my teacher speaks Mandarin to explain English grammar, I understand the English grammar better." (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 3). The *standard deviation* for the students' responses to survey question 2.3 was 1.07. The students' *mean* for this survey question 2.3 was 5.15 (see Table 14).

As shown in Table 14, the *standard deviation* for each survey question was around 1 for both students' and teachers' responses. This means that most of the students' and teachers' (68.27% of the participants) responses were within the range of  $(Mean-1, Mean+1)$ . The students' responses were not widely spread, and the same was found among the teachers' responses.

#### **5.3.1.2 Percentages of responses**

In the questionnaires, student and teacher participants were required to give only one number score for each survey question. The number of responses and the percentages

of each response for survey questions in Section 2 (survey question 2.1-2.12) are shown in Table 15.

**Table 15. Percentages of students' and teachers' responses for survey questions 2.1-2.12**

**Table 15a. Percentages of students' and teachers' responses for survey questions 2.1-2.3**

<p><i><b>Survey question 2.1 for students:</b> In general, it is beneficial for my English learning if my teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms.</i></p> <p><i><b>Survey question 2.1 for teachers:</b> In general, it is beneficial for my English teaching if I speak Mandarin in EFL classrooms.</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	6	9	61	91	188	38	24	417
Percentages	1.44%	2.16%	14.63%	21.82%	45.08%	9.11%	5.76%	100%
Teachers	0	1	0	3	17	1	0	22
Percentages	0%	4.55%	0.00%	13.64%	77.27%	4.55%	0%	100%
<p><i><b>Survey question 2.2 for students:</b> In EFL classes, if my teacher translates previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, I usually understand them better.</i></p> <p><i><b>Survey question 2.2 for teachers:</b> In EFL classes, if I translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understand them better.</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	2	4	22	49	235	60	45	417
Percentages	0.48%	0.96%	5.28%	11.75%	56.35%	14.39%	10.79%	100%
Teachers	0	1	3	2	12	3	1	22
Percentages	0%	4.55%	13.64%	9.09%	54.55%	13.64%	4.55%	100%
<p><i><b>Survey question 2.3 for students:</b> If my teacher speaks Mandarin to explain English grammar, I understand the English grammar better.</i></p> <p><i><b>Survey question 2.3 for teachers:</b> When I speak Mandarin to explain English grammar to students, they understand English grammar better.</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	0	4	22	69	188	82	52	417
Percentages	0%	0.96%	5.28%	16.55%	45.08%	19.66%	12.47%	100%
Teachers	0	0	0	5	8	6	3	22
Percentages	0%	0%	0%	22.73%	36.36%	27.27%	13.64%	100%

**Table 15b. Percentages of students' and teachers' responses for survey questions 2.4-2.6**

**Survey question 2.4 for students:** *I usually understand better if my teacher speaks Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs).*

**Survey question 2.4 for teachers:** *Students usually understand better if I speak Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs).*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Students	4	10	47	87	177	59	33	417
Percentages	0.96%	2.40%	11.27%	20.86%	42.45%	14.15%	7.91%	100%
Teachers	0	2	4	7	7	1	1	22
Percentages	0%	9.09%	18.18%	31.82%	31.82%	4.55%	4.55%	100%

**Survey question 2.5 for students:** *It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests).*

**Survey question 2.5 for teachers:** *It saves class time if I speak Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Students	1	9	54	84	173	64	32	417
Percentages	0.24%	2.16%	12.95%	20.14%	41.49%	15.35%	7.67%	100%
Teachers	0	1	5	4	8	3	1	22
Percentages	0%	4.55%	22.73%	18.18%	36.36%	13.64%	4.55%	100%

**Survey question 2.6 for students:** *It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).*

**Survey question 2.6 for teachers:** *It saves class time if I speak Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Students	3	11	68	113	152	49	21	417
Percentages	0.72%	2.64%	16.31%	27.10%	36.45%	11.75%	5.04%	100%
Teachers	0	0	5	4	9	3	1	22
Percentages	0%	0%	22.73%	18.18%	40.91%	13.64%	4.55%	100%

**Table 15c. Percentages of students' and teachers' responses for survey questions 2.7-2.9**

**Survey question 2.7 for students:** *I am more willing to speak English during EFL classes when my teacher encourages us in Mandarin than in English.*

**Survey question 2.7 for teachers:** *Students are more willing to speak English during EFL classes when I encourage them in Mandarin than in English.*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	21	27	121	120	75	36	17	417
Percentages	5.04%	6.47%	29.02%	28.78%	17.99%	8.63%	4.08%	100%
Teachers	5	3	8	4	1	1	0	22
Percentages	22.73%	13.64%	36.36%	18.18%	4.55%	4.55%	0%	100%

**Survey question 2.8 for students:** *I usually understand better if my teacher speaks Mandarin to evaluate our answers or practice in English.*

**Survey question 2.8 for teachers:** *I am usually better understood if I speak Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English.*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	7	15	82	122	153	26	12	417
Percentages	1.68%	3.60%	19.66%	29.26%	36.69%	6.24%	2.88%	100%
Teachers	0	3	8	3	7	1	0	22
Percentages	0%	13.64%	36.36%	13.64%	31.82%	4.55%	0%	100%

**Survey question 2.9 for students:** *It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to answer our questions asked in Mandarin.*

**Survey question 2.9 for teachers:** *If I speak Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin, it saves class time.*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	20	35	142	113	87	13	7	417
Percentages	4.80%	8.39%	34.05%	27.10%	20.86%	3.12%	1.68%	100%
Teachers	0	2	9	3	7	0	1	22
Percentages	0%	9.09%	40.91%	13.64%	31.82%	0.00%	4.55%	100%

**Table 15d. Percentages of students' and teachers' responses for survey questions 2.10-2.12**

<p><b>Survey question 2.10 for students:</b> <i>We students give more feedback to our teacher when he/she speaks Mandarin to check if we have understood the content of the class.</i></p> <p><b>Survey question 2.10 for teachers:</b> <i>I have more feedback from students when I speak in Mandarin to check if they have understood the content of the class.</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	13	34	139	109	87	24	11	417
Percentages	3.12%	8.15%	33.33%	26.14%	20.86%	5.76%	2.64%	100%
Teachers	0	4	7	7	3	1	0	22
Percentages	0%	18.18%	31.82%	31.82%	13.64%	4.55%	0%	100%
<p><b>Survey question 2.11 for students:</b> <i>It is more effective if my teacher speaks Mandarin to build up close rapport with us during EFL classes.</i></p> <p><b>Survey question 2.11 for teachers:</b> <i>It is more effective if I speak Mandarin to build up close rapport with students than in English.</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	16	21	137	113	89	23	18	417
Percentages	3.84%	5.04%	32.85%	27.10%	21.34%	5.52%	4.32%	100%
Teachers	1	2	9	6	4	0	0	22
Percentages	4.55%	9.09%	40.91%	27.27%	18.18%	0%	0%	100%
<p><b>Survey question 2.12 for students:</b> <i>It saves class time if my teacher speaks in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).</i></p> <p><b>Survey question 2.12 for teachers:</b> <i>It saves class time if I speak in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).</i></p>								
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students	1	3	30	70	199	60	54	417
Percentages	0.24%	0.72%	7.19%	16.79%	47.72%	14.39%	12.95%	100%
Teachers	0	0	1	2	16	2	1	22
Percentages	0%	0%	4.55%	9.09%	72.73%	9.09%	4.55%	100%

For example, for survey question 2.12:

- One (1) student chose the response 1 Very Strongly Disagree, (1.44%)
- Three (3) students chose the response 2 Strongly Disagree, (2.16%)
- 30 students chose the response 3 Disagree, (14.63%)
- 70 students chose the response 4 Neither Disagree or Agree, (21.82%)
- 199 students chose the response 5 Agree, (45.08%)
- 60 students chose the response 6 Strongly Agree, (9.11%)
- 54 students chose the response 7 Very Strongly Agree, (5.76%)
- The total number of students who answered the questionnaires was 417, (100%).

Participants who chose responses 5, 6 or 7 were those who agreed with the statement, participants who chose response 4 were those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement; participants who chose responses 1, 2 or 3 were those who disagreed with the statement.

Table 16 was extrapolated from Table 15, presenting the percentages of students and teachers who agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, or disagreed with the statements of survey questions in Section 2 (see Appendix 4, Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2). For example, for survey question 2.1 (Table 16), 59.95% of the students agreed that it was beneficial for their English learning if EFL teacher spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Survey question 1). 21.82% of the students

neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, and 18.23% of the students disagreed with the statement. In contrast, 81.82% teachers agreed that it was beneficial for their EFL teaching if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in classrooms. 4.55% of the teachers disagreed on this statement, and 13.64% teachers neither agreed nor disagreed on this statement.

As shown in Table 16, a greater percentage of teachers than students indicated they agreed with the positive effects of EFL teachers Mandarin usage for EFL learning and teaching (81.82% and 59.95% respectively for Survey question 2.1). However, approximately the same proportion of students and teachers had the same opinion on the statement of survey question 2.3 in Table 16 (77.21% and 77.27% respectively); they believed that if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to explain English grammar, students would understand the English grammar better.

A higher proportion of teachers than students believed that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage could save class time. In three of the four statements concerning the relationship between EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and time-saving in classrooms, the percentages of teachers who agreed with the statements were greater than the percentages of students who agreed with the same statement. A higher proportion of teachers believed that it could save class time when EFL teachers used Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice and tests (see Table 16, Survey question 2.6); it could save class time if EFL teachers answered

students' questions asked in Mandarin (see Table 16, Survey question 2.9); it could save class time when EFL teachers used Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans (see Table 16, Survey question 2.12).

**Table 16. Percentages of students and teachers who disagreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, and agreed on statements of survey questions 2.1-2.12**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2)	Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree	
	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher
2.1 In general, it is beneficial for English learning/teaching if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms.	18.23%	4.54%	21.82%	13.64%	59.95%	81.82%
2.2 In EFL classes, if EFL teacher translates previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understand them better.	6.72%	18.19%	11.75%	9.09%	81.53%	72.74%
2.3 If EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to explain English grammar, students understand the English grammar better.	6.24%	0	16.55%	22.73%	77.21%	77.27%
2.4 Students usually understand better if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs).	14.63%	27.27%	20.86%	31.82%	64.51%	40.92%
2.5 It saves class time if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests).	15.35%	27.28%	20.14%	18.18%	64.51%	54.55%

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2; Appendix 5, Section 2)	Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree	
	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher
2.6 It saves class time if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).	19.67%	22.73%	27.10%	18.18%	53.24%	59.10%
2.7 Students are more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teacher encourages students in Mandarin than in English.	40.53%	72.73%	28.78%	18.18%	30.70%	9.10%
2.8 Students usually understand better if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English.	24.94%	50%	29.26%	13.64%	45.81%	36.37%
2.9 It saves class time if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin.	47.24%	50%	27.10%	13.64%	25.66%	36.37%
2.10 Students give more feedback to EFL teacher when he/she speaks Mandarin to check if students have understood the content of the class.	44.60%	50%	26.14%	31.82%	29.26%	18.19%
2.11 It is more effective if EFL teacher speaks Mandarin to build up close rapport with students during EFL classes.	41.73%	54.55%	27.10%	27.27%	31.18%	18.18%
2.12 It saves class time if EFL teacher speaks in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).	8.15%	4.55%	16.79%	9.09%	75.06%	86.37%

The greatest difference was in survey question 2.7, “students are more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teacher encourages students in Mandarin than in English”. The proportion of students who agreed on this statement was three times of the proportion of teachers who agreed on it (30.70% and 9.10% respectively, see Table 16).

A greater percentages of students than teachers agreed that:

- EFL teachers’ Mandarin usage could help students understand new English words or expressions when they were translated into Mandarin (see Table 16, Survey question 2.2);
- students could understand better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (see Table 16, Survey question 2.4);
- It could save class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (see Table 16, Survey question 2.5);
- Students were more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teacher encouraged students in Mandarin than in English (see Table 16, Survey question 2.7);
- Students could understood better if EFL teachers used Mandarin to evaluate students’ answers or practice in English (see Table 16, Survey question 2.8);
- Students would give more feedback to EFL teachers when EFL teachers used Mandarin to check if students understood the content of the class. (see Table

16, Survey question 2.10);

- EFL teachers could build close rapport with students during EFL classes if EFL teachers used Mandarin (see Table 16, Survey question 2.11).

The results presented in Table 16 indicate that students were more likely to agree that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was helpful for EFL learning in different contexts because, in seven of the twelve survey questions the percentages of students who agreed with the statements were higher than percentages of teachers who agreed with the statements. Teachers were more likely to agree that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was time saving in classroom.

### **5.3.2 Students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms**

Table 17 presents the students' and teachers' estimations of teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage in EFL classes. In Section 3 (see Appendix 4, Section 3; Appendix 5, Section 3) of the questionnaires, participants were asked to give a number which best represented their estimations about the actual amount of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes. Five numbers were given: *1* meant 0% to 20%, *2* meant 21% to 40%, *3* meant 41% to 60%, *4* meant 61% to 80% and *5* meant 81% to 100%. These percentages were used to show the EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage.

**Table 17. Students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms**

Survey question (Appendix 4 , Section 3; Appendix 5, Section 3)	All students (n=417)		Teachers (n=22)	
	M	SD	M	SD
3.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.23	0.89	2.18	0.85
3.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.70	0.99	2.14	0.64
3.3 Explaining English grammar	2.47	1.00	3.14	0.83
3.4 Introducing English culture	2.48	1.09	2.14	0.89
3.5 Providing activity objectives	2.81	1.15	2.59	0.96
3.6 Providing activity instruction	2.73	1.12	2.36	0.90
3.7 Encouraging students	2.02	0.97	1.73	0.88
3.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.22	1.01	1.95	0.72
3.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.26	1.06	2.18	1.10
3.10 Comprehension checks	2.09	0.94	2.05	0.84
3.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.38	0.96	2.36	0.66
3.12 Announcing administrative items	3.08	1.18	3.36	1.05

\*M refers to *Mean*; SD refers to *Standard deviation*.

The *standard deviations* for the twelve survey questions ranged from 0.64 (Teacher survey question 3.2) to 1.18 (Students survey question 3.12) (see Table 17). This meant that 68.27% of the students gave the responses within the range of  $(\mu - 1\sigma, \mu + 1\sigma)$ ; 95.45% of the students gave the responses within the range of  $(\mu - 2\sigma, \mu + 2\sigma)$ . For example, the *mean* of students for survey question 3.1 was 2.23, and the *standard deviation* was 0.89, therefore, 68.27% of the students gave the responses for the survey question 3.1 within the range of (1.34, 3.12). Students' responses had a higher *standard deviation* than teachers', which indicates that students' answers were spread out over a larger range than those of the teachers.

Teachers and students both estimated that EFL teachers' total Mandarin usage was between 21% to 40% of class time in their actual practice in EFL classrooms. Teachers' estimations of their own Mandarin usage amount were all below students' estimations, except for explaining English grammar and announcing administrative items (see Table 17, Survey question 3.3; Survey question 3.12).

When examining the EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different usage contexts, the Total Mandarin usage (see Table 17, Survey question 3.1) was not included as it referred to all kinds of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in general. EFL teachers estimated that their amount of Mandarin usage was most frequent for explaining English grammar (mean=3.14, see Table 17, Survey question 3.3) and announcing administrative items (mean=3.36, see Table 17, Survey question 3.12); and least

frequent for encouraging students to speak English (mean=1.73, see Table 17, Survey question 3.7) and evaluating students' answers or practice in English (mean=1.95, see Table 17, Survey question 3.8). Students thought that EFL teachers' most frequent Mandarin usage contexts were providing activity objectives (mean=2.81, see Table 17, Survey question 3.5) and announcing administrative items (mean=3.08, see Table 17, Survey question 3.12), while the two least Mandarin usage contexts were encouraging students to speak English (mean=2.02, see Table 17, Survey question 3.7) and comprehension checks (mean=2.09, see Table 17, Survey question 3.10).

Table 18 presents a summary of the percentages of students' and teachers' estimations about EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in the classroom. Percentage ranges on the top of the table (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, and 81-100%) represented the estimated percentages when EFL teachers used Mandarin in their teaching in EFL classrooms. The percentages in *italic* show the percentages of students/teachers who chose that particular percentage range. For example, in the survey question 3.1, 16.31% of the students estimated that EFL teachers used Mandarin about 0-20% of the class time; while 18.18% of the teachers estimated 0-20%. 56.12% of the students and 54.55% of the teachers thought EFL teachers used Mandarin 21-40% of the class time.

**Table 18. Percentages of students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms**

**Table 18a. Percentages of students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms (survey question 3.1-3.4)**

<i>Survey question 3.1: Total Mandarin usage</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	68	234	75	31	9	417
<i>Percentages</i>	16.31%	56.12%	17.99%	7.43%	2.16%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	4	12	4	2	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	18.18%	54.55%	18.18%	9.09%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.2: Mandarin usage for translating English words or expressions</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	33	174	109	87	14	417
<i>Percentages</i>	7.91%	41.73%	26.14%	20.86%	3.36%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	2	16	3	1	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	9.09%	72.73%	13.64%	4.55%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.3: Mandarin usage for teaching English grammar</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	61	180	110	51	15	417
<i>Percentages</i>	14.63%	43.17%	26.38%	12.23%	3.60%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	1	3	10	8	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	4.55%	13.64%	45.45%	36.36%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.4: Mandarin usage for introducing cultures in English speaking countries</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	80	155	101	64	17	417
<i>Percentages</i>	19.18%	37.17%	24.22%	15.35%	4.08%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	5	11	4	2	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	22.73%	50.00%	18.18%	9.09%	0%	100%

**Table 18b. Percentages of students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms (survey question 3.5-3.8)**

<i>Survey question 3.5: Mandarin usage for providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests)</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	53	131	107	95	31	417
<i>Percentages</i>	12.71%	31.41%	25.66%	22.78%	7.43%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	2	10	5	5	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	9.09%	45.45%	22.73%	22.73%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.6: Mandarin usage for providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests)</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	59	133	107	97	21	417
<i>Percentages</i>	14.15%	31.89%	25.66%	23.26%	5.04%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	3	11	5	3	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	13.64%	50%	22.73%	13.64%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.7: Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	145	160	75	32	5	417
<i>Percentages</i>	34.77%	38.37%	17.99%	7.67%	1.20%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	11	7	3	1	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	50%	31.82%	13.64%	4.55%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.8: Mandarin usage for evaluating students' answers or practice in English</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	107	173	86	41	10	417
<i>Percentages</i>	25.66%	41.49%	20.62%	9.83%	2.40%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	6	11	5	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	27.27%	50.00%	22.73%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 18c. Percentages of students' and teachers' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms (survey question 3.9-3.12)**

<i>Survey question 3.9: Mandarin usage for answering students' questions asked in Mandarin</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	110	157	92	46	12	417
<i>Percentages</i>	26.38%	37.65%	22.06%	11.03%	2.88%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	7	8	3	4	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	31.82%	36.36%	13.64%	18.18%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.10: Mandarin usage for checking if students understand the content of the EFL class</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	123	173	84	33	4	417
<i>Percentages</i>	29.50%	41.49%	20.14%	7.91%	0.96%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	5	13	2	2	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	22.73%	59.09%	9.09%	9.09%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.11: Mandarin usage for building up close rapport with students</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	69	184	113	40	11	417
<i>Percentages</i>	16.55%	44.12%	27.10%	9.59%	2.64%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	2	10	10	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	9.09%	45.45%	45.45%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 3.12: Mandarin usage for announces administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans)</i>						
	<b>0-20%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	31	126	94	109	57	417
<i>Percentages</i>	7.43%	30.22%	22.54%	26.14%	13.67%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	0	6	5	8	3	22
<i>Percentages</i>	0%	27.27%	22.73%	36.36%	13.64%	100%

For the total amount of Mandarin usage, students and teachers made almost the same estimations: 72.43% of the students and 72.73% of the teachers estimated that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was less than 40% in classroom. More than half of the students and approximately half of the teachers estimated that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was less than 40% of the time in most of the Mandarin usage contexts. A higher proportion of teachers than students had estimations of EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage under 40% of the time in eight contexts. These eight different contexts were:

- Mandarin usage for translating English words or expressions (see Table 18, Survey question 3.2);
- Mandarin usage for introducing cultures in English speaking countries (see Table 18, Survey question 3.4);
- Mandarin usage for providing objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (see Table 18, Survey question 3.5);
- Mandarin usage for providing instructions of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (see Table 18, Survey question 3.6);
- Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes (see Table 18, Survey question 3.7);
- Mandarin usage for evaluating students' answers or practice in English (see Table 18, Survey question 3.8);
- Mandarin usage for answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (see Table 18, Survey question 3.9);

- Mandarin usage for checking if students understand the content of the EFL class (see Table 18, Survey question 3.10);

In three survey questions, a smaller proportion of teachers than students appeared to estimate EFL teachers amount of Mandarin usage was less than 40%:

- Mandarin usage amount for teaching English grammar (see Table 18, Survey question 3.3);
- Mandarin usage amount for building up good rapport with students (see Table 18, Survey question 3.11);
- Mandarin usage amount for announcing administrative items (see Table 18, Survey question 3.12).

That is, teachers' estimated the amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was greater than students' estimated amount. For survey question 3.3 concerning EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount for teaching English grammar, 57.80% of the students estimated EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was less than 40%. However, only 18.19% of the teachers had the estimation under 40%. 81.81% of the teachers thought EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage for teaching English grammar was over 40%, 45.45% of the teachers thought their Mandarin usage amount was from 41 to 60%, and 36.36% of the teachers thought the amount of Mandarin usage was 61 to 80%. For Mandarin usage for announcing administrative items, only 37.65% of the students thought their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was less than 40%.

Regarding the Mandarin usage context for building close rapport with students (see Table 18, Survey question 3.11), 45.45% of the teachers estimated that their Mandarin usage amount was 41-60%, only 27.10% of the students estimated the same amount range. 60.67% of the students and 54.54% of the teachers thought EFL teachers Mandarin usage amount for building close rapport with students was less than 40%.

In the Mandarin usage context of announcing administrative items, 37.65% of students estimated EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage was less than 40% (see Table 18, Survey question 3.12). However, no teacher believed that their own amount of Mandarin usage was less than 20%; only 27.27% of teachers estimated their amount of Mandarin usage as 21-40%. 36.36% of teachers' estimation was between 61-80%; 13.64% of teachers even estimated their Mandarin usage in this context 81-100% of the time.

### **5.3.3 Students' and teachers' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future**

Table 19 presents the results regarding the desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future. In Section 4 of the questionnaires (see Appendix 4, Section 4; Appendix 5, Section 4), participants were asked to give a number which best represented their desired amount of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes in the future. A scale using five numbers was provided: *1* meant 0% to 20%, *2* meant 21% to 40%, *3* meant 41% to 60%, *4* meant 61% to 80% and *5* meant

81% to 100%. These percentages were used to show the frequency of desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage.

Students' responses spread across a wider range than those from the teachers in 11 of 12 survey questions, thus the students' *standard deviations* were larger than the teachers' *standard deviations*. Compared with their students (20% to 40%), the EFL teachers desired less teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes in the future (about 0-20%). Explaining grammar (see Table 19, Survey question 4.3) was the only context in which teachers expected more Mandarin usage than their students.

**Table 19. Students' and teachers' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future**

Survey question (Appendix 4 , Section 4; Appendix 5, Section 4)	All students (n=417)		Teachers (n=22)	
	M	SD	M	SD
4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.19	0.84	1.82	0.59
4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.69	1.01	1.86	0.64
4.3 Explaining English grammar	2.62	1.00	2.86	0.94
4.4 Introducing English culture	2.53	1.05	1.64	0.66
4.5 Providing activity objectives	2.83	1.11	1.91	0.75
4.6 Providing activity instruction	2.75	1.13	1.82	0.80
4.7 Encouraging students	2.14	0.96	1.55	0.74
4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.28	0.90	1.86	0.83
4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.33	0.94	1.86	1.08
4.10 Comprehension checks	2.25	0.92	1.91	0.97
4.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.42	0.91	1.95	0.90
4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.16	1.17	2.77	1.11

\*M refers to *Mean*; SD refers to *Standard deviation*.

When examining students' and teachers' desired Mandarin usage in different usage contexts, the Total Mandarin usage (see Table 19, Survey question 4.1) was not included as it referred to all kinds of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage desired by students and EFL teachers. When comparing the 12 responses of EFL teachers, EFL teachers most desired Mandarin usage contexts were Explaining grammar (mean=2.86, see Table 19, Survey question 4.3) and Announcing administrative items (mean=2.77, see Table 19, Survey question 4.12). EFL teachers desired the least amount of Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English in class (mean=1.55, see Table 19, Survey question 4.7) and introducing English culture (mean=1.64, see Table 19, Survey question 4.4). When compared to themselves, students desired the most amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage for announcing administrative items (mean=3.16, see Table 19, Survey question 4.12) and providing activity objectives (mean=2.83, see Table 19, Survey question 4.5); they desired the least amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English (mean=2.14, see Table 19, Survey question 4.7) and comprehension checks (mean=2.25, see Table 19, Survey question 4.10).

Table 20 presents the percentages of each response that students or teachers chose concerning EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in classroom in the future. The responses from 1 to 5 represented five ranges: 0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80% and 81-100%.

**Table 20. Percentages of students' and teachers' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms in the future**

**Table 20a. Percentages of students' and teachers' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms in the future (survey question 4.1-4.4)**

<i>Survey question 4.1: Total Mandarin usage</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	72	228	86	26	5	417
<i>Percentages</i>	17.27%	54.68%	20.62%	6.23%	1.20%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	6	14	2	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	27.27%	63.64%	9.09%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.2: Mandarin usage for translating English words or expressions</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	38	165	120	76	18	417
<i>Percentages</i>	9.11%	39.57%	28.78%	18.23%	4.32%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	6	13	3	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	27.27%	59.09%	13.64%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.3: Mandarin usage for teaching English grammar</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	44	168	124	64	17	417
<i>Percentages</i>	10.55%	40.29%	29.74%	15.35%	4.08%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	1	8	6	7	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	4.55%	36.36%	27.27%	31.82%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.4: Mandarin usage for introducing cultures in English speaking countries</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	63	164	115	56	19	417
<i>Percentages</i>	15.11%	39.33%	27.58%	13.43%	4.56%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	10	10	2	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	45.45%	45.45%	9.09%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 20b. Percentages of students' and teachers' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms in the future (survey question 4.5-4.8)**

<i>Survey question 4.5: Mandarin usage for providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests)</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	45	132	117	93	30	417
<i>Percentages</i>	10.79%	31.65%	28.06%	22.30%	7.19%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	7	10	5	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	31.82%	45.45%	22.73%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.6: Mandarin usage for providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests)</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	55	135	115	83	29	417
<i>Percentages</i>	13.19%	32.37%	27.58%	19.90%	6.95%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	9	8	5	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	40.91%	36.36%	22.73%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.7: Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	115	174	90	31	7	417
<i>Percentages</i>	27.58%	41.73%	21.58%	7.43%	1.68%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	12	9	0	1	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	54.55%	40.91%	0%	4.55%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.8: Mandarin usage for evaluating students' answers or practice in English</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	73	201	100	38	5	417
<i>Percentages</i>	17.51%	48.20%	23.98%	9.11%	1.20%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	9	7	6	0	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	40.91%	31.82%	27.27%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 20c. Percentages of students' and teachers' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms in the future (survey question 4.9-4.12)**

<i>Survey question 4.9: Mandarin usage for answering students' questions asked in Mandarin</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	74	188	107	40	8	417
<i>Percentages</i>	17.75%	45.08%	25.66%	9.59%	1.92%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	10	8	2	1	1	22
<i>Percentages</i>	45.45%	36.36%	9.09%	4.55%	4.55%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.10: Mandarin usage for checking if students understand the content of the EFL class</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	86	186	107	31	7	417
<i>Percentages</i>	20.62%	44.60%	25.66%	7.43%	1.68%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	8	10	3	0	1	22
<i>Percentages</i>	36.36%	45.45%	13.64%	0%	4.55%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.11: Mandarin usage for building up close rapport with students</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	55	190	117	50	5	417
<i>Percentages</i>	13.19%	45.56%	28.06%	11.99%	1.20%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	8	8	5	1	0	22
<i>Percentages</i>	36.36%	36.36%	22.73%	4.55%	0%	100%
<i>Survey question 4.12: Mandarin usage for announces administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans)</i>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Students (number)</b>	22	125	102	101	67	417
<i>Percentages</i>	5.28%	29.98%	24.46%	24.22%	16.07%	100%
<b>Teachers (number)</b>	2	8	7	3	2	22
<i>Percentages</i>	9.09%	36.36%	31.82%	13.64%	9.09%	100%

These results indicate that a higher percentage of teachers than students desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage to be less than 40% of the time in all Mandarin usage contexts, except for the context in which Mandarin was used for teaching English grammar. For teaching English grammar by using Mandarin, 31.82% of the teachers desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage to be more than 60% of the time, while only 15.35% of the students desired such an amount. Except for teaching English grammar and announcing administrative items, a very high percentage (more than 70%) of teachers desired less than 40% of the Mandarin usage in classroom in all the other Mandarin usage contexts.

Table 21 compares students' and teachers' estimated EFL teachers' actual amounts of Mandarin usage and their desired amount in the future. For each survey question, the mean of teachers' desired Mandarin usage amount is smaller than the mean of teachers' estimation of their actual Mandarin usage amount in classrooms. These results indicate that teachers think it is more desirable that they use less EFL Mandarin usage in the future than their actual amount of Mandarin usage.

**Table 21. Comparison of estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount and desired Mandarin usage amount**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3, VS Section 4; Appendix 5, Section 3, VS Section 4)	All students (n=417)		Teachers (n=22)	
	Actual	Desired	Actual	Desired
3.1 and 4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.23	2.19	2.18	1.82
3.2 and 4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.70	2.69	2.14	1.86
3.3 and 4.3 Explaining English grammar	2.47	2.62	3.14	2.86
3.4 and 4.4 Introducing English culture	2.48	2.53	2.14	1.64
3.5 and 4.5 Providing activity objectives	2.81	2.83	2.59	1.91
3.6 and 4.6 Providing activity instruction	2.73	2.75	2.36	1.82
3.7 and 4.7 Encouraging students	2.02	2.14	1.73	1.55
3.8 and 4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.22	2.28	1.95	1.86
3.9 and 4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.26	2.33	2.18	1.86
3.10 and 4.10 Comprehension checks	2.09	2.25	2.05	1.91
3.11 and 4.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.38	2.42	2.36	1.95
3.12 and 4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.08	3.16	3.36	2.77

For students, in the comparisons of two sets of survey questions (comparison between survey question 3.1 and 4.1; comparison between survey question 3.2 and 3.2) the means of their desired EFL teachers' total Mandarin usage amount are smaller than the means of their estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount. For the remaining comparison of survey questions, the means of students' desired EFL

teachers' Mandarin usage amount in the future are greater than students' estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount. The results indicate that:

- Students hoped to receive a little less Mandarin usage (the total Mandarin usage, or Mandarin usage of all kinds of usage contexts) from their teachers in general. (comparison between survey question 3.1 and 4.1)
- Students desired less Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers for translating previous English words or expressions (comparison between survey question 3.2 and 4.2).
- Student wanted a little more amount of Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers in different contexts:
  - a. teaching English grammar (comparison between survey question 3.3 and 4.3);
  - b. introducing the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs) (comparison between survey question 3.4 and 4.4);
  - c. providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests) (comparison between survey question 3.5 and 4.5);
  - d. providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests) (comparison between survey question 3.6 and 4.6);
  - e. encouraging students to speak English (comparison between survey question 3.7 and 4.7);
  - f. evaluating students' answers or practice in English (comparison

- between survey question 3.8 and 4.8);
- g. answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (comparison between survey question 3.9 and 4.9);
  - h. checking if students have understood the content of the EFL class (comparison between survey question 3.10 and 4.10);
  - i. building up close rapport with students (comparison between survey question 3.11 and 4.11);
  - j. announcing administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans) (comparison between survey question 3.12 and 4.12).

#### **5.4 Students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage**

After comparing the differences between students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms, I chose students from University B as the focus of a more intense analysis through a series of comparisons into the relationship between students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom and students' English proficiency levels.

University B provides four levels of EFL courses for all students of Year 1 and Year 2 according to their scores obtained in the University B students' English proficiency level exam after their enrolment to University B. From high to low these courses are

called: Level 4, Level 3, Level 2 and Level 1. According to their scores, the top 20% students will start in a Level 4 course in the first semester of their university study. Students from 21% to 50% will start in a Level 3 course; students from 51% to 80% will start in a Level 2 course; and the bottom 20% students will start in a Level 1 course.

Different course levels can be assumed to be indicators of EFL students' English proficiency levels. Therefore, a series of comparisons were made between high English proficiency level EFL students and low English proficiency level EFL students in terms of:

- their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts;
- their estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in non-English major EFL classes;
- their desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms in the future.

The findings from this analysis are discussed in the following sections.

#### **5.4.1 Students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts**

I first compared students' responses from Section 2 (see Appendix4, Section 2) of the students' questionnaires. In this section, a Likert Scale with seven numbers was given, where 1 meant very strongly disagree and 7 meant very strongly agree.

The comparisons were first made between the lowest English proficiency level students (Level 1) and the highest proficiency level students (Level 4). *Mean*, *t* value and *p* value were calculated to determine the differences between English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 EFL students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in diverse usage contexts in classroom.

Table 22 shows that the *means* of English proficiency Level 1 students' responses for all survey questions were greater than those of the English proficiency Level 4 students. The Level 1 students gave responses of more than 5 for five of the survey questions, (Survey questions 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.12); and they gave scores near to 5 for survey question 2.6, 2.8, and 2.11. In comparison, Level 4 students only gave scores of more than 5 for one survey question, question 2.3 (explaining English grammar). The greater the *mean*, the more likely that the participants thought that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom was helpful for EFL learning practices. These results therefore indicated that Level 1 students were more likely to admit that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was helpful in EFL classrooms than English proficiency Level 4 students.

**Table 22. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts (Level 1 vs Level 4 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix4, Section 2)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 4 (n=91)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	5.03	1.31	4.32	1.19	3.01	0.0031
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	5.36	1.20	4.91	1.01	2.18	0.0308
2.3 Explaining English grammar	5.59	0.99	5.04	1.10	2.66	0.0088
2.4 Introducing English culture	5.10	1.25	4.60	1.35	1.97	0.0509
2.5 Providing activity objectives	5.21	1.15	4.68	1.15	2.37	0.0191
2.6 Providing activity instruction	4.87	1.32	4.49	1.11	1.68	0.0962
2.7 Encouraging students	4.36	1.37	3.73	1.33	2.46	0.0151
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.59	1.27	4.15	1.13	1.94	0.0552
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.95	1.41	3.45	1.23	2.02	0.0454
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.92	1.16	3.53	1.33	1.62	0.1086
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	4.51	1.23	3.51	1.24	4.25	<0.0001
2.12 Announcing administrative items	5.64	1.01	4.88	1.30	3.26	0.0014

Translation of previous words or expressions from English to Mandarin (see Table 22, Survey question 2.2), explaining English grammar (see Table 22, Survey question 2.3), and announcing administrative items (see Table 22, Survey question 2.12) were three Mandarin usage contexts that both English proficiency Level 1 students and Level 4 students gave the highest scores. English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students both agreed on the advantages of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in these three contexts:

- In EFL classes, if EFL teachers translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understood them better.
- If EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar, students could understand the English grammar better.
- If EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans) it could class time.

The t-test is a widely used statistical technique to compare the *means* of two groups, who were selected as the research sample. I applied paired-sample t-test to address the question: Is there any difference between the *means* of two groups of students with different English proficiency levels (see English proficiency Level 1 vs Level 4 students in Table 22)? The t-value is related to the size of the difference between the *means* of the two samples to be compared. A t-value greater than 2 (or less than -2) indicates that the coefficient is significant with >95% confidence. A t-value greater than 1.68 (or less than -1.68) indicates the coefficient is significant with >90%

confidence. The larger the t-value is, the smaller the probability that the *means* of the two populations are the same.

In addition, calculated from the t-values, p-values are the probabilities that the coefficients are *not* statistically significant. When p-values are less than the significance levels, the null hypothesis should be rejected. In this study, the null hypothesis is the presumption that there is no difference between *means* of two groups of students' answers to the survey questions (see English proficiency Level 1 students vs Level 4 students in Table 22). When the p-values were less than the significance levels, I rejected the presumption that there is no difference between *means* of two groups. Conventionally, significance levels are chosen as follows:

- $p > 0.1$ : no evidence that the null hypothesis does not hold
- $0.05 < p < 0.1$ : very weak evidence that the null hypothesis does not hold
- $0.01 < p < 0.05$ : moderately strong evidence that the null hypothesis does not hold
- $p < 0.01$ : strong evidence that the null hypothesis does not hold

In this study, 0.05 and 0.1 were used as significance levels. When p-values were larger than 0.1, it meant that there were no significant difference between *means* of two groups of students' answers to survey questions; when p-values were less than 0.05, it indicated that the two groups of *means* differed significantly.

As shown in Table 22, the  $t$ -value for survey question 2.10 was 1.62 less than the required 1.68 which indicates the coefficient is significant with >90% confidence. Meanwhile, the  $p$ -value was 0.1086,  $p > 0.1$  means there is no evidence that the null hypothesis does not hold. Therefore, there was no significant difference between English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' answers to survey question 2.10. "We students give more feedback to our teacher when he/she speaks Mandarin to check if we have understood the content of the class".

The  $p$ -values were less than 0.05 for eight of the twelve survey questions. These values indicated that English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' answers to these survey questions differed significantly. These differences implied that English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage differed significantly for the following statements:

- In general, it was beneficial for students' English learning if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms (see Table 22, Survey question 2.1).
- If EFL teachers translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually could understand them better (see Table 22, Survey question 2.2).
- If EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar, students understood the English grammar better (see Table 22, Survey question 2.3).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (see Table 22, Survey

question 2.5).

- Students were more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teachers encouraged students in Mandarin than in English (see Table 22, Survey question 2.7).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin (see Table 22, Survey question 2.9)
- It was more effective if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to build up close rapport with students during EFL classes (see Table 22, Survey question 2.11).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers used Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans (see Table 22, Survey question 2.12)

The *p*-values for survey question 2.4, 2.6, 2.8 were within the range 0.05 to 0.1 (see Table 22). Thus there was weak evidence that English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' attitudes differed significantly for these three statements:

- In EFL classes, if teachers' translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understood them better.
- Students usually understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).

**Table 23. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts (Level 1 vs Level 3 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 3 (n=103)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	5.03	1.31	4.38	1.19	2.82	0.0056
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	5.36	1.20	4.78	1.16	2.64	0.0093
2.3 Explaining English grammar	5.59	0.99	4.92	1.13	3.25	0.0014
2.4 Introducing English culture	5.10	1.25	4.40	1.25	3.00	0.0032
2.5 Providing activity objectives	5.21	1.15	4.75	1.15	2.11	0.0364
2.6 Providing activity instruction	4.87	1.32	4.49	1.19	1.68	0.0957
2.7 Encouraging students	4.36	1.37	3.43	1.38	3.59	0.0004
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.59	1.27	4.07	1.09	2.43	0.0162
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.95	1.41	3.61	1.27	1.37	0.1734
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.92	1.16	3.75	1.30	0.74	0.4620
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	4.51	1.23	3.70	1.26	3.46	0.0007
2.12 Announcing administrative items	5.64	1.01	5.07	1.00	3.03	0.0029

A similar comparison was made between English proficiency Level 1 EFL students and Level 3 EFL students (see Table 23). Level 3 students gave the highest responses for the same three contexts as the English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students: Translation of previous words or expressions from English to Mandarin (2.2), explaining English grammar (2.3), and announcing administrative items (2.12) (see Table 22; Table 23). These results indicate that no matter what their English proficiency levels; all students (Level 1, 3 and 4) agreed that it would be beneficial for their study if their EFL teachers used Mandarin in these contexts.

English proficiency Level 1 students gave higher scores (see means for all survey questions, Table 23) for all survey questions compared with the English proficiency Level 3 students, thus Level 1 students were more likely to agree on the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom. As shown in Table 23, *p*-values for nine survey questions were less than 0.05. *P*-values for the three other survey questions were greater than 0.05, survey question 2.6 (0.0957), 2.9 (0.1734), and 2.10 (0.4620). These results meant that English proficiency Level 1 and Level 3 students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage differed significantly in the following nine statements:

- In general, it was beneficial for students' English learning if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms (Table 23, Survey question 2.1).
- If EFL teachers translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually could understand them better (Table 23, Survey

question 2.2).

- If EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar, students understood the English grammar better (Table 23, Survey question 2.3).
- Students usually understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries, such as historical events, holidays, and customs (Table 23, Survey question 2.4).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (Table 23, Survey question 2.5).
- Students were more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teachers encouraged students in Mandarin than in English (Table 23, Survey question 2.7).
- Students understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English (Table 23, Survey question 2.8).
- It was more effective if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to build up close rapport with students during EFL classes (Table 23, Survey question 2.11).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers used Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans (Table 23, Survey question 2.12).

*P*-values for two survey questions (Table 23 survey question 2.9 and 2.10) were greater than 0.1; *p*-value for survey question 2.6 was within the range from 0.05 to 0.1

This means there was weak evidence that English proficiency Level 1 and 3 students' attitudes differed significantly for the statement:

It could save class time if EFL teachers' used Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice and tests (Table 23, Survey question 2.6).

No significant difference was found between English proficiency Level 1 and Level 3 students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the following two statements:

- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin (Table 23, Survey question 2.9).
- Students gave more feedback to EFL teachers when EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to check if students understood the content of the class. (Table 23, Survey question 2.10).

Comparing Tables 22 and 23, English proficiency Level 1 students gave higher responses for each survey question compared with English proficiency Level 3 and Level 4 students. This indicated that low English proficiency level students were more likely to admit the positive influences of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes.

#### **5.4.2 Students' English proficiency levels and their estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms**

Table 24 shows English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 EFL students' estimations of teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classes. Table 25 shows English proficiency Level 1 and Level 3 EFL students' estimation of their EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classes. In Section 3 (see Appendix 4) of students' questionnaires, student participants were asked to give a number which best represented their estimations about the actual amount of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes. Five numbers were given: 1 meant 0% to 20%, 2 meant 21% to 40%, 3 meant 41% to 60%, 4 meant 61% to 80% and 5 meant 81% to 100%. These percentages were used to show the students' estimation of their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in classrooms.

With regard to the most/least frequent Mandarin usage estimated by EFL students, survey question 3.1 (Table 24; Table 25) is not included in the discussion of different usage contexts as survey question 3.1 refers to EFL teachers' actual total Mandarin usage amount estimated by students, which means all the Mandarin usage by EFL teachers in different kinds of Mandarin usage contexts.

**Table 24. Students' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms (Level 1 vs Level 4 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 4 (n=91)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
3.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.85	0.81	1.86	0.72	6.88	<0.0001
3.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.87	0.98	2.48	0.96	2.10	0.0374
3.3 Explaining English grammar	3.13	0.95	2.32	0.94	4.48	<0.0001
3.4 Introducing English culture	3.10	0.97	2.41	1.07	3.48	0.0007
3.5 Providing activity objectives	3.64	1.04	2.55	1.19	4.99	<0.0001
3.6 Providing activity instruction	3.51	1.00	2.42	1.13	5.25	<0.0001
3.7 Encouraging students	2.85	0.81	1.63	0.85	7.58	<0.0001
3.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.82	1.05	2.01	0.98	4.22	<0.0001
3.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.79	0.89	2.09	1.02	3.76	0.0003
3.10 Comprehension checks	2.72	0.83	1.87	0.86	5.23	<0.0001
3.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.92	0.87	2.07	0.88	5.11	<0.0001
3.12 Announcing administrative items	3.79	1.10	2.75	1.23	4.60	<0.0001

Tables 24 and 25 show that English proficiency Level 1 students stated that EFL teachers used Mandarin most frequently (about 41% to 60% of the time) for:

- announcing administrative items (Table 24, Survey question 3.12),
- providing activity objectives (Table 24, Survey question 3.5),
- providing activity instruction (Table 24, Survey question 3.6).

While English proficiency Level 3 and Level 4 students' thought teachers used Mandarin most frequently (about 21% to 40% of the time) for:

- announcing administrative items (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.12),
- providing activity objectives (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.5),
- translation of previous words or expressions (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.2).

Announcing administrative items (Survey question 3.12) and providing activity objectives (Survey question 3.5) were the two most frequent Mandarin usage contexts for all students no matter what English proficiency levels they had.

When teaching English proficiency Level 1 students, EFL teachers used Mandarin the least frequently (about 21% to 40% of the time) in the three contexts:

- comprehension checks (Table 24, Survey question 3.10),
- Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (Table 24, Survey question 3.9),

- evaluating students' answers or practice (Table 24, Survey question 3.8).

Whereas when teaching English proficiency Level 3 and Level 4 students, EFL teachers used Mandarin the least frequently (less than 20% of the time) in the following contexts:

- encouraging students (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.7),
- comprehension checks (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.10),
- evaluating students' answers or practice (Table 24 and 25, Survey question 3.8).

Comprehension checks (Survey question 3.10) and Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (Survey question 3.9) were the two least frequent Mandarin usage contexts for all three English proficiency level students.

As shown in Tables 24 and Table 25, English proficiency Level 1 students estimated a higher amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms than English proficiency Level 3 and Level 4 students. In both Tables 24 and 25, all the t-values were greater than 1.68 and all the p-values were less than 0.05, which indicates that English proficiency Level 1 students' and Level 4 students' estimated amount of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage differed significantly; as did the estimates of the English proficiency Level 1 students' and Level 3 students.

**Table 25. Students' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms (Level 1 vs Level 3 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 3 (n=103)		t	P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
3.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.85	0.81	1.83	0.78	6.85	<0.0001
3.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.87	0.98	2.27	0.99	3.23	0.0015
3.3 Explaining English grammar	3.13	0.95	2.18	1.12	4.67	<0.0001
3.4 Introducing English culture	3.10	0.97	1.79	0.88	7.73	<0.0001
3.5 Providing activity objectives	3.64	1.04	2.34	1.04	6.64	<0.0001
3.6 Providing activity instruction	3.51	1.00	2.26	1.01	6.61	<0.0001
3.7 Encouraging students	2.85	0.81	1.47	0.67	10.33	<0.0001
3.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.82	1.05	1.67	0.91	6.44	<0.0001
3.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.79	0.89	1.70	0.96	6.19	<0.0001
3.10 Comprehension checks	2.72	0.83	1.60	0.75	7.73	<0.0001
3.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.92	0.87	1.89	0.78	6.81	<0.0001
3.12 Announcing administrative items	3.79	1.10	2.88	1.11	4.39	<0.0001

According to students' estimations, EFL teachers' total Mandarin usage was less than 20% in Level 3 and Level 4 classrooms (Level 3 mean=1.83, Table 25; Level 4 mean=1.86, Table 24); less than 40% in Level 1 classrooms (mean=2.85, Table 24). When examining further into EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different 11 usage contexts, EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in Level 1; 3 and 4 classrooms differed as shown below (Table 24; Table 25):

- When teaching Level 1 students:
  - 5 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 41-60% Mandarin (means are greater than 3 and less than 4),
  - 6 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 21-40% Mandarin (means are greater than 2 and less than 3).
- When teaching Level 3 students :
  - 5 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 21-40% Mandarin (means are greater than 2 and less than 3),
  - 6 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 0-20% Mandarin (means are greater than 1 and less than 2).
- When teaching Level 4 students:
  - 9 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 21%-40% Mandarin (means are greater than 2 and less than 3),
  - 2 of 11 usage contexts EFL teachers used 0-20% Mandarin (means are greater than 1 and less than 2).

This suggested that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount varied with students' English proficiency levels: EFL teachers used Mandarin from 21% to 40% in some contexts but 41% to 60% of the time for low English proficiency level EFL students; and they used Mandarin less than 40% or even less than 20% of the time for higher English proficiency level EFL students.

#### **5.4.3 Students' English proficiency levels and their desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future**

In the fourth section of the students' questionnaires (Appendix 4, Section 4), the same numbers were given to represent students' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms in the future (*1* meant 0% to 20%, *2* meant 21% to 40%, *3* meant 41% to 60%, *4* meant 61% to 80% and *5* meant 81% to 100%).

When examining the most/least frequent Mandarin usage desired by EFL students, survey question 4.1 (Table 26; Table 27) is not included in the discussion of different usage contexts as survey question 3.1 refers to EFL teachers' actual total Mandarin usage amount estimated by students, which means all the Mandarin usage by EFL teachers in different kinds of Mandarin usage contexts.

**Table 26. Students' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future (Level 1 vs Level 4 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 4)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 4 (n=91)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.72	0.83	1.87	0.76	5.68	<0.0001
4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.95	0.83	2.40	0.95	3.15	0.0020
4.3 Explaining English grammar	3.03	0.84	2.46	1.05	2.98	0.0035
4.4 Introducing English culture	3.08	0.90	2.30	1.02	4.15	<0.0001
4.5 Providing activity objectives	3.51	1.00	2.63	1.19	4.08	<0.0001
4.6 Providing activity instruction	3.46	1.10	2.54	1.19	4.16	<0.0001
4.7 Encouraging students	2.74	0.79	1.89	0.95	4.94	<0.0001
4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.77	0.93	2.12	0.81	3.98	0.0001
4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.69	0.98	2.14	0.90	3.10	0.0023
4.10 Comprehension checks	2.51	0.91	2.08	0.83	2.65	0.0089
4.11 Building up good rapport with students	3.03	0.78	2.16	0.95	5.00	<0.0001
4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.92	1.01	2.80	1.24	4.98	<0.0001

**Table 27. Students' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future (Level 1 vs Level 3 at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 4)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 3 (n=103)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.72	0.83	1.86	0.75	5.86	<0.0001
4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.95	0.83	2.46	1.08	2.57	0.0112
4.3 Explaining English grammar	3.03	0.84	2.53	1.14	2.46	0.0152
4.4 Introducing English culture	3.08	0.90	2.08	1.01	5.43	<0.0001
4.5 Providing activity objectives	3.51	1.00	2.51	1.11	4.91	<0.0001
4.6 Providing activity instruction	3.46	1.10	2.43	1.15	4.84	<0.0001
4.7 Encouraging students	2.74	0.79	1.70	0.84	6.74	<0.0001
4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.77	0.93	1.94	0.92	4.78	<0.0001
4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.69	0.98	2.01	0.97	3.75	0.0003
4.10 Comprehension checks	2.51	0.91	1.96	0.93	3.17	0.0018
4.11 Building up good rapport with students	3.03	0.78	2.17	0.85	5.47	<0.0001
4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.92	1.01	3.15	1.12	3.80	0.0002

Table 26 shows that both English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' most desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts were:

- announcing administrative items (Survey question 4.12),
- providing activity objectives (Survey question 4.5),
- providing activity instruction (Survey question 4.6).

English proficiency Level 1 students' least desired contexts were:

- Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (Survey question 4.9),
- comprehension checks (Survey question 4.10),
- encouraging students (Survey question 4.7).

English proficiency Level 4 students' least desired contexts were:

- comprehension checks (Survey question 4.10),
- encouraging students (Survey question 4.7),
- evaluating students' answers or practice (Survey question 4.8).

Table 27 shows that English proficiency Level 3 students desired less Mandarin usage amount by their EFL teachers than Level 1 students (means: 1.86 vs 2.72, Table 27, Survey question 4.1). Level 3 students desired the most frequent Mandarin usage of their EFL teacher in the contexts:

- announcing administrative items (Survey question 4.12),
- explaining English grammar (Survey question 4.3),

- providing activity objectives (Survey question 4.5).

Level 3 students' least desired contexts were:

- encouraging students (Survey question 4.7),
- comprehension checks (Survey question 4.10),
- evaluating students' answers or practice (Survey question 4.8).

As shown in Tables 26 and 27, announcing administrative items was the most desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage context for all of the English proficiency levels (Levels 1, 3, and 4). All students desired that their EFL teachers used Mandarin most frequently to announce administrative items in classroom. Encouraging students and comprehension checks were the two least desired Mandarin usage contexts for all students. All students desired the least amount of their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak more English in EFL classroom; and for checking if students understood the content in classroom.

Low English proficiency level students (Level 1) desired more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers in the future compared with high English proficiency level students (Level 3 and Level 4). All t-values in Table 26 and 27 were over 1.68 and all p-values were less than 0.05. Significant differences were found between English proficiency Level 1 and Level 3 students' answers; and between English proficiency Level 1 and Level 4 students' answers. English proficiency Level 1 students' desired EFL teachers'

total Mandarin usage was about 21 to 40% (Table 27, Survey question 4.1, mean=2.72); whereas Level 3 and Level 4 students desired only about 0-20% of Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers in classrooms (Table 27, Survey question 4.1, mean=1.86; Table 26, Survey question 4.1, mean=1.87).

As shown in Table 28, English proficiency Level 3 students desired more Mandarin usage in all Mandarin usage contexts than their estimated amount of their EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage in the classroom. Level 4 students also desired more Mandarin usage than their estimated amount of their EFL teachers' actual practice except for two usage contexts: translation of previous English words or expressions (Table 28, Survey question 3.2 & 4.2) and introducing English culture (Table 28, Survey questions 3.4 and 4.4). However, English proficiency Level 1 students desired less Mandarin usage than their estimation of EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage in general (Table 28, Survey question 3.1 and 4.1).

**Table 28. Comparison of students' estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount and desired amount**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3 & 4)	Level 1 (n=39)		Level 3 (n=103)		Level 4 (n=91)	
	E	D	E	D	E	D
3.1 and 4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.85	2.72	1.83	1.86	1.86	1.87
3.2 and 4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.87	2.95	2.27	2.46	2.48	2.40
3.3 and 4.3 Explaining English grammar	3.13	3.03	2.18	2.53	2.32	2.46
3.4 and 4.4 Introducing English culture	3.10	3.08	1.79	2.08	2.41	2.30
3.5 and 4.5 Providing activity objectives	3.64	3.51	2.34	2.51	2.55	2.63
3.5 and 4.6 Providing activity instruction	3.51	3.46	2.26	2.43	2.42	2.54
3.7 and 4.7 Encouraging students	2.85	2.74	1.47	1.70	1.63	1.89
3.8 and 4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.82	2.77	1.67	1.94	2.01	2.12
3.9 and 4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.79	2.69	1.70	2.01	2.09	2.14
3.10 and 4.10 Comprehension checks	2.72	2.51	1.60	1.96	1.87	2.08
3.11 and 4.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.92	3.03	1.89	2.17	2.07	2.16
3.12 and 4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.79	3.92	2.88	3.15	2.75	2.80

\*E refers to students' estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in classroom; D refers to students' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the future.

When going further to examine EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different contexts, Level 1 students desired less EFL teachers' Mandarin usage than their estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in eight usage contexts:

- teaching English grammar (Table 28, Survey question 3.3 & 4.3);
- introducing the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs) (Table 28, Survey question 3.4. & 4.4);
- providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests) (Table 28, Survey question 3.5 & 4.5);
- providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin should your teacher speak (Table 28, Survey question 3.6 & 4.6);
- encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes (Table 28, Survey question 3.7 & 4.7);
- evaluating students' answers or practice in English (Table 28, Survey question 3.8 & 4.8);
- answering students' questions asked in Mandarin (Table 28, Survey question 3.9 & 4.9);
- checking if students understood the content of the class (Table 28, Survey question 3.10 & 4.10).

English proficiency Level 1 students desired more EFL teachers' Mandarin usage than their EFL teachers' actual amount in three contexts:

- EFL teachers translated English words or expressions into Mandarin (Table 28, survey question 2);
- EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in order to building up good rapport with students (Table 28, survey question 11);
- EFL teachers used Mandarin to announcing administrative items (Table 28, survey question 12).

The results of the English proficiency Level 1 students desiring less EFL teachers' Mandarin usage than their EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage might be explained by the EFL teachers actually using a little more Mandarin than the amount that low English proficiency level students actually needed. It might further be implied that EFL teachers felt less confident about low English proficiency level students' ability to understand English speaking, and thus the teachers used more Mandarin than needed in EFL classrooms.

## **5.5 Student gender and students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage**

All students at the three English proficiency levels from University B were selected as the sample for an analysis of the relationship between gender and students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. All student participants in this study provided their scores from the final English exam held in the second semester of

the 2011/1012 academic year. I arranged all the students from the highest exam score to the lowest in Level 1, 3 and 4 respectively, and then put them into four score groups according to their exam scores, as shown in Table 29. Level 2 students were not included in this study as I was not permitted to collect data of students of this level (see Section 4.2.2).

For example, the total number of English proficiency Level 1 students was 39. I categorised their scores into four groups from the highest scores to the lowest scores. In the group of Top 25% there were eight (8) female students and one (1) male student. In the group of Bottom 25%, there were seven (7) female students and three (3) male students.

**Table 29. Student distribution by gender and English exam score (University B only)**

<i>University B Level 1 students gender and score distribution</i>					
	Top 25%	26-50%	51-75%	Bottom 25%	Total
Female	8	10	8	7	33
Male	1	0	2	3	6
Total	9	10	10	10	39
<i>University B Level 3 students gender and score distribution</i>					
	Top 25%	26-50%	51-75%	Bottom 25%	Total
Female	24	23	23	17	87
Male	1	3	3	9	16
Total	25	26	26	26	103
<i>University B Level 4 students gender and score distribution</i>					
	Top 25%	26-50%	51-75%	Bottom 25%	Total
Female	20	17	12	12	61
Male	2	6	11	11	30
Total	22	23	23	23	91

Female students achieved better English exam scores than the male students' at all three English proficiency levels. More than half of the female students were classified in the top two ranges (see Table 29). About 25% of the female students in Level 1 and 3; and 33% of the female students in Level 4 were the top 25% students in each English proficiency level. However, half of the male students in Level 1 and 3, and 33% of the male students in Level 4, were the bottom 25% students.

English exam scores were considered as indicators of students' English proficiency levels. Therefore, it was assumed that female students had higher English proficiency levels compared to male students in all three English proficiency levels (Level 1, 3, and 4) at University B.

**Table 30. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms by gender (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2)	Female (n=181)		Male (n=52)		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	4.42	1.17	4.62	1.43	-1.01	0.3141
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	4.87	1.09	5.12	1.23	-1.37	0.1713
2.3 Explaining English grammar	5.06	1.11	5.15	1.16	-0.53	0.5975
2.4 Introducing English culture	4.57	1.26	4.69	1.46	-0.60	0.5500
2.5 Providing activity objectives	4.74	1.11	5.00	1.31	-1.42	0.1561
2.6 Providing activity instruction	4.49	1.12	4.79	1.38	-1.63	0.1050
2.7 Encouraging students	3.58	1.29	4.12	1.66	-2.47	0.0144
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.12	1.06	4.42	1.41	-1.68	0.0951
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.59	1.22	3.65	1.49	-0.31	0.7574
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.62	1.17	3.92	1.66	-1.47	0.1422
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	3.69	1.25	4.02	1.41	-1.65	0.1000
2.12 Announcing administrative items	5.08	1.05	5.12	1.48	-0.18	0.8584

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

Table 30 shows the comparisons of female and male students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in different usage contexts. *Standard deviation* was applied to measure dispersion of students' responses from the average. Male students had

greater *standard deviations* for each survey question, indicating male students' answers spread more widely than female students' answers. The male students' *means* were greater than the female students' in all 12 survey questions, which indicated that male students were more likely to admit to the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom.

No significant difference, that is, *p*-values were greater than 0.1, were found between female and male students in their responses to the following statements:

- In general, it was beneficial for students' English learning if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in EFL classrooms (Table 30, Survey question 2.1).
- If EFL teachers translated previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually could understand them better (Table 30, Survey question 2.2).
- If EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar, students understood the English grammar better (Table 30, Survey question 2.3).
- Students usually understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries, such as historical events, holidays, and customs (Table 30, Survey question 2.4).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke in Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests (Table 30, Survey question 2.5).

- It could save class time if EFL teachers' used Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice and tests (Table 30, Survey question 2.6).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin (Table 30, Survey question 2.9).
- Students gave more feedback to EFL teachers when EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to check if students understood the content of the class (Table 30, Survey question 2.10).
- It was more effective if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to build up close rapport with students during EFL classes (Table 30, Survey question 2.11).
- It saved class time if EFL teachers used Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans (Table 30, Survey question 2.12).

There was weak evidence that both female and male students' attitudes differed significantly for the statement:

Students understood better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English (Table 30, Survey question 2.8,  $p = 0.0951$ ).

Female and male students' attitudes differed significantly only for one statement:

Students were more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teachers encouraged students in Mandarin than in English (Table 30, Survey

question 2.7,  $p = 0.0144$ ).

No significant difference was found between female and male students' estimations about their EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage (see Table 31, all p-values were greater than 0.1 except for 3.3). The one exception was EFL teachers' Mandarin usage for teaching English grammar (3.3): here a significant difference was found between female and male students' estimation about teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in the classroom. Female students estimated that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was more than male students did.

Table 32 provides the comparisons between female and male students' desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in the future. No significant difference was found as all p-values were greater than 0.1 except for the survey question 4.1. This question stated: "how often should your teacher speak Mandarin in EFL classes", and female and male students' answers differed significantly. Male students desired less Mandarin usage by EFL teachers for their future EFL learning. However, when they were asked about their desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in different contexts, there was no significant difference between female and male students' opinions.

**Table 31. Students' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in classrooms by gender (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3)	Female (n=181)		Male (n=52)		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
3.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.02	0.80	1.96	1.01	0.45	0.6520
3.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.50	1.01	2.29	0.94	1.37	0.1716
3.3 Explaining English grammar	2.51	1.08	2.00	0.95	3.06	0.0025
3.4 Introducing English culture	2.27	1.10	2.17	1.02	0.57	0.5674
3.5 Providing activity objectives	2.67	1.18	2.52	1.21	0.83	0.4089
3.6 Providing activity instruction	2.56	1.16	2.42	1.07	0.78	0.4351
3.7 Encouraging students	1.75	0.91	1.79	0.91	-0.26	0.7965
3.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	1.98	1.08	2.04	0.88	-0.34	0.7374
3.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.03	1.06	2.06	1.00	-0.18	0.8549
3.10 Comprehension checks	1.88	0.90	1.94	0.85	-0.45	0.6499
3.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.13	0.94	2.15	0.80	-0.19	0.8517
3.12 Announcing administrative items	3.04	1.23	2.79	1.13	1.32	0.1882

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

**Table 32. Students' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in the future by gender (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 4)	Female (n=181)		Male (n=52)		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.09	0.88	1.73	0.56	2.78	0.0059
4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.57	1.03	2.33	0.90	1.53	0.1275
4.3 Explaining English grammar	2.65	1.07	2.38	1.05	1.56	0.1208
4.4 Introducing English culture	2.35	1.09	2.25	0.90	0.63	0.5316
4.5 Providing activity objectives	2.76	1.22	2.60	1.01	0.90	0.3697
4.6 Providing activity instruction	2.68	1.25	2.52	1.04	0.84	0.4007
4.7 Encouraging students	1.93	0.97	2.02	0.85	-0.61	0.5416
4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.14	0.96	2.17	0.79	-0.20	0.8399
4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.13	0.96	2.33	0.98	-1.28	0.2031
4.10 Comprehension checks	2.09	0.91	2.12	0.90	-0.15	0.8808
4.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.28	0.94	2.42	0.89	-0.97	0.3346
4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.18	1.18	3.00	1.30	0.96	0.3384

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

As already discussed, no significant difference was found in 10 of the 12 questions analysed in Table 30, and 11 questions analysed in both Tables 31 and 32 respectively.

From these analyses I concluded that gender was not a decisive factor in students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage, their estimations about EFL teachers'

amount of Mandarin usage and their desired EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in the future. If any difference existed, the difference was likely to be related to students' English proficiency levels as female students had higher levels than male students.

## **5.6 Student major and students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage**

Table 33 shows the distributions of all 233 students from University B by their major and English proficiency levels. Students who majored in Design had the lowest English proficiency levels as more than half of them were classified into Level 1. Only 20% of the Design students were studying Level 4 courses at the time this study was conducted. Students who majored in Liberal Arts had higher English proficiency levels than Design major students; however, they were less competent in EFL than students of Economics and Business. Science and Engineering students had comparatively the highest English proficiency levels: 25 of the 41 students were in English proficiency Level 4 and 15 students in Level 3.

**Table 33. Student distribution by major and level (University B only)**

	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Liberal Arts</b>	9	28	10	47
<b>Science and Engineering</b>	1	15	25	41
<b>Economics and Business</b>	0	45	45	90
<b>Design</b>	29	15	11	55
<b>Total</b>	39	103	91	233

Table 34 shows the differences in students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom between the different majored students. The differences between the four major groups could not be related to their different English proficiency levels. Students who majored in Science and Engineering, who were the highest English proficiency level students, had the highest *means* for 11 of the 12 survey questions. They were most likely to agree that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was helpful for their EFL learning in different Mandarin usage contexts. Students who majored in Economics and Business gave the lowest *means* for nine of the 12 survey questions. Liberal Arts students gave the lowest mean for two survey questions; Design students with the lowest English proficiency levels gave the lowest *mean* for only one survey question.

**Table 34. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage by major (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2)	Liberals arts (n=47)		Science and Engineering (n=41)		Economics and Business (n=90)		Design (n=55)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	4.68	0.89	4.44	1.27	4.30	1.18	4.56	1.51
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	4.83	1.15	5.07	0.98	4.83	1.05	5.05	1.31
2.3 Explaining English grammar	4.91	1.04	5.37	1.09	4.90	1.14	5.31	1.10
2.4 Introducing English culture	4.64	1.17	4.66	1.26	4.61	1.24	4.49	1.56
2.5 Providing activity objectives	4.91	0.95	4.95	1.24	4.67	1.18	4.80	1.24
2.6 Providing activity instruction	4.47	0.93	5.00	1.20	4.42	1.20	4.51	1.29
2.7 Encouraging students	3.70	1.30	3.90	1.48	3.63	1.36	3.65	1.48
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.06	0.96	4.54	1.03	4.09	1.12	4.20	1.38
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.60	1.14	3.98	1.23	3.44	1.26	3.60	1.45
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.68	1.25	3.98	1.23	3.61	1.39	3.62	1.21
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	3.62	1.19	4.00	1.26	3.62	1.25	3.93	1.44
2.12 Announcing administrative items	4.87	0.90	5.34	1.06	5.00	1.21	5.24	1.29

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

When students' majors were taken into consideration, their English proficiency levels were not found to be the decisive factor in their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. Comparisons between students with the highest English proficiency levels (students majoring in Science and Engineering) and students with the lowest English proficiency levels (students majoring in Design) were made (see Table 35). For 11 of the 12 survey questions,  $p$ -values were greater than 0.1, but for survey question 2.6 the  $p$ -value was greater than 0.05. This means that there was no significant difference between the Science and Engineering and the Design major students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage for 11 survey questions, and there was weak evidence that their attitudes differed significantly for the survey question related to providing instructions for activities.

**Table 35. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage (Science and Engineering students vs Design students at University B)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 2)	Science and Engineering (n=41)		Design (n=55)			
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
2.1 Total Mandarin usage	4.44	1.27	4.56	1.51	-0.43	0.6700
2.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	5.07	0.98	5.05	1.31	0.08	0.9394
2.3 Explaining English grammar	5.37	1.09	5.31	1.10	0.25	0.8026
2.4 Introducing English culture	4.66	1.26	4.49	1.56	0.56	0.5740
2.5 Providing activity objectives	4.95	1.24	4.80	1.24	0.59	0.5561
2.6 Providing activity instruction	5.00	1.20	4.51	1.29	1.90	0.0608
2.7 Encouraging students	3.90	1.48	3.65	1.48	0.81	0.4191
2.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	4.54	1.03	4.20	1.38	1.31	0.1922
2.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	3.98	1.23	3.60	1.45	1.34	0.1843
2.10 Comprehension checks	3.98	1.23	3.62	1.21	1.42	0.1590
2.11 Building up good rapport with students	4.00	1.26	3.93	1.44	0.26	0.7971
2.12 Announcing administrative items	5.34	1.06	5.24	1.29	0.42	0.6719

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

When students were asked to estimate the actual amount of their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom, Design students gave the highest responses the other three major students for all of the 12 survey questions (see Table 36). As discussed in section 5.4.2, regarding students' English proficiency levels and their estimations of EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage in EFL classes, EFL teachers used different amounts of Mandarin for different English proficiency levels students, using more Mandarin when they were teaching low English proficiency level students. The reason for EFL teachers' greater usage of Mandarin with Design students compared with students of the other three majors might be related to 29 of the 55 Design students being classified as English proficiency Level 1. As noted earlier (see Section 5.4.2), when EFL teachers taught English proficiency Level 1 students they spoke more Mandarin than when they taught Level 3 and 4 students.

**Table 36. Students' estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classrooms by major (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 3)	Liberals arts (n=47)		Science and Engineering (n=41)		Economics and Business (n=90)		Design (n=55)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
3.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.00	0.72	1.83	0.74	1.87	0.84	2.38	0.95
3.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.47	1.04	2.46	0.98	2.30	0.95	2.69	1.02
3.3 Explaining English grammar	2.34	1.15	2.46	1.05	2.28	1.06	2.58	1.05
3.4 Introducing English culture	2.13	1.06	2.24	1.07	2.14	1.09	2.53	1.09
3.5 Providing activity objectives	2.55	1.04	2.56	0.92	2.47	1.26	3.05	1.30
3.6 Providing activity instruction	2.40	1.04	2.34	0.88	2.42	1.21	2.96	1.20
3.7 Encouraging students	1.77	0.91	1.76	0.89	1.46	0.75	2.25	0.97
3.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	1.81	0.90	2.02	0.99	1.84	1.02	2.38	1.15
3.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	1.96	0.98	1.85	0.82	1.93	1.08	2.40	1.12
3.10 Comprehension checks	1.89	0.84	1.71	0.68	1.76	0.87	2.25	1.02
3.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.09	0.86	2.05	0.77	1.99	0.85	2.47	1.05
3.12 Announcing administrative items	2.89	1.07	3.00	1.26	2.87	1.17	3.24	1.32

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

As shown in Table 37, Design students desired that EFL teachers' used more Mandarin in the future compared with students in the other three majors. This difference might be explained by their different English proficiency levels. As analysed in section 5.4.3, regarding students' English proficiency levels and their desired amount of Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms by EFL teachers in the future, low English proficiency level students desired more Mandarin usage from their EFL teachers compared with high English proficiency levels students. Design students who had comparatively the lowest English proficiency levels received more Mandarin amount from EFL teachers.

**Table 37. Students' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future by major (University B only)**

Survey question (Appendix 4, Section 4 and 4)	Liberal arts (n=47)		Science and Engineering (n=41)		Economics and Business (n=90)		Design (n=55)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
4.1 Total Mandarin usage	2.19	0.85	2.07	0.96	1.74	0.65	2.24	0.88
4.2 Translation of previous words or expressions	2.47	0.91	2.56	1.14	2.34	1.04	2.80	0.89
4.3 Explaining English grammar	2.60	1.01	2.56	1.00	2.56	1.21	2.65	0.95
4.4 Introducing English culture	2.34	1.05	2.32	0.99	2.19	1.09	2.56	1.01
4.5 Providing activity objectives	2.68	1.20	3.00	1.10	2.50	1.19	2.93	1.14
4.6 Providing activity instruction	2.60	1.19	2.76	1.20	2.46	1.24	2.91	1.16
4.7 Encouraging students	2.04	0.98	1.95	0.95	1.67	0.81	2.33	1.00
4.8 Evaluating students' answers or practice	2.28	0.97	2.29	0.72	1.91	0.93	2.33	0.94
4.9 Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin	2.11	0.87	2.27	0.84	2.03	1.03	2.40	1.01
4.10 Comprehension checks	2.28	0.97	2.00	0.77	1.94	0.89	2.27	0.93
4.11 Building up good rapport with students	2.36	1.01	2.29	0.81	2.11	0.94	2.62	0.85
4.12 Announcing administrative items	3.13	1.24	3.15	1.15	3.06	1.22	3.29	1.21

\*M refers to Mean; SD refers to Standard deviation.

## 5.7 Summary

In this chapter, data collected from class audio-recording sessions and questionnaires were analysed quantitatively. Five levels of analysis were conducted: a) calculation of Mandarin usage amount of eight class audio-recording sessions; b) comparison between students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms; c) the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms; d) the relationship between students' genders and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms; e) and the relationship between students' majors and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms.

First, by applying 15-second sampling technique (Duff & Polio, 1990), four EFL teachers' Mandarin and English utterances were classified into five categories and calculations were made to indicate the percentages of Mandarin and English usage amount in the EFL classrooms. The results show that teachers' Mandarin usage varied widely from 0.78% to 74.83%.

Secondly, student and teacher participants' responses to the survey questions were analysed. A comparison was made between student and teacher participants' responses to indicate the differences between students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. Both students and teachers agreed that

Mandarin usage was helpful in ELF classrooms for students' English learning processes. Students were more likely to admit that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage were positive for EFL learning and teaching. A higher proportion of teachers than students believed that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage could save class time.

Both students and teachers estimated that EFL teachers' total Mandarin usage was about 40% of class time in their actual practice in EFL classrooms. However, teachers' estimations of their own amount of Mandarin usage were all below students' estimations, except for explaining English grammar and announcing administrative items.

EFL teachers desired less teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes in the future (about 0-20%); while students' desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount ranged from 20% to 40%. Explaining grammar was the only context in which teachers expected more Mandarin usage than their students.

When comparing actual and desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount, EFL teachers thought it was more desirable that they used less EFL Mandarin usage in the future than their actual amount of Mandarin usage. However, students desired more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers except for translations.

Thirdly, students' English proficiency levels were taken into consideration. The results show that low English proficiency level EFL students were more likely to agree on the advantages of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. According to students' estimations, EFL teachers used Mandarin more frequently when they gave EFL courses to low English proficiency level EFL students (Level 1 English proficiency) compared with high levels (Level 4 English proficiency). Low English proficiency level students thought that their EFL teachers used Mandarin for 41% to 60% of the time, whereas high English proficiency level EFL students estimated that their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was from 21% to 40% of the time in classroom.

High English proficiency level EFL students desired less Mandarin usage from their EFL teachers than low English proficiency level students. However, when comparing students' estimated EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage and their desired amount in the future, low English proficiency level students appeared to desire less Mandarin usage by EFL teachers than their teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage, whereas high English proficiency level students desired more Mandarin usage from EFL teachers for their future EFL learning practices.

Fourthly, gender was not a decisive factor in students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage. Female and male students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage did not differ significantly except in the context where EFL teachers used Mandarin for encouraging students to speak English in EFL classes: male students

were more likely to agree that students were more willing to speak English when their EFL teachers encouraged students in Mandarin. No significant difference was found concerning female and male students' estimated EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage except for Mandarin used for teaching English grammar. No significant difference was found when comparing female and male students' desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the future.

Finally, the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the classroom could not explain the differences that existed among students from different majors. Students who majored in Science and Engineering and who had the highest English proficiency levels were most likely to admit the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage. This finding is contradictory with what is presented in Section 5.4.1: students with comparatively lower English proficiency levels were more likely to admit the positive effects of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. The reasons of this result need further research in the future.

Design students with the lowest English proficiency levels estimated the greatest amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage; they also desired the most amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the future. These results reflected the analysis in section 5.4.2 (Students' English proficiency levels and their estimations of EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in EFL classes); and 5.4.3 (Students' English

proficiency levels and their desired amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in the future).

In Chapter 6, data collected from the eight class audio-recordings will be analysed qualitatively to address the research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in EFL classrooms? EFL teachers used Mandarin in different contexts, such as translating English words or expressions into Mandarin, teaching English grammar, and comprehension checks. Their amount of Mandarin usage in different contexts also differed. The EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts were classified into categories; additionally, the frequencies of Mandarin usage contexts were calculated and these are presented in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Qualitative Analysis of Teachers' Mandarin Usage Contexts**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the same transcriptions of the class audio-recording sessions (Chapter 4) were used to analyse the usage contexts in which EFL teachers resorted to Mandarin in EFL classrooms. This analysis was undertaken to address research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms? Eight class audio-recording sessions were provided by the same four EFL teachers who participated in the teachers' interviews: Teacher A, B and D from University A; and Teacher C from University B (see Chapter 7). This study applied the same technique as that used by Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002): eight class audio-recording sessions were first transcribed, and then divided into discourse passages for the purpose of analysis. As explained in Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) study, linguistic features of classroom interaction indicating a switch to a different phase in the teaching were used as criteria to determine the beginning of a passage for transcription purposes. Similar discursive notions or utterances (when the teacher finished her turn of speech) as well as prosodic features of speech (falling intonation) were indications of the end of a teacher's speaking. In this study, four EFL

teachers often used some words or expressions to indicate the beginning and the end of their discourse, as shown in the Table 38.

**Table 38. Examples of expressions used by EFL teachers to indicate the beginning or the end of a discourse passage**

	<b>Words for the beginning</b>	<b>Words for the end</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	First Next Now	So Ok
<b>Teacher B</b>	Ok First Second Next	Good Yes That's it.
<b>Teacher C</b>	Then The last	Right Good
<b>Teacher D</b>	So let's begin... Next	Excellent Right

Some authors consider that Chinese students are often silent in EFL classrooms as they are deeply influenced by Confucian thinking (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995; Liu & Littlewood, 1997). Students in this study were very quiet in EFL classrooms so there were not many discourse passages involving teacher-student interactions in this study to analyse. However, it does raise the question “Were the students influenced in their verbal interactions within the classroom because they were being audio-recorded?” Furthermore, if any interactions did occur in this study, only the teachers’ speaking was transcribed as it was the focus of the research.

## 6.2 Coding procedure

### 6.2.1 Coding scheme for teachers' Mandarin usage contexts

A total of 307 discourse passages was obtained from the class audio-recording sessions. The transcriptions of these 307 passages were then analysed by using a coding scheme in Table 39. Based on the studies by Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) and De La Campa and Nassaji (2009), a scheme which indicated the circumstances under which EFL teachers used Mandarin in EFL teaching was established for this study. I coded four times, passage by passage, in order to validate the coding scheme and to check for reliability of the coding application. Table 39 presents all the usage context categories of these four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in their non-English major EFL classrooms.

Three of these 12 Mandarin usage context codes were then sub-classified, they were *Translation* (code 1), *Instruction* (code 5), and *Other* (code 12). The sub-classifications of these three codes are showed in tables from Table 40 to Table 42.

**Table 39. Coding scheme of four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Explanation of code</b>
<i>1. Translation</i>	EFL teachers switched from English to Mandarin to give the translated version of their English articulation.
<i>2. Grammar</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to explain English grammar to students.
<i>3. Culture</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to introduce the culture of English-speaking countries.
<i>4. Objective</i>	EFL teachers provided students with objectives of teaching activities in Mandarin.
<i>5. Instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give instructions to students.
<i>6. Encouragement</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to encourage students to respond in English.
<i>7. Evaluation</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English.
<i>8. Responses to students' questions</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to respond to students' questions raised in Mandarin
<i>9. Comprehension checks</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to check if students understand the teaching content.
<i>10. Good rapport</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to build up a good rapport with students.
<i>11. Administration</i>	EFL teachers announced administrative items in Mandarin, such as timetabling issues and exam plans.
<i>12. Other</i>	Other usage contexts (details in Table 42)

**Table 40. Sub-classification of Translation (code 1)**

<b>Code 1</b>	<b>Explanation of code</b>
<i>1a. Word translation</i>	EFL teachers translated their previous words into Mandarin.
<i>1b. Phrase translation</i>	EFL teachers translated their previous phrases into Mandarin.
<i>1c. Sentence translation</i>	EFL teachers translated their previous sentences into Mandarin.

**Table 41. Sub-classification of *Instruction* (code 5)**

<b>Code 5</b>	<b>Explanation of code</b>
<i>5a. Procedural instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give instructions of the procedure in Mandarin.
<i>5b. Word instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give extended or related topics about the English word to facilitate students' understanding of the word.
<i>5c. Phrase instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give extended or related topics about the English phrase to facilitate students' understanding of the phrase.
<i>5d. Sentence instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give extended or related topics about the English sentences to facilitate students' understanding of the phrase.
<i>5e. Text instruction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to give extended or related topics about the text to be taught to facilitate students' understanding of the text.

**Table 42. Sub-classification of *Other* (code 12)**

<b>Code 12</b>	<b>Explanation of code</b>
<i>12a. Asking for help from students</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to ask students for help.
<i>12b. Name</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to call students' name in Mandarin.
<i>12c. Conjunction</i>	EFL teachers used Mandarin to say some conjunctive words.
<i>12d. Comment</i>	EFL teachers gave personal comments in Mandarin

### 6.2.2 Coding for EFL teachers' discourse passages

After building up the coding scheme, each Mandarin usage in the 307 discourse passages was examined and given a usage code according to the circumstance under which it happened. The discourse passages were represented in this study by a coding system. A1.17.05.2012.100 means Teacher A, class audio-recording session one, recorded on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012, Line 100 of the transcript. B2.24.05.2012.219-225 means Teacher B, Class audio-recording session two, recorded on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012,

Line 219 to 225 of the transcript. Teacher A, B and D all provided two class audio-recording sessions of about 40 minutes. Teacher C provided two EFL classes without a break. Hence Teacher C had only one class audio-recording session which involved about 80 minutes. The discourse passages for Teacher C were presented as C.31.05.2012.215-219; it means, Teacher C, Class audio-recording session recorded on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012, from Line 215 to 219 of the transcript.

Discourse passages from the four EFL teachers are presented in tables in this chapter; the discourse passages sometimes include the reactions or responses from their students. In the tables, Teacher A was abbreviated as TA, students as S. As discussed in section 4.1.2.1, these four EFL teachers' Mandarin speaking was transcribed into Han Yu Pin Yin. Words or sentences in Han Yu Pin Yin were transcribed in italics and the English translation was put into bracket < >. Students' responses were put into brackets (). And words or expressions these four EFL teachers used as examples, or quotes, in their teaching were put into quotation marks, shown as "...". Anything that the four EFL teachers forgot to say, or omitted, was completed by the researcher and put into brackets () as shown in Table 43.

Some discourse passages contained more than one Mandarin usage context. As shown in Table 43, there were four Mandarin usage contexts in this discourse passage: the first Mandarin usage context was *Translation* (word, phrase, sentence); the second was *Administrative announcement*; the third was *Instruction* (procedure, word, phrase,

sentence, text); and the last was classified as the code of *Other* (asking for help from students, name, conjunction, comment).

**Table 43. Discourse passage A1.17.05.2012.301-307**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA:	For example, you can say, he was in good condition again after a long holiday. You are going to have a summer holiday. So after, maybe after the summer holiday, you will be in good condition again. Now you are not in a good condition.	
S:	(Students laughed.)	
TA:	<i>ni xian zai zhuang kuang bu shi hen hao de. Maybe after two months summer holiday (you will be good). jin nian, jin jian de summer holiday hen chang, zheng liang ge yue, dui ba. ni men zhe ge qi yue yi hao jiu dismissed. ni men ke neng zhi yao, ni men ke neng kao wan ying yu jiu ke yi go back home.</i>	1. <You are not in a good condition now. > 2. <The summer holiday of this year is very long, two months. You will be dismissed on July 1st. You may go back home after the English exam.>
	You look forward to it.	
	<i>na me liang ge yue zhi hou, ni ke neng jiu in good condition. ni xian zai MEI JING DA CAI, liang ge yue hou you bian de SHENG LONG HUO HU.</i>	3. <So you may be in a good condition two months later. You are out of spirits now, but two months later, you will be full of vim and vigour. >
S:	(Students laughed loudly.)	
TA:	<i>suo yi</i> , in good condition.	4. <So, in good condition.>

## 6.3 Qualitative analysis of the four EFL teachers' discourse passages

### 6.3.1 Frequencies of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts

After acknowledging that some discourse passages might contain more than one usage context, I began to calculate the numbers of all usage contexts for each of the four EFL teachers' Mandarin speaking; and the numbers of all usage contexts for each teacher's Mandarin talk. A total of 756 units of all kinds of Mandarin usage contexts were recorded, and then the frequencies of each usage context were calculated as shown in Table 44.

**Table 44. Raw data of frequencies of all Mandarin usage contexts**

Mandarin usage Contexts	Unit Number					Percentage (%)				
	All	TA	TB	TC	TD	All	TA	TB	TC	TD
1. Translation	405	72	180	129	24	53.57	30.90	69.77	64.18	37.50
2. Grammar	1	0	0	1	0	0.13	0	0	1.49	0
3. Culture	4	3	0	1	0	0.53	1.29	0	0.50	0
4. Objective	14	4	10	0	0	1.85	1.72	3.88	0	0
5. Instruction	155	97	50	8	0	20.50	41.63	19.38	2.99	0
6. Encouragement	46	18	16	9	3	6.08	7.73	6.20	4.48	4.69
7. Evaluation	4	0	0	4	0	0.53	0	0	1.99	0
8. Responses to students' questions	3	0	0	3	0	0.40	0	0	1.49	0
9. Comprehension checks	22	17	1	3	1	2.91	7.30	0.39	1.49	1.56
10. Good Rapport	5	3	0	2	0	0.66	1.29	0	1.00	0
11. Administration	9	0	0	9	0	1.19	0	0	4.48	0
12. Other	88	19	1	32	36	11.64	8.15	0.39	15.92	56.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

There were both similarities and differences among the teachers' Mandarin usage context frequencies. All four EFL teachers used Mandarin most frequently for translation. Another usage context well accepted by these four EFL teachers was using Mandarin to encourage students (6.08%). But the four EFL teachers did not use Mandarin in all Mandarin usage contexts. For example, Teacher A did not use Mandarin for explaining grammar; evaluating students' answers; answering students' questions asked in Mandarin; and announcing administrative items. Teacher C did not use Mandarin to provide teaching activity objectives to students. Teachers A and B used Mandarin more frequently than the other two teachers for instructions; whereas Teacher B and Teacher D used Mandarin more frequently in the code context of other.

*Translation* was the most frequent usage context; it comprised 53.57% (Table 44) of all usage contexts. It was sub-classified into three categories: *word translation*; *phrase translation*; and *sentence translation*. Table 45 shows a large discrepancy in the usage context *Translation* among the four EFL teachers. Teacher A used Mandarin much more frequently for translating sentences than words and phrase; while Teacher D translated words and phrases more often than sentences. Teachers B and C translated phrases less frequently than words and sentences.

**Table 45. Mandarin usage context of *Translation* (code 1)**

Mandarin Usage Contexts	Unit Number					Percentage (%)				
	All	TA	TB	TC	TD	All	TA	TB	TC	TD
<i>1a. Word</i>	139	5	82	42	10	34.32	6.94	45.56	32.56	41.67
<i>1b. Phrase</i>	72	5	32	25	10	17.78	6.94	17.78	19.38	41.67
<i>1c. Sentence</i>	194	62	66	62	4	47.90	86.11	36.67	48.06	16.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Instruction* was the second most common usage context in teachers' Mandarin talk during EFL classes. It contributed about 20.5% of teachers' Mandarin talk (Table 44). It was sub-classified into five sub categories; the frequencies of each are shown in the Table 46.

**Table 46. Mandarin usage context of *Instruction* (code 5)**

Mandarin Usage Contexts	Unit Number					Percentage (%)				
	All	TA	TB	TC	TD	All	TA	TB	TC	TD
<i>5a. Procedure</i>	45	29	15	1	0	29.03	29.90	30.00	12.50	0
<i>5b. Word</i>	40	13	22	5	0	25.81	13.40	44.00	62.50	0
<i>5c. Phrase</i>	32	26	6	0	0	20.65	26.80	12.00	0	0
<i>5d. Sentence</i>	12	3	7	2	0	7.74	3.09	14.00	25.00	0
<i>5e. Text</i>	26	26	0	0	0	16.77	26.80	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>

As Table 47 shows, five usage contexts were combined as the Mandarin usage context *Other: to call students' names; to ask help from students; to tell some conjunctive words; or to give personal comment*. Teacher A was the only teacher who gave her personal comments during EFL classes, and only Teacher C used Mandarin to ask for help from students. Teachers A and B never called students' names in Mandarin; but Teachers C and D did it very often.

**Table 47. Mandarin usage context of *Other* (code 12)**

Mandarin Usage Contexts	Unit Number					Percentage (%)				
	All	TA	TB	TC	TD	All	TA	TB	TC	TD
<i>12a. Students' Names</i>	67	0	0	31	36	76.14	0	0	96.88	100
<i>12b. Asking for help from students</i>	1	0	0	1	0	1.14	0	0	3.13	0
<i>12c. Conjunction</i>	7	6	1	0	0	7.95	31.58	100	0	0
<i>12d. Personal Comment</i>	13	13	0	0	0	14.77	68.42	0	0	0
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### 6.3.2 Examples of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts

Excerpts were extracted from the transcriptions of the four EFL teachers' class audio-recording sessions, and used to provide examples for each Mandarin usage context. In the excerpts in this section, teachers' Mandarin talk was transcribed in Han Yu Pin Yin. When there was an interaction between teacher and students, only teachers' talk was transcribed, shown as TA, TB, TC and TD. S represented the responses of students. Students' responses were put into brackets. For example, (the student could not answer the question) or (the students were answering the question). If teachers did not finish a sentence for some reason, what they omitted was also put into brackets as (...). For example, Teacher A asked: *Do you understand the meaning of this word? Could you tell (us the meaning)?* The words, phrases or sentences teachers used as examples were all put into a quotation mark as "...". Teachers' Mandarin talk showing the Mandarin usage contexts was underlined in the excerpts.

### 6.3.2.1 Example for Mandarin usage context of Word translation (code 1a)

In Table 48, Teacher B translated the English word of “millennium” into Mandarin.

**Table 48. Class audio-recording excerpt B1.24.05.2012.38**

	Teacher’s Talk	English Meaning of Teacher’s Mandarin Talk
TB:	And the next one (vocabulary), millennium, <u>yi qian nian</u> , Millennium, <u>yi qian nian</u> .	<millennium> <millennium>

### 6.3.2.2 Example for Mandarin usage context of Phrase translation (code 1b)

Teacher C was teaching the new phrase “tangle with” (Table 49). She gave the phrase in English and immediately translated it into Mandarin.

**Table 49. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.317-320**

	Teacher’s Talk	English Meaning of Teacher’s Mandarin Talk
TC	Tangle with something or somebody, <u>gen mo ren huo mo shi jiu chan</u> . I should not tangle with Peter—he is bigger than me. What does tangle mean? Or what does this tangle mean?	<tangle with somebody of something>

### 6.3.2.3 Example for Mandarin usage context of Sentence translation (code 1c)

As shown in Table 50, Teacher C was teaching the text. She introduced the Amazon River and the Napo River. She translated her sentence of “Actually the Napo River just joins the Amazon River” into Mandarin.

**Table 50. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.210-213**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	That is the Amazon River. That scenery is just the Amazon River. Then the Napo River. And that is the introduction. Actually the Napo River just joins the Amazon River.	
	<u>ta zui hou he ya ma xun he shi liu dao yi qi.</u>	<The Napo River joins the Amazon River.>

#### 6.3.2.4 Example for Mandarin usage context of Grammar (code 2)

Here Teacher C was teaching the inverted sentence (Table 51). She spoke in Mandarin directly to tell students that the sentence was an inverted sentence as the prepositional clause “behind us” was put at the beginning of the sentence.

**Table 51. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.247-249**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	“Behind us came the sound of a recorder”. <u>dao zhuang ju</u> , behind us <u>jie ci duan yu ti qian, ju zi wan quan dao zhuang.</u>	<“Behind us” is a prepositional clause, you put it at the beginning of the sentence, and the sentence becomes an inverted sentence.>

#### 6.3.2.5 Example for Mandarin usage context of Culture (code 3)

As shown in Table 52, Teacher A used Mandarin to explain to her students what a remittance man was. Remittance men were a particular group of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in British society. Students could hardly have background knowledge about the term of primogeniture and they could not understand who remittance men were.

Table 52. Class audio-recording excerpt A2.17.05.2012.244-249

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA:	<p><u>dan shi shen me ren cai zuo</u> remittance man? <u>shen me ren?</u> <u>shen me yang de ren cai zuo</u> remittance man? <u>na wo men lai kan yi xia, you liang lei ren.</u> A younger son, <u>shen me jiao</u> younger son? <u>bu shi zhang zi ma, bus hi zhang zi.</u> <u>shi jiu shi ji mo de hua,</u> <u>zuo wei ying guo de jia ting, you qian dian de, ta de qian dou shi gei zhang zi de.</u> <u>cong di er ge er zi kai shi zhi neng ji cheng hen xiao hen xiao yi bu fen.</u> <u>suo yi you de shi hou zhe ge</u> younger son <u>ne, ta yao zen me yang?</u> <u>ta yao chu qu chuang zi ji de shi ye.</u> <u>ta shuo wo dao wai guo, e, zhi min di qu, ji hui duo yi dian.</u> <u>you ke neng jiu</u> successful, <u>dui bu dui?</u> <u>zhe shi yi zhong.</u> <u>dan shi</u> Lenny <u>hen ming xian shi shu yu zhe zhong:</u> a black sheep! <u>yi qun yang dou shi bai de,</u> <u>you yi zhi hei de, jiu shi jia li de bai jia zi, jiu shi gei jia li mo hei de zhe zhong ren:</u> a black sheep of an upper or middle class family who was sent away. <u>ye jiu shi shuo, ta shi zhong shang ceng jia ting li mian yi ge suo wei bai jia zi de xing xiang.</u> <u>ran hou fu mu ba ta song zou de, fu mu bu neng ba ta liu zai jia li, ba ta song zou ba.</u> And paid, <u>ran hou shuo wo gei ni qian, ni zou ba, shi bu shi?</u></p>	<p>&lt;What is a remittance man? Or who were called remittance men? Who were they? Now let's have a look. There were two kinds of remittance men. The first kind of remittance men, a younger son in a family. What is a younger son? Not the eldest son. At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, primogeniture was the right, by law or custom, of the firstborn son to inherit the family estate, in preference to siblings. Younger sons were entitled to just a small proportion of the family estate. Sometimes the younger sons tried to make a fortune in a foreign country, eh, a colony. Maybe they got more chances, maybe they became successful. Right? This is the first kind of remittance men. But Lenny was one of the second kind of remittance men: a black sheep. All the other sheep are white, only one is black. We call this man a black sheep, a member of a family or group who is regarded as a disgrace to it. Lenny was a black sheep of an upper or middle class family and he was sent away. His parents did not allow him to stay at home; they gave him a sum of money and sent him away to a colony. Right? &gt;</p>

### 6.3.2.6 Example for Mandarin usage context of Objective (code 4)

Table 53 demonstrates how Teacher B gave the teaching objective to her students.

Teacher B was going over new vocabulary with students. Then she switched into

Mandarin to tell students that they should remember the vocabulary and master them as the objective of this teaching activity.

**Table 53. Class audio-recording excerpt B1.24.05.2012.47-48**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TB:	Ok, two words with prefix, "untangle", U-N; "enslave", E-N; "millennium". <u><i>dan ci yao ren shi, gang cai san ge shi yao zhang wo de.</i></u>	<i>You should remember these words, master these words.&gt;</i>

### 6.3.2.7 Example for Mandarin usage context of Procedural instruction (code 5a)

Table 54 shows how Teacher A gave students a procedural instruction. She asked students to turn to page one hundred and seventy-two in Mandarin.

**Table 54. Class audio-recording excerpt A2.17.05.2012.138**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA:	<u><i>wo men fan dao yi bai qi shi er ye lai kan yi xia.</i></u>	<i>&lt;Please turn to page one hundred and seventy-two.&gt;</i>

### 6.3.2.8 Example for Mandarin Usage Context of Word Instruction (code 5b)

Teacher C was teaching the text and came across the new vocabulary "moth" (Table 55). In order to help students remember it better, she quoted an idiom in Mandarin "fei e pu huo" to further explain it to her students. The well-known idiom in Mandarin means a flying moth darting into a flame. By quoting this idiom in Mandarin, Teacher C helped students to connect this English word with its image and its meaning.

**Table 55. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.195-196**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	Moths, <i>fei e</i> .	<moth>
	In Chinese you have an idiom that is " <u><i>fei e pu huo</i></u> ".	<a flying moth darting into a flame>

### 6.3.2.9 Example for Mandarin usage context of Phrase instruction (code 5c)

In Table 56, Teacher A was teaching the phrase of “something of”, in order that her students would understand the meaning and usage of this phrase; she spoke in Mandarin, telling students the differences between “something of” and “in a way”.

**Table 56. Class audio-recording excerpt A1.17.05.2012.147-150**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA	Similar to something of, <u><i>he</i></u> something of <u><i>yi si shi cha bu duo de, dan shi gong neng shang lai jiang bu yi yang.</i></u> “Something of” <u><i>ta shi jia ming ci, dan shi</i></u> “in a way” <u><i>ne, ta shi zuo zhuang yu de, suo yi ta shi gen ju zi yi qi yong. Ye jiu shi ni ke yi fang zai ju shou, ke yi fang zai ju wei.</i></u>	<“In a way” has the similar meaning to “something of”, but there is still a difference between them. “Something of” is always followed by a noun. But “in a way” is always used as an adverbial modifier, so it is used as a clause in a sentence, you can put it at the beginning of a sentence, or at the end of a sentence as well.>

### 6.3.2.10 Example for Mandarin usage context of Sentence instruction (code 5d)

Table 57 shows that Teacher B was helping students to finish some paraphrasing exercises. Students were required to make a sentence by using the word “forecast” to replace the word “predict” in the original sentence. Teacher B read the original sentence and translated it into Mandarin clause by clause. Then Teacher B continued

in Mandarin to explain how to rewrite the sentence by using the new word “forecast”. She gave explanations and instructions about the sentence. Finally she helped students to construct the new sentence.

**Table 57. Class audio-recording excerpt B2.24.05.2012.219-225**

	Teacher’s Talk	English Meaning of Teacher’s Mandarin Talk
TB	“It is predicted”,	
	<i>ju ce, ju yu ce,</i>	<to say something will happen in the future>,
	“the next year unemployment rate will be below average”,	
	<i>ming nian de shi ye lu hui jiang zhi ping jun shui ping yi xia,</i>	<the next year unemployment rate will be below average>,
	“which at the moment is four percent”.	
	<i>xian zai shi bai fen zhi si.</i>	<which at the moment is four percent>.
	<u><i>Zhe ge forecasting gai qu ti huan yuan ju dang zhong de</i></u> “predict” <u><i>ying gai qu ti huan yuan ju dang zhong de</i></u> predict. <u><i>suo yi xian zai bian cheng le</i></u> “the unemployment rate”, <u><i>ta shi bei yu ce de, suo yi zhe ju ying gai shi, reng ran ying gai shi</i></u> “is forecasted”, <u><i>hou mian</i></u> to be below average.	<This “forecast” must replace the “predict” in the original sentence. So now we have “the unemployment rate”, it is predicted by people, so here we use “is forecasted”, then “to be below average”.>
	“The unemployment rate is forecasted to be below average.”	

### 6.3.2.11 Example for Mandarin usage context of Text instruction (code 5e)

Table 58 shows that Teacher A used both English and Mandarin to give students instruction of the text to be taught. After she told students in English that there were two stories in this text, Teacher A switched to Mandarin twice to tell students who the

narrators were for each of the two stories and which story was the main story.

**Table 58. Class audio-recording excerpt A2.17.05.2012.53-60**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA	How many stories?	
	<i>wo men shuo yi ge story shi yi ge duan pian xiao shuo. dan zhe li mian you ji ge xiao shuo, e, ji ge gu shi?</i>	<i>&lt;A story, a short story. How many are there in this text? &gt;</i>
S:	(Students gave different answers to this question.)	
TA:	Two. We have a story within a story.	
	<u><i>zui wai mian de zhe ge xiao shuo shi shei lai, zui wai mian de gu shi shi shei lai jiang de? shi "wo" jiang de.</i></u>	<i>&lt;Who tells the first story, the first story is told by which person? It's "I". &gt;</i>
	"I" tell the readers that once "I" came across an "Edward Burton". This "Edward" told "me" something.	
	<u><i>shi bus hi a ? shi bus hi di yi ceng shi yi ge gu shi a? wo ma. wo gen du zhe shuo, wo peng dao yi ge "Edward", zhe ge ren gen wo jiang le yi jian shi qing. ran hou zhe ge li mian you shi shen me?</i></u>	<i>&lt;Right? Is this the first story? "I" tell the readers that once "I" met with an "Edward", and this man told me another story. What's the second story? &gt;</i>
	"Edward" told this "I", "Edward" tells the story between "Edward" and "Lenny".	
	<u><i>na me zai liang ge li mian na yi ge shi zhu yao gu shi? dang ran shi "Edward" gen "Lenny".</i></u>	<i>&lt;Then which story is the main story? Of course, the one between "Edward" and "Lenny" is the main one.&gt;</i>

### 6.3.2.12 Example for Mandarin usage context of Encouragement (code 6)

Teacher D was asking students if they knew how to say “the rice cooker” in English (Table 59). As her students kept silent, Teacher D switched to Mandarin and told her students that it was a household appliance. Finally she succeeded in encouraging students to give the correct English expression of “the rice cooker”.

**Table 59. Class audio-recording excerpt D1.12.06.2012.77-78**

	Teacher’s Talk	English Meaning of Teacher’s Mandarin Talk
TD:	Do you know how to say <i>dian fan guo</i> in English? What?	<a rice cooker>
S:	(Students kept silent.)	
TD:	<u><i>zhe shi yi zhong chu ju.</i></u>	< <i>This is a kind of household appliance.</i> >
S:	(Students gave the correct answer.)	
TD:	Yes, good.	

### 6.3.2.13 Example for Mandarin usage context of Evaluation (code 7)

Teacher C was revising the words and expressions that she had taught to students (Table 60). She told students the meaning of the expression “be dying for”, and she returned to English to ask students if they knew this expression or not. When she got a correct answer in English from one student, she evaluated in Mandarin the student’s answer as “It’s the correct answer.”

**Table 60. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.427-428**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	<i>fei chang xiang ba (shen me zuo le). qi shi wo men zai zhong wen zhong you si ge zi shi hen hao xing rong zhe zhong meaning.</i> What is this English expression?	< <i>He was dying for something. In Mandarin we have one expression for this meaning.</i> >
S:	(One student gave the correct answer in English.)	
TC:	<u><i>dui, hui da zheng que.</i></u> Be dying for. <i>po bu ji dai.</i>	< <i>Yes. It's the correct answer..</i> >

**6.3.2.14 Example for Mandarin usage context of Responses to students' questions  
(code 8)**

Table 61 shows how Teacher C used Mandarin to respond to her students. Teacher C had told the students the component parts of the final exam and then she asked them if they had any questions. One student asked a question about one part in Mandarin. Teacher C did not know which part the student was referring to, and then she asked the student in Mandarin which part the student was talking about. When Teacher C knew the part, she continued in Mandarin to tell the student the testing content of that part in the final exam.

**Table 61. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.42-46**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	Then do you have any questions? Do you have any questions? Any questions?	
S:	(One student raised a question in Mandarin.)	
TC:	<u><i>hou mian shi zhi de na ge bu fen yi hou?</i></u>	< <i>After which part, which part do you refer to?&gt;</i>

S:	(The student told the teacher which part she referred to in Mandarin.)	
TC:	Text B. <u>pan duan ti yi hou shi ying yi zhong, liang ju, dou shi lai zi</u> Text B <u>de yuan ju. ran hou hou mian zhong yi ying wu ju, kao de yu yan dian shi</u> Text A <u>yuan ju. zui hou yi bu fen</u> writing. <u>zui hou yi bu fen</u> writing.	<Text B. After the multiple choice questions will follow the translation from English to Mandarin. Two sentences, both are the original sentences from Text B. After the translation from English to Mandarin you will have the translation from Mandarin to English. Five sentences are all from Text A. And the last part is writing. The last part is writing.

### 6.3.2.15 Example for Mandarin usage context of Comprehension checks (code 9)

In Table 62, Teacher A checked the students' comprehension about what she had just taught. She asked in Mandarin "Do you understand what I have just taught?"

**Table 62. Class audio-recording excerpt A1.17.05.2012.217**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA	<u>zhi bu zhi dao zen me li jie a ?</u>	<Do you understand what I have just taught?>

### 6.3.2.16 Example for Mandarin usage context of Good rapport (code 10)

As shown in Table 63, Teacher C was teaching the text at the beginning of this excerpt. When she came across the word "hammock", she switched into Mandarin to tell students her own experience of sleeping in a hammock, and she continued in Mandarin to ask students what was the trick of sleeping well in a hammock.

**Table 63. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.510-516**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
T3:	Then let's come to paragraph twelve. The first sentence. Some of the Indians of this region, used to, used to sleep naked in hammocks. What is a hammock?	
	<i>diao chuang.</i>	<hammock.>
	Do you have any experience of sleeping in hammocks? Did you have an experience like this? Could you handle it?	
	<u><i>ni neng gou bu diao xi alai ma? ni neng gou? shui diao chuang hai shi yao dian ji qiao de. wo bu xing. wo shui guo liang ci, dou diao xia lai. ni ke yi bu diao xia lai ma?</i></u>	<Can you sleep in a hammock without falling down? Can you? We need some skills to sleep in the hammock without falling down. I couldn't handle it. I tried two times, and each time I fell down from the hammock. Can any of you sleep in the hammock without falling down?>
S:	(One student raised her hand.)	
T3:	<u><i>Zu Yiwen, zen me neng bu diao xia lai ne?</i></u>	<Zu Yiwen, how can you sleep in it without falling down?>
S:	(The student was exchanging her personal experience with the teacher.)	
T3:	Oh, maybe that is the trick. Maybe that is the trick.	
	<u><i>na jiu shi shuo wo shui de na ge diao chuang beng de tai jin le, dui bu dui?</i></u>	<You mean I put the hammock too tight, that may be the reason why I fell down, right?>

### 6.3.2.17 Example for Mandarin usage context of Administration (code 11)

In Table 64, Teacher C began the class in English. She told students she would tell them something about the final exam. Then Teacher C switched to Mandarin. She used Mandarin to tell students when the final exam would take place.

**Table 64. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.1-4**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	Good morning. First I'd like to say something about our final examination. Ok, so you can take some notes and I will explain this part in Chinese.	
	<u>liu yue yi shi hao jiu shi kao shi, zhe ge da jia ye ke yi zai wang shang kan dao de.</u>	<We will have the exam on June 11 <sup>th</sup> . You can also see it online.

### 6.3.2.18 Example for Mandarin usage context of Asking for help from students

(code 12a)

Table 65 shows that Teacher C was not very certain about the Mandarin translation of “the Rose Family”, and then she asked students in Mandarin whether her expression was correct.

**Table 65. Class audio-recording excerpt C.31.05.2012.330-333**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TC:	Trailing plant.	
	So what is Rose Family? So what is a Rose Family? What is a family?	
TC:	<u>shi zhi wu ke zhong jiao qiang wei ke ma?</u>	<Is it called the Rose Family in the botany text?>
S:	(Students gave the correct Mandarin version of “the rose family” for Teacher C.)	

### 6.3.2.19 Example for Mandarin usage context of Name (code 12b)

Table 66 is an example where the EFL teacher used Mandarin to call students' names.

Teacher D called one student's name in Mandarin to ask him to complete the

exercises (Table 66).

**Table 66. Class audio-recording excerpt D2.12.06.2012.25-26**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TD:	So next, complete the sentences by translating the Chinese into English using “enough”, number one and number two, <u>XXX</u> .	<XXX> (The student's real name was changed into the pseudonym XXX.)

#### **6.3.2.20 Example for Mandarin usage context of Conjunction (code 12c)**

Teacher B used Mandarin to say a conjunctive word. She was asking students to do exercises of filling blanks by choosing words from the boxes. She said the word “next” in Mandarin (Table 67).

**Table 67. Class audio-recording excerpt B1.24.05.2012.253**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TB:	Number five. <u>xia mian.</u>	<The next one.>

#### **6.3.2.21 Example for Mandarin usage context of Comment (code 12d)**

Teacher A was giving her students an introduction to the story. She told her students that the story was divided into three parts in English. She then commented on the three part division in Mandarin. She told students that she believed three was a good number and that most texts were divided into three parts (Table 68).

**Table 68. Class audio-recording excerpt A2.17.05.2012.6-7**

	Teacher's Talk	English Meaning of Teacher's Mandarin Talk
TA:	So it will be easier for us to discuss the story. Now you can see again, this text is divided into three parts.	
	<u>san shi ge hen hao de shu zi. ji ben shang da bu fen de ke wen dou shi fen cheng</u> three parts.	<Three is a good number. Most of our texts are divided into three parts.>

## 6.4 Summary

In this chapter, eight class audio-recording sessions were qualitatively analysed to reveal the different contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin in their non-English major EFL classrooms. The analysis was undertaken to address research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms? The frequencies of each Mandarin usage context were calculated and shown in tables, and then examples of Mandarin usage contexts were presented and explained.

First, all teachers' utterances during the eight class audio-recording sessions were divided into discourse passages by using the same technique applied in Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) study. As discussed in section 4.1.2.3, based on this study, I created a code scheme involving 12 categories of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage contexts, such as *Grammar*, *Translation*, *Instruction*, and *Other*. I then analysed all of the teachers' discourse passages and coded these into the 12 Mandarin usage contexts. Some discourse passages contained more than one Mandarin usage context. I calculated the percentages of each Mandarin usage context to show the frequencies. A

comparison was made to show the differences and similarities among the four teachers' Mandarin usage context frequencies. All of the four EFL teachers most frequently used Mandarin to translate English expressions into Mandarin. They also used Mandarin very frequently to encourage students to speak English in classrooms. But these four EFL teachers did not use Mandarin in all contexts. Finally, examples for each Mandarin usage context were presented and explained.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the teachers' interviews. The teachers' interview questions were divided into five sections: Teacher backgrounds; University department policy or requirement; Teachers' spoken English; Teacher's philosophy of EFL teaching activities; and Teacher's actual teaching practices. The data obtained from the four EFL teachers' responses to interview questions are analysed qualitatively, to address the research questions 5: Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? The results of the qualitative analysis of teachers' interviews also provide an in-depth insight into EFL teachers' attitudes towards their own Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes, which serves as a complementary source of data to address the research question 3: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?

## **Chapter 7**

### **Qualitative Analysis of Teachers' interviews**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the qualitative analysis of the transcriptions of interviews conducted with the four EFL teachers. EFL teachers' answers to interviews questions were used to address the following two research questions: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 3); Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 5)

The four EFL teachers from University A and University B were also the participants of class audio-recording sessions for the quantitative analysis of this study (see Chapter 6). The teachers were given a choice of which language they preferred to answer the interview questions. None chose English, although they all claimed that they did not have a language preference. The interview questions were divided into five sections (see Appendix 6 Teacher interview questions): Section 1 Teacher backgrounds; Section 2 University department policy or requirement; Section 3 Teachers' spoken English; Section 4 Teacher's philosophy of EFL teaching activities; and Section 5 Teacher's actual teaching practices. Teachers' responses to the interview

questions were coded, for example as Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.39. This means that this excerpt was extracted from the transcriptions of the interview with Teacher A which occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012, Line 39 of the transcript. Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.68-72, it means that this excerpt was extracted from the transcriptions of the interview with Teacher D which occurred on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012, Line 68 to 72 of the transcript.

The first three interview questions in Section 1 asked about each teacher participants' academic backgrounds and teaching experience in EFL teaching activities (Appendix 6, Section 1, Questions 1 to 3). The answers provided have been summarised and reported in Table 5. In the next sections, the teachers' responses to each interview question (from question 4 onwards), presents each question first, followed by each teacher's answers and then a summary.

## **7.2 University department policy and requirements**

This section concerns the four EFL teachers' responses to the teacher interview questions 4 and 5 (see Appendix 6, Section 2):

- Teacher interview question 4: Does your university department have any policy about language choice in EFL classrooms? If yes, please explain or expand.
- Teacher interview question 5: Has your university department given you any

requirement on how you should teach EFL classes? If so, please explain.

**7.2.1 Teacher interview question 4: Does your university department have any policy about language choice in EFL classrooms? If yes, please explain or expand.**

In relation to this question, the four interviewed teachers provided the following information. All four of the EFL teachers stated that there was not any University department policy about language choice in EFL classes. Using Mandarin in EFL classes was not prohibited by their University departments. However, Teacher A, Teacher B and Teacher D from University A believed that all EFL teachers had a tacit agreement to speak more English during EFL classes, even though there was no formal language policy issued from their University departments.

***Interview excerpt A. 25.06.2012.19-20:***

There is no department policy about our language choice. We don't have any department policy about how much English we should use in EFL classrooms; or about whether Mandarin is prohibited or not in our teaching. But we are encouraged to use as much as possible English.

Teacher B also answered: "We don't have any rule about language choice, but we are encouraged to use English as much as we can" (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.28).

Teacher C from University B said: "In our department, EFL teachers often tacitly limit

the Mandarin talk in teaching activities; and that 60% to 70% of teachers' utterances should be in English" (Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.31). This range of English articulation in EFL classes reflected her percentage of English articulation derived from class audio-recording sessions. In her first class, Teacher C's English amount was 74.84%; and in her second class, her English amount was 63.58% (Table 13).

### **7.2.2 Teacher interview question 5: Has your university department given you any requirement on how you should teach EFL classes? If so, please explain.**

University A and University B had the same teaching goals: to help students improve their English language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; as well as translating skills between English and Mandarin. This was the guiding principle of the two departments within University A and University B. The data related to university department requirement on how non-English major EFL teachers should teach EFL classes is summarised in Table 69.

Teacher A said: "In general, the objective of non-English EFL course is to develop students' listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills" (Interview excerpt A. 25.06.2012.28). "This (the development of students' English skills) is the guiding principle of our teaching" (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.26). Teacher C from University B also mentioned the development of students' English skills as "the most important principle of EFL teaching" (Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.30) in their university department.

**Table 69. University department requirement on language choice and EFL teaching**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>University department policy on language choice</b>	<b>University department requirement on EFL teaching</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	No policy. Teachers were encouraged to use English as much as possible.	No specific requirement. To improve students' English skills.
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	No policy. Teachers were encouraged to use English as much as possible.	No specific requirement. To improve students' English skills.
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	No policy. A tacit agreement among teachers: 60% to 70% of teachers' utterances should be in English.	No specific requirement. To improve students' English skills.
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	No policy. Teachers were encouraged to use English as much as possible.	No specific requirement. To improve students' English skills.

All four teachers pointed out that their university departments required them to fulfill teaching goals, but no specific and detailed teaching requirement was given. Each EFL teacher was permitted to have a personal style in his/her teaching in EFL classrooms. The teachers were given the freedom to decide on the language choice between Mandarin and English. Teacher D from University A commented: “We EFL teachers decide how much English we should use in classes at our university” (Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.20). Teacher C from University B had the similar answer to this question: “We often teach different students in different ways. We can

decide the optimal way we believe to teach our EFL students, to help students improve their English proficiency levels” (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.35-36).

### **7.3 Teachers’ spoken English**

This section concerns the four EFL teachers’ responses to the teacher interview questions 6, 7 and 8 (see Appendix 6, Section 3):

- Teacher interview question 6. Do you feel confident to talk in English all the class time to accomplish teaching tasks in EFL classes? Why or why not?
- Teacher interview question 7. Do you feel comfortable to talk in English exclusively during EFL classes? Why or why not?
- Teacher interview question 8. How much do you think your students can understand your English speaking? When they do not understand your English, what do you usually do (such as repetition, or translation)? Does your solution work? If yes, why? If no, why?

#### **7.3.1 Teacher interview question 6: Do you feel confident to talk in English all the class time to accomplish teaching tasks in EFL classes? Why or why not?**

When asked whether they felt confident, or not, to talk in English all the class time to accomplish teaching tasks in EFL classes the four teachers gave different responses. Teacher A and Teacher D agreed that they were confident in their own spoken English. If required, they could speak English all the time in EFL classes. But all four EFL

teachers were not confident in accomplishing all teaching tasks by talking in English all the time in EFL classes.

Teacher B thought she still had some problems if she spoke English all the time in EFL classes. This is reflected in her audio recorded usage of English in class B1 30.83% and B2 48.89% (Table 13).

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.48-50:***

It is difficult to explain some items in English when I am not very familiar with the terms myself; then I cannot find the exact English words, or expressions to explain some difficult abstract concepts in English, such as words or expressions related to religions or philosophy.

Teacher C responded very positively to this question. She thought she could use English all the time through EFL classes to accomplish her teaching tasks. She was also very confident about the English proficiency levels of most of her students.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.45-46:***

I have taught EFL classes for nine years. I am confident as to my own spoken English and my students' English levels. The amount of English I use can reach 90% to 95% when I teach students of high levels.

From the class audio-recording sessions, it was found that Teacher C used 74.84% and 63.58% of English in her two classes (Table 13). One possible reason that Teacher C used less English in the class audio-recording sessions was that she was not teaching her high proficiency level students when her classes were audio-recorded.

However, Teacher A said she was “not very confident in teaching EFL classes exclusively in English, especially when teaching English grammar” (Interview excerpt A. 25.06.2012.39-40). This is reflected in her English usage in the audio-recording sessions. In the first class audio-recording session Teacher A used 42.62% English and in the second session 25.17% English (Table 13). Teacher A added that EFL teachers at University A did not teach much grammar in EFL classes. This data can be verified from the results obtained from the qualitative analysis of teachers’ Mandarin usage contexts.

Three of the four EFL teachers (Teachers A, B and D) did not teach English grammar by using Mandarin, one EFL teacher’s Mandarin usage frequency for explaining English grammar was only 1.49% (Teacher C, Table 44). Teacher A thought that using English all the time to teach grammar would be a little difficult.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.41-44:***

Students have been taught grammar in Mandarin when they studied in middle school. They are now very familiar with the grammatical terms in Mandarin,

but they do not know the terms in English. We can use English to explain words or texts. That is ok, but not grammar.

Teacher D was pessimistic about using English exclusively to accomplish teaching tasks, especially when she had to teach new words and expressions to her students. She thought students' language proficiency levels were a decisive factor in her reducing the amount of English she used in EFL classes.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.45-46:***

I believe in teachers' teaching ability. Most of the EFL teachers in our department have good educational background and long teaching experience. If our department requires us to use English exclusively, I believe we can do it. But if you ask me whether I am confident to accomplish teaching tasks by using English all the time, my answer is negative.

However, Teacher D's actual teaching practice was not consistent with her attitude towards the first language usage in EFL teaching. She used 89.60% English in the first class audio-recording session and 99.23% in the second session. Such discrepancy between actual practice and attitudes towards the first language usage has been found common and discussed in previous research study (Liu, 2010; Song, 2009; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010). Foreign or second language teachers may not be always

conscious about their own code-switching from the target language to the first language. It will be further discussed in Chapter 8 Discussion.

For Teacher D, it was impossible to use English exclusively as some of her students could not understand her or give her any responses. She gave an example to further her explanation. She thought students' English proficiency levels decided the amount of English articulation she used in EFL classrooms.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.47-49:***

In the class I am going to teaching, in this class, when I teach some difficult words or expressions, I give them an example sentence, they do not respond, and then I say the sentence again, there is still no response. Sometimes I even repeat it ten times, my students still have no feedback. I know it from their impassive countenance.

Teacher D also believed that it was impossible for EFL teachers to speak the same amount of English in each class because the students' English proficiency levels were very diverse. Teacher D explained that students at University A were from all over the country; and all provinces or areas did not have the same educational levels. "Each province or area has its own University Entrance Exam. The result is we have different level students now" (Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.28-29). She said that in the same class there would be mixed with some very high English proficiency level

EFL students and some students who were not very good at English. She was concerned that many students were still very weak at English listening after they entered the university.

Alongside students' English proficiency levels, class time was another concern which Teacher D thought was related to her decreased amount of English articulation in EFL classes. In order to save class time, Teacher D used Mandarin in her teaching. She explained that if she insisted on using English exclusively, she might not be understood very quickly. In order to complete teaching tasks in time, she chose to use Mandarin in her teaching.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.50-58:***

When we do translation exercises, I may ask seven or eight students, one by one, to translate it, but no one can do it. If I do persist in speaking in English, I have to write down on the blackboard all the difficult words or expressions they may use, and explain to them one by one, very slowly in English. They may understand what I say. How slowly I teach one text! Then I cannot accomplish teaching tasks by this way. We have many contents in EFL classes, such as discussion, fast reading, listening and exercises. If I explain each word or expression in English very slowly, when I can finish one text?

### **7.3.2 Teacher interview question 7: Do you feel comfortable to talk in English exclusively during EFL classes? Why or why not?**

EFL teachers were asked whether they felt comfortable to use only English in classes. Teacher C was the only one who felt comfortable to talk English exclusively during EFL classes. The other three EFL teachers all felt uncomfortable when their students did not give feedback.

#### ***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.49-51:***

I will feel very uncomfortable if my students do not give me any response. No interaction means they do not understand me. I will ask myself if I did not accomplish teaching tasks or I did not apply good teaching technique.

#### ***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.68-69:***

Teaching and learning is an interaction between teachers and students. Students' responses are very important for me. I do care about their reactions. If students do not have any reaction, I will feel uncomfortable, and I cannot continue my teaching.

Students in Teacher B's classes were not very active; they often kept silent when Teacher B asked questions. Students seldom answered her questions in English. She was concerned about the silence of her students and she did not feel comfortable to speak English exclusively without any feedback from her students.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.71-79:***

Students are indifferent. I speak in English, there is no reaction; then I switch into Mandarin, there is still no reaction. Students are very silent. This concerns me. If things go very smoothly, I like speaking English all the time in EFL classes. But most of time, it is a monologue of myself. I speak all the time, students give no feedback. I feel uncomfortable. Then I will repeat my sentences in Mandarin. Students' proficiency levels are a major factor to the language choice. If I teach a high level class, I like speaking English all the time with them. If students can understand, I prefer using more English.

**7.3.3 Teacher interview question 8: How much do you think your students can understand your English speaking? When they do not understand your English, what do you usually do (such as repetition, or translation)? Does your solution work? If yes, why? If no, why?**

In relation to the interview question "How much do you think your students can understand your English speaking", all four EFL teachers agreed that students with different English proficiency levels could understand different amounts of the teachers' English articulation in classes. The data are documented in Table 70.

**Table 70. Teachers’ estimations about how much students could understand their EFL teachers’ English speaking in classrooms**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>High English proficiency level EFL students</b>	<b>Low English proficiency level EFL students</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	80%	50% or less than 50%
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	Up to 85%	Not mentioned.
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	90% to 95%	0%
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	At least 70% to 80%, even 100%	0%

Teacher A said: “In high level classes, students can understand 80% of my English utterances related to the texts; while in some classes, students can only understand about 50%, even less than 50%” (Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.67-68). Teacher B commented that different level students could understand different amounts of her English articulation. Some classes could understand up to 85%. In some lower level classes, “I think if I repeat several times, they can understand me as well. Maybe they are not used to listening to English” (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.92-93). Teacher B thought that many EFL students had been used to using much Mandarin in English classes when these students were studying in the middle school years.

Among Teacher C’s students, some students could understand 90% to 95% of her English speaking, however, some students did not understand at all. Teacher C said: “Some students don’t understand English sentences at all, such as some artistic design major students” (Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.64).

As noted earlier, Teacher D mentioned that the educational levels were uneven in different areas in Mainland China; this resulted in different English proficiency levels among university students. Some of her students could understand at least 70% to 80% of her English utterances, or even 100% of her English sentences. However, some low English proficiency level students could understand nothing at all.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.82-87:***

Of course the educational levels are very imbalanced throughout the whole country. You know the University Entrance Exam? Each province provides its own exam papers. Our province has listening in the exam. But some provinces do not have listening. You can imagine how weak some students' listening skills are! I even had one student who came to tell me that he understood nothing of my English sentences. I ask him why, he told me they never had English listening before entering the university. They only had practice in reading: if they could answer questions after reading, it would be enough.

She reported that some of her students even did listening exercises by guessing and then they ticked any answer they wanted. These students did not understand oral English at all.

When these four EFL teachers were asked the interview question “When they do not understand your English, what do you usually do (such as repetition, or translation)”, teachers had different solutions to help students.

Teacher A chose to repeat the English sentences she had previously said, as she thought EFL classes were the main source of students’ English input. When her students did not understand her, she preferred continuing in English rather than using Mandarin to help students.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.76-79:***

When students do not understand, I will say sentences in another simple way, try to inspire students. Then high English proficiency level EFL students may understand me. For lower English proficiency level classes, I first use some simple words, and then mix English with Mandarin, if they still don’t understand me, I have to use Mandarin.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.59-62:***

I am teaching EFL classes, I hope to give more chances to students to listen to English. You know, they do not have too much chance to listen to English in daily life. EFL classes are the main source of their English listening.

Teacher B usually helped students to understand her by repetition or translation. She believed that her students could understand her English sentences if she repeated them several times.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.101-102:***

I guess, after repetition they can understand me. [...] Students are passive, they are not confident; they don't believe they can understand me, and they wait for Mandarin translation after my English articulation. So I give them the translated version after English speaking.

For Teacher B another solution to improve her students' comprehension was to translate her English sentences into Mandarin.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.107-109:***

When I find my students seem puzzled, I often repeat my words, or directly translate into Mandarin if in lower level classes. [...] I find they will take some notes after I use Mandarin to translate or explain my talk in English. In fact, they understand after I use Mandarin. If I use English to explain my sentences, such as confusable words, they will be more confused.

When Teacher B was asked why she did not repeat her sentences in English without translation, she answered:

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.116-120:***

Yes, if I have enough patience. I have never tried to persist in English and repeat again and again my sentence to see whether they can or cannot understand me. I am impatient. I do not have much class time to waste. I don't think my students cooperate with me well. They do not like the content of EFL classes, such as exercises of English expressions. They like translation, they accept well learning English by using Mandarin.

Teacher B also reiterated that the EFL class design was a failure and her students did not like EFL classes. She said: "Many students do not like EFL classes; they are not interested in what I say in English. I think the course design must have something to improve" (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.287-288). Her students preferred her Mandarin translation than her repetition in English; and students refused to respond in English to Teacher B.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.65-68:***

I find my students accept well Mandarin translation in EFL classes; and they like using Mandarin themselves. When I ask them a question, they prefer answering in Mandarin. I find they sometimes know how to say in English, but they still give me answers in Mandarin.

Teacher C switched to Mandarin in her teaching when her students did not understand her.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.69-72:***

In some extreme cases, students don't understand at all. I have to ignore this; I do not have so much time to take care of every student. Actually they do not listen to me. Then I am forced to use Mandarin.

When Teacher C was asked why she did not repeat her sentences in English to help students understand better what she said in English, she answered that she did not think repetition in English was a good solution to improve students' comprehension. Two major reasons were given by Teacher C for her Mandarin usage instead of repetition in English. The first reason was students' low English proficiency levels.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.76-81:***

I have to use Mandarin. They don't understand me even if I repeat (English sentences) several times. Their proficiency levels are just primary school levels. They are artistic design students, they had special university enrolment exam, which was different from other students. Now they don't understand my English articulation, they even don't understand English texts when they read.

The second reason was to save limited class time:se

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.66-68:***

If I have to catch up with the teaching task arrangement, I cannot repeat in English, I have to use Mandarin to explain to students. I do not have much time to waste. If time permits, I of course will repeat in English.

Teacher D also chose to use Mandarin after her English articulation to save class time. However, she added that if time permitted, she preferred repeating in English than using Mandarin in EFL classrooms.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.71-75:***

For example, I must finish 20 new words in one EFL class. This is just an example, in most cases I have to teach more than 20 new words. [...] If I insist in using English exclusively, I will have to spend five minutes to explain one new word in English to my students. [...] I have no choice; I have to explain words to students in Mandarin.

Table 71 summarises the data of the four EFL teachers' strategies for dealing with classroom situations where students did not appear to understand the English content.

**Table 71. Ways to improve students' comprehension when they do not understand EFL teachers' English sentences**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Reasons</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	Repetition of English sentences	She tried to provide more English input.
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	a. Repetition of English sentences; b. Translation from English to Mandarin	a. Not mentioned. b. Saving class time; students expected her to speak in Mandarin.
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	Using Mandarin	a. Students' low English levels; b. Saving class time.
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	Using Mandarin	Saving class time.

## 7.4 Teachers' philosophy of teaching

This section concerns the four EFL teachers' responses to the teacher interview questions 9 and 10 (see Appendix 6, Section 4):

- Teacher interview question 9. What is the ideal way do you think to teach and learn English in EFL classes? Why?
- Teacher interview question 10. Do you think Mandarin could be spoken by teachers in teaching EFL classes? If so, what should be the ratio of English and Mandarin in your teaching? If no, why do you think Mandarin should be excluded in your teaching of EFL?

#### **7.4.1 Teacher interview question 9: What is the ideal way do you think to teach and learn English in EFL classes? Why?**

All four of the EFL teachers had their own point of view on the ideal way to teach EFL classes. The data related to interview question 9 and the teachers' opinions about the ideal way to teach EFL is summarised in Table 72.

**Table 72. Interviewed teachers' ideal ways to teach EFL classes**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Ideal way to teach EFL classes</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	More interaction between teachers and students.
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	Giving students more exercises requiring paraphrasing or summarising tasks.
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	Giving more freedom for students to express themselves.
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	No idea.

For Teacher A, having more interaction between teacher and students was the ideal way. Teacher B hoped to give students more chances to do exercises requiring paraphrasing or summarising tasks.

#### ***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.87-91:***

I think the best way to teach EFL classes is the interaction between students and me. In EFL classes, the main task is to teach texts and explain to students sentences in texts. I think the ideal way is that I ask some questions and students answer them; and then students ask some questions related to the content, and I answer their questions. This can help students to understand the

text content. But I don't think it is applicable, because it requires students to do a lot of preparation work.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.129-131:***

I think it is the best way: students use their own words to express themselves.

But it's not applicable. One reason is that they do not know how to express themselves in English; the other one is that they are not willing to do so.

Teacher C wanted to change EFL classes into lectures and give students more freedom to extend knowledge and broaden their horizons. Teacher C believed that the objective of EFL classes was to help students learn how to express themselves by using what they had learned in English. Teacher C's ideal way of teaching EFL classes involved more freedom for students in English learning processes.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.95-100:***

For example, students can write whatever they want, as long as they can, and as an EFL teacher, my job is to encourage them. [...] I will ask students to have more reading, and then we will have a discussion about what they have read. A free interaction between students and teachers (is the ideal teaching way).

Teacher D did not have any specific idea about the optimal way of EFL teaching. She just hoped students would develop English skills in EFL classes: listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills; and at the same time students could broaden their vision and knowledge.

**7.4.2 Teacher interview question 10: Do you think Mandarin could be spoken by teachers in teaching EFL classes? If so, what should be the ratio of English and Mandarin in your teaching? If no, why do you think Mandarin should be excluded in your teaching of EFL?**

All four of the EFL teachers believed that Mandarin could be included in EFL classes and they admitted to using Mandarin in their EFL classrooms. Teacher A thought Mandarin could only be excluded from EFL classrooms with very high English proficiency level EFL students. While Teacher C said it was impossible to exclude Mandarin definitely from EFL classes, even in high level classes. All teachers admitted that their Mandarin usage in EFL classes was inevitable for improving students' comprehension in English learning.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.99-103:***

I think it necessary to use Mandarin in teaching English grammar. English grammar is difficult for students to understand, if I explain in English, it may become more difficult to students. Of course, I give example sentences in English, if I continue in English to explain grammatical rules to students;

English explanation may become obstacles in their learning processes. They can easily grasp the rules if I explain in Mandarin, why I use English? Using English here wastes time and hinders students' understanding.

For Teacher B it was efficient to use Mandarin to explain difficult words, sentence structures, and especially English grammar to her students.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.160-162:***

I need to use Mandarin to teach English grammar. I need to use Mandarin to explain some grammatical terms and rules. Students might have learned English grammar by using Mandarin in middle school; so I have to continue in this way.

Teacher C thought EFL teachers should speak English as much as possible, and only use Mandarin when it was necessary. She agreed that Mandarin usage was efficient for explaining difficult language points and cultural differences in EFL classes. Teacher D thought she could get meanings across to every student by using Mandarin in her teaching.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.116-121:***

I believe it necessary to use Mandarin. I must take care of some low English proficiency level students. They are not good at English for some reasons, but

[...] I won't ignore them in my classes. For example, many students in the following class are not good at listening. Many students got bad marks in last listening quiz; some of them even failed the quiz.

In relation to the interview question “what should be the ratio of English and Mandarin in your teaching?” the teachers had the following different opinions. Teacher A thought 80% of English and 20% of Mandarin was the bottom-line. Teacher B gave a ratio of 70% and 30% between English and Mandarin usage.

The data reported by the EFL teachers regarding the question asking them to make a judgement about the ratio of English and Mandarin usage in class activities is documented in Table73.

**Table 73. Bottom line of ratio between English and Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Bottom line of Ratio between English and Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	English 80% vs. Mandarin 20%
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	English 70% vs. Mandarin 30%
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	Three levels of ratio for different students: a. English 95% vs. Mandarin 5% b. English 60% to 70% vs. Mandarin 30% to 40% c. English 40% vs. Mandarin 60%
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	No specific ratio. Ratio should depend on students' English levels

However, from the quantitative analysis of class audio-recording sessions, Teacher A and Teacher B used much more Mandarin than 20% (Table 13). This meant that Teacher A and Teacher B might often underestimate their Mandarin usage in EFL classes.

Teacher C believed that there should be different ratios between English and Mandarin when she taught different level students. She provided three ratios between English and Mandarin.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.113-118:***

I think EFL teacher should speak as much English as possible. However, excluding Mandarin from EFL classes is impossible. If I teach high level classes, I should limit the Mandarin amount to 5%. For medium level students, English percentage should be 60% to 70%. And if I teach low level classes, and I think I should use 60% Mandarin and 40% English as they don't understand me.

A comparison of Teacher C's estimation of her amount of Mandarin usage with the data collected from class audio-recording sessions indicates that she was relatively accurate in her estimation (Table 13).

Teacher D thought the ratio of Mandarin to English should depend on students' English proficiency levels but she could not give a specific ratio between English and Mandarin. However, Teacher D also emphasised that she insisted on speaking English as much as possible. This was supported by the class audio-recording sessions where Teacher D used the least amount of Mandarin of all of the teachers (Table 13).

However, it is important to point out that a number of the teachers raised the issue of lack of clarity at the university level in relation to the goals of teaching EFL. In Teacher B's interview, she mentioned the same problem several times. She said that both students and teachers were not clear about the goals of EFL classes. Teachers and students did not have the same objectives; even students did not have the same objectives.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.197-201:***

Actually I don't know the objectives. I have no idea about how much and what students should learn from EFL classes. No requirement from our university department. I can ask them to understand texts, or only grasp new words, or I extend a little from our texts.

Teachers B, C and D thought that students' English proficiency level was one of the main factors influencing teachers' decisions about how much English they should speak in EFL classes. The expansion of the number of the students in University A

was seen by the teachers as being related to the decline of students' English language proficiency, the assumption being that more students were being admitted to university with lower English abilities. Teacher B thought that she spoke more Mandarin after the expansion of their university in the year 2000 because of the drop in English proficiency levels of the students being enrolled. Teacher B often did not know if her students understood what she was talking about in English as her students seldom gave her responses.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.29-34:***

Before the expansion of our university in 2000, students had higher English proficiency level; I could speak more English in classes. They could even understand what I said in English when they did exercises of "Paraphrases". But now, after the expansion, the English levels of students are diverse. In some classes, I can speak English as much as possible; while in some other classes, it's hard to speak too much English.

## **7.5 Teachers' actual EFL teaching practice**

This section documents the data related to the four EFL teachers' responses to the teacher interview questions 11 to 17 (see Appendix 6, Section 5):

- Teacher interview question 11. Do you use Mandarin in your teaching in EFL classes? For what purposes do you use Mandarin?
- Teacher interview question 12. What are the advantages or disadvantages of teachers' Mandarin speaking in EFL classrooms? Please elaborate.
- Teacher interview question 13. Do you think speaking Mandarin is necessary in your teaching of EFL? If yes, in what circumstances do you think speaking Mandarin is most necessary or important in your teaching? Why?
- Teacher interview question 14. Do you think it can help students better understand English grammar if you talk in Mandarin? Why or why not, please explain?
- Teacher interview question 15. Do you think translating English words, expressions or sentences into Mandarin can help students learn more quickly these new items? Why or why not, please explain?
- Teacher interview question 16. Do you think it can save the class time if you announce administrative items (such as timetable, or exam plans) in Mandarin? Why or why not, please explain?

- Teacher interview question 17. Do you think if you speak Mandarin in EFL classes, it can help develop a learner-friendly environment, so you can have more interaction with students? Why or why not, please explain.

### 7.5.1 Teacher interview question 11: Do you use Mandarin in your teaching in EFL classes? For what purposes do you use Mandarin?

All four of the EFL teachers admitted that they used Mandarin in EFL classes (Table 74). They used Mandarin for different purposes: teaching English grammar, doing translation exercises, giving instructions, helping students to concentrate in classes, helping students to understand better the class contents, and saving class time.

**Table 74. For what purposes do EFL teachers use Mandarin?**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Purposes</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	a. Teaching grammar more easily b. Doing translation exercises
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	a. Giving examples b. Providing extended topic c. Providing background knowledge d. Teaching grammar
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	a. Improving students' comprehension b. Helping students to concentrate on teaching contents
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	a. Improving students' comprehension b. Saving class time

All four of the teachers stated that it was necessary to translate some words with which students were not familiar from English to Mandarin. Teacher A said she often used Mandarin when she taught English grammar. She also used Mandarin when she asked students to do translation exercises.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.127-131:***

Another one is translation exercises. In Mainland China translation skill is often highlighted. When I ask students to translate sentence from Mandarin to English, I have to give students sentences in Mandarin, and then ask them to translate them into English. It is necessary to use Mandarin for these exercises.

Teacher B commented that she often used Mandarin when giving examples to students and providing some extra topics related to the texts. “For example, I need to extend from our text; I may use Mandarin to give more examples” (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.183). She agreed that she needed Mandarin to give students more explanations and instructions of the extended topics. She also used Mandarin to provide background knowledge to her students and to teach grammar. As for administration items, such as exam arrangements, she often used Mandarin.

Teacher C used Mandarin in EFL classes mainly for two purposes. First, it was necessary to translate some teaching content into Mandarin in order to improve students’ comprehension.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.121-127:***

Sometimes I also need to use Mandarin [...], and then they will understand me better. I give them more background knowledge, and tell them Mandarin translations. For example, if I teach them the structure of a ship, I think most

students do not know much about the structure of a ship. If I explain each part of a ship in English, they do not understand. I should tell them translated version of each part in a ship. So translation is absolutely necessary.

The second purpose for using Mandarin was to help students concentrate on the teaching content in EFL classes. Teacher C believed that students could not focus on the class content for a long time in EFL classes. As she said: “I sometimes will start from one example sentence, and give them more extended knowledge or some related interesting topics. At that time I often use both English and Mandarin (Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.135).”

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.140-142:***

My Mandarin usage can help students to relax themselves during classes. Otherwise they are very nervous, and they cannot concentrate for a long while. I use Mandarin to tell them a joke; and they smile. It's just refreshment, and then I can concentrate on the class content again.

Teacher D also used Mandarin to help students understand class content and save class time. She stated that “When I find my students are confused, I will use Mandarin to let them quickly understand me. The second reason is to save class time. If I repeat a simple item several times, I will be bored” (Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.130-133).

**7.5.2 Teacher interview question 12: What are the advantages or disadvantages of teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms? Please elaborate.**

In relation to the advantages and disadvantages of teachers' Mandarin usage, the four teachers had different points of view. Teacher A thought there were pros and cons of using Mandarin. First it could help EFL teachers to save class time. EFL teachers would not waste much time in repeating and rephrasing difficult language points. But Teacher A was also concerned about teachers' using too much Mandarin. She thought her students might become lazy, because if EFL teachers used too much Mandarin, students would rely more and more on teachers' Mandarin usage; and they were at the risk of losing good chances to be exposed to enough English input. Students would not get enough practice in English to enhance their English language abilities.

Teacher B held the same opinion as Teacher A. She said that teachers' Mandarin usage could "help students to master better the teaching content" (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.203); while the disadvantage for Teacher B was that "students might become passive in EFL classes and they might lose opportunities to practise English" (Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.204-205).

Teacher C thought that if she used Mandarin in EFL classrooms it was helpful for her students' EFL learning. Meanwhile she still admitted there were some disadvantages that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage might bring about in EFL teaching and learning processes.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.154-159:***

There are merits and demerits. For me, it is normal to incorporate Mandarin in my EFL teaching as it can save class time. And I think it can help students to better understand and master the class content. But it may bring about some problems: students will lose opportunities to be exposed to real or realistic communication in English if teachers use too much Mandarin.

Teacher D did not think that her Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms would be negative to her students' EFL learning; on the contrary, she thought that using Mandarin could be helpful as she could "get feedback from students" and "get meaning across more easily" (Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.139). When asked if her using Mandarin in EFL classrooms would reduce the English input amount that her students received in EFL learning processes, she did not agree with this statement.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.140-143:***

Students have a lot of other means to listen to English. For example, they can listen to the radio, watch English TV shows, and have public classes via the Internet. I don't think Mandarin usage will affect negatively their English learning or reducing the amount of English input.

Table 75 provides a summary of the main advantages and disadvantages raised in the interviews by all four of the EFL teachers.

**Table 75. Advantages and disadvantages of Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	a. Help improve students' comprehension b. Help save class time	Students would lose opportunity to be exposed to enough English input.
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	Help improve students' comprehension	Students would lose opportune to practise in English.
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	a. Help students to master teaching contents b. Help save class time	Students could not be exposed to real or realistic communication in English.
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	a. Get feedback from student b. Get meaning across more easily	No disadvantages

**7.5.3 Teacher interview question 13: Do you think speaking Mandarin is necessary in your teaching of EFL? If yes, in what circumstances do you think speaking Mandarin is most necessary or important in your teaching? Why?**

When the four EFL teachers were asked about in what circumstances they thought their Mandarin usage was the most necessary, each teachers gave a different answer: to improve students' comprehension of teaching content; to teach English grammar; to introduce culture in English speaking countries; to introduce cultural differences between China and English speaking countries; to teach difficult vocabulary; and to save class time (Table 76).

**Table 76. Necessity of Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Most necessary Mandarin usage</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	To improve students' comprehension by translating English into Mandarin
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	a. To teach English grammar b. To introduce culture in English speaking countries c. To introduce cultural differences between China and English speaking countries
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	a. To save class time b. To teach difficult vocabulary and sentences
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	To save class time

Teacher A thought it was most necessary to use Mandarin to improve students' comprehension of teaching content by translating English sentences into Mandarin. Teacher B believed that it was most necessary to use Mandarin for teaching English Grammar, but the other three teachers did not agree with her. Teachers A, C and D all said that they seldom taught English grammar in EFL classes as students had systematically learned English grammar in middle school years and there was not much grammar to teach in the texts.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.228-235:***

For example, students are not familiar with grammatical terms in English, such as prefix or suffix. They cannot know these terms unless I use English to teach them English grammar again and systematically. They understand very well Mandarin translation of these grammatical terms; however, they do not know these terms in English. If I tell them the term of “subjective mood” in Mandarin, they immediately understand the meaning; but if I say it in English,

they are puzzled. They do not know what this English expression means. They do not know how people call it in English. How can they speak out these grammatical terms in English if they do not know them at all?

Teacher B also mentioned the necessity of using Mandarin to introduce the culture in English speaking countries and cultural differences between China and English speaking countries. This reflected her answer to interview question 6 (see Section 7.3) where she stated that she did not feel confident to speak English exclusively in EFL classrooms when she came across some areas where she was not familiar with the language.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.52-59:***

It is very hard for me to introduce the culture of English speaking countries such as lifestyles or cuisines. Take the cuisines for example: people in those countries use different materials, sauces, and recipes. Sometimes I even do not know them at all; it's hard for me to introduce them to my students in English exclusively. And I think my students cannot understand me if I insist in using English to introduce a dish to them, for example. I need to speak in Mandarin.

Teachers C and D shared the opinion that using Mandarin in EFL classes was most necessary and important for saving class time. In addition to saving class time,

Teacher C thought it most important and necessary to use Mandarin for explaining difficult vocabulary and sentences to her students.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.186-190:***

When I teach them new vocabulary or sentences, I try to explain in English as much as possible. But if I find students cannot understand my explanation for some difficult words or sentences, I will put my explanation into Mandarin.

Both English and Mandarin explanation will be used.

**7.5.4 Teacher interview question 14: Do you think it can help students better understand English grammar if you talk in Mandarin? Why or why not, please explain?**

All four of the teachers agreed that using Mandarin could help students better understand English grammar although they seldom taught grammar because there was not much grammar to teach in EFL classes at university. As Teacher A said: “Grammar is not an important part in our EFL teaching activities. They are university students now and teachers seldom teach English grammar” (Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.150). It was believed that university students should have already grasped English grammar. EFL teachers only taught English grammar when they met difficult grammar structures in the texts. If they taught English grammar, Mandarin usage would help students’ learning processes.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.175-179:***

Students are very weak at the expressions of grammatical terms in English, even some simple grammatical terms, such as attributive clause. If I use too many terms in English, they do not understand me. Additionally, grammar is complicated; if I teach English grammar in English, sometimes students will be more confused. I prefer using Mandarin for teaching English grammar.

**7.5.5 Teacher interview question 15: Do you think translating English words, expressions or sentences into Mandarin can help students learn more quickly these new items? Why or why not, please explain?**

Teacher A thought the translation of new words into Mandarin could be helpful for students to master the new words. But she still hoped to limit the amount of Mandarin usage when she taught new vocabulary.

***Interview excerpt A.25.06.2012.160-164:***

The ideal way is that I explain new words, expressions or sentences in English to my students. I can use pictures or video clips to help them to understand. But I cannot do it in practice. For example, some adjectives, I directly translate them into Mandarin, students may understand more quickly. If I teach verbs or nouns, I can teach by showing objects or actions to students. But adjectives are abstract. Translation can help students to understand and thus save class time.

Teacher B thought that providing Mandarin translation would be helpful for students to master the new words.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.258-263:***

I sometimes need to translate words and expressions into Mandarin. I have to give them translation versions. For example, if I give students the Mandarin translations of expressions like ‘kick in’ or ‘blend in’, they can immediately know what I say. Students seem to feel more comfortable when they get the new vocabulary translated into Mandarin.

Teacher C preferred English rather than Mandarin when it came to teaching new words to students. Teacher C did not think Mandarin usage could help students to learn new words or expressions more quickly. For her, Mandarin translation was at most an auxiliary factor to learning new words successfully. She insisted on giving as much as possible English input to her students to help them understand new words.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.190-193:***

If it is a difficult word, I will try to explain in English the meaning to my students. If students still do not understand, I will repeat my sentences or use some simple sentences or words to help elicit the meanings. If time permits, I prefer using English exclusively.

Teacher D thought students should prepare new words and expressions themselves prior to each EFL class: “We do not have much time for new words and expressions in EFL classes. I often focus on the texts in classes or topics close to the texts” (Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.163). Teacher D seldom taught new vocabulary; therefore this interview question was not applicable for her. This reflected Teacher D’s answer for interview question 6: EFL teachers at University A had the freedom to have their personal style in EFL teaching (see Section 7.3).

Table 77 provides a summary of the EFL teachers’ opinions in relation to interview question 15.

**Table 77. Is EFL teachers’ Mandarin usage helpful for teaching English new vocabulary?**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Mandarin usage for teaching new vocabulary</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	Helpful for students’ understanding of new words Hope to limit Mandarin usage
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	Helpful for students’ understanding of new words
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	Not helpful for students’ understanding of new words Hope to use English as much as possible
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	Not applicable as she seldom taught new vocabulary.

**7.5.6 Teacher interview question 16: Do you think it can save the class time if you announce administrative items (such as timetable, or exam plans) in Mandarin?**

**Why or why not, please explain?**

Table 78 contains the data from interview question 16.

**Table 78. Can EFL teachers' Mandarin usage save class time?**

	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Use or not use Mandarin?</b>	<b>Can it save class time?</b>
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	Yes	Yes
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	No	Not applicable
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	Yes	No
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	Yes	Yes

Teacher B was the only one who seldom used Mandarin for administrative announcement as she believed that her students could understand her announcements in English; and therefore there was no need using Mandarin.

Teachers A, C and D all admitted that they often used Mandarin to announce administrative items, such as timetables or exam plans. Administrative announcements were often very important for both students and teachers; therefore EFL teachers used Mandarin to make sure that students were clear about these arrangements. Teacher A said she always used Mandarin and English together to get meanings across: she first used English to make announcements, and immediately she

put her English announcements into Mandarin. Teacher C also agreed with this statement.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.200-205:***

For example I used Mandarin today to tell my students the arrangement of the final exam. I used Mandarin because I must take care of each student. In this class, most students might understand my English announcements; however, there were still some lower level students who could not understand my English sentences. They will also attend the final exam. I must make sure they understand me. So I put my English announcements into Mandarin.

In relation to the question about whether using Mandarin to announce administrative items could save class time or not, Teacher C did not think that it could save class time by using Mandarin. However, Teacher A and Teacher D felt that using Mandarin for administrative announcements could save class time.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.179-181:***

For example, at the end of one class, I will tell students the procedure of the next class. I may use English to tell them, I think students can understand me. But if there is only twenty seconds left, I will use Mandarin for I speak Mandarin faster than English.

**7.5.7 Teacher interview question 17: Do you think if you speak Mandarin in EFL classes, it can help develop a learner-friendly environment, so you can have more interaction with students? Why or why not, please explain.**

Table 79 provides the summary data of the EFL teachers' responses to interview question 17.

**Table 79. Can EFL teachers' Mandarin usage help create a learner-friendly environment?**

	Campus	Mandarin usage can help learner-friendly environment	Mandarin usage can help teachers get more feedback from students
<b>Teacher A</b>	University A	No	Yes
<b>Teacher B</b>	University A	No	No
<b>Teacher C</b>	University B	No	No
<b>Teacher D</b>	University A	Yes	Yes

Teachers A, B and C did not think teachers' Mandarin usage could help develop a learner-friendly environment. Teacher D was the only one who gave a positive answer to this question. She said that she could get more feedback from students if she used Mandarin.

***Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.188-191:***

If I speak exclusively English, students might be lost. Sometimes I have to repeat three times my sentences. For example, I ask them a question, I ask them: 'Can you answer this question?' Many of them had no response. I have

to repeat (my question), still no response. Then (I am forced to) repeat again. I feel upset, students feel upset as well. But if I use Mandarin (after English sentences), I can easily get feedback from students.

Teacher A thought that there was no relationship between her Mandarin usage and the creation of a learner-friendly environment. She said that students were not active in EFL classes; and for most of the class time Teacher A was the only person who spoke, while her students passively received the teaching content. As for the interaction between teachers and students, Teacher A admitted that she could get more feedback from students when students could not understand her English speaking and she put her English sentences into Mandarin.

Teacher B also expressed her concern about the indifference of students in EFL classes. In Teacher B's classes, students did not respond to her no matter what language Teacher B used.

***Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.283-285:***

They may be more relaxed if I use Mandarin, but they do not give feedback either. They are indifferent; they do not want to give me feedback. I use either English or Mandarin; they give me the same feedback. They do not care whether I use English or Mandarin.

Teacher B thought many students attended EFL classes unwillingly. However, students had no choice as EFL classes were compulsory at the university. Most students passively received English input in learning EFL classes. For some high English proficiency level EFL students, they also did not care about EFL classes as the content was too easy for them. According to Teacher B, Mandarin usage could not help to build up a learner-friendly environment; she did not have more feedback from students either when she used Mandarin in teaching EFL classes.

Teacher B gave two reasons to explain students' indifference in EFL classrooms. First, she believed that students' preferred an English native speaker to teach them English. Students were not active when their teachers shared the same first language as themselves; and students would have more interaction with an English native speaker. Secondly, Teacher B expressed her concern several times about the EFL class design. From teachers to students, no one had a clear goal for EFL classes. Teacher B stated that she was not confident about the output of EFL classes as the content of EFL classes was not well designed and this was a hindrance to a successful EFL learning and teaching.

Teacher C denied that there was a relationship between Mandarin usage and the creation of a learner-friendly environment. She held a mixed opinion in relation to the interaction between students and teachers.

***Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.217-221:***

It depends on topics. For example, one topic is difficult, students have ideas, but their verbal expressions cannot match their ideas. At that time they can be more inspired if I use Mandarin. But usually I will try my best to give them some similar but easier sentences. I try to make them understand little by little. It's not a good choice to use much Mandarin.

Teacher C did not agree that Mandarin usage was positive for creating a learner-friendly environment; on the contrary, she believed that using English as much as possible could help build up a learner-friendly environment. She felt that she could get more responses from students if she used English to encourage students or told them some jokes.

## **7.6 Summary**

The data in this chapter provides evidence to address research question 3 and research question 5:

- What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 3)
- Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes? (research question 5)

Although there were some differences in relation to teachers' understanding of Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes; the overall general conclusion reached can be summarised as follows: 1) Mandarin usage was inevitable in EFL classrooms. 2) Mandarin usage was helpful in some circumstances, namely improving students' comprehension by translation from English to Mandarin; teaching difficult vocabulary and sentences; and saving class time. 3) Too much Mandarin input was detrimental for the creation of a successful EFL teaching and learning environment. 4) Teachers' self-estimation of their own Mandarin usage was much lower than what the researcher observed in class audio-recording sessions. 4) Students' English proficiency levels were a decisive factor to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in their classroom activities. EFL teachers used less Mandarin when they were teaching high level EFL student; they chose to use more Mandarin when teaching low English proficiency level students. 5) There was a general consensus of opinion that grammar was not being taught at the university level because of the assumption that grammar had been taught in the middle school years. However, the teachers all commented that this may not be an accurate interpretation of the reality of the students' knowledge. Teaching complex English linguistic structures to student who did not have the English vocabulary to understand the grammatical terms required the teachers to resort to Mandarin to ensure understanding.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Discussion**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The aim of this study was to quantify the actual amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in eight EFL classes in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. The investigation explored EFL students' and teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. The study also examined the contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin, explored the reasons why EFL teachers used Mandarin in their EFL classrooms and the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. This chapter presents the key findings based upon results obtained from class audio-recording sessions, questionnaires and interviews. These findings are discussed in relation to relevant studies reviewed in Chapter 2 Literature Review and Chapter 3 China Context.

## **8.2 Research question 1: How much Mandarin do teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms in the two participating Southeast Mainland China universities actually use?**

From the results of eight class audio-recording sessions and four teachers' interviews documented in this study, it is evident that EFL teachers used Mandarin in their EFL classes. They believed that it was necessary to incorporate Mandarin into their teaching practices. This result is consistent with Liu's (2010) study in which neither students nor teachers reported that EFL teachers never code-switched to Mandarin.

Class audio-recording sessions were used in this study to quantify how much Mandarin the four non-English major EFL teachers used in their classrooms. It was found that their Mandarin usage amount varied widely from 0.78% to 74.83% (Table 12). The average amount of Mandarin usage by these four EFL teachers was 40.73%. In four of the eight class audio-recording sessions, EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was more than 50%. Only Teacher D used a small amount of Mandarin in her teaching: 10.95% and 0.78% for two class audio-recording sessions.

The great divergence in Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes is consistent with some previous studies. Kim and Elder's (2005) research showed five out seven teachers used the first language more than 30% of the time and two of them used the first language more than 60% of the time. Duff and Polio (1990) also

reported a wide difference of teachers' first language usage amount ranging from 0% to 90%.

However, this wide range of Mandarin usage amount in foreign language classes was not found in other studies. In Macaro's (2001) study, an average of 4.8% of the first language usage amount was found; and the range was from 0 to 15.2%. Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) reported that teachers' first language usage amount were 0%, 4.32%, 12.75% and 18.15%. De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) found the overall usage of the first language (English) by the two German teachers was 11.3% (9.3% for the experienced teacher and 13.2% for the novice teacher). In Song's (2009) study conducted in the context of tertiary education in Mainland China, four EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount were 10.5%, 20.3%, 21.5% and 32.2%.

Great divergence of teachers' first language usage was found in both studies conducted with teenagers (Kim & Elder, 2005) and with university students (Duff & Polio, 1990), and also in this study with EFL students at two universities in Southeast Mainland China. Contrary to the findings from this study a wide range of teachers' usage of students' first language did not occur in other studies conducted with teenagers and higher education students (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Macaro, 2001; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002; Song, 2009). These findings indicate that the age of the learners may not be the decisive factor for teachers' usage amount of students' first language in foreign or second language classes. Indeed, there is no

evident correlation between student age and teachers' usage amount of students' first language.

### **8.3 Research question 2: What are the students' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classes?**

The results from the students' questionnaires in this study indicated EFL students' attitudes towards their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms in universities in Mainland China. When asked about EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in general, the majority of the university non-English major students (59.95%) agreed with the statement that "in general, it is beneficial for my English learning if my teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms" (see Section 5.3.1). Only 18.23% of the students disagreed with the statement; and the rest of the students neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Students' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in this study are in line with findings in previous studies. Liu's (2010) study found that the majority (66%) of students agreed with EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin. In Tang's (2002) study, 70% of the students thought it was necessary that their EFL teachers used Mandarin in classrooms. Schweers (1999) found 88.7% of students agreed with the positive effects of the first language usage by teachers. Macaro (2001) also reported that the majority of students agreed that teachers' first language usage could help them better understand their teachers.

When further examining the different Mandarin usage contexts in this study, it seems that students were more likely to admit the effectiveness of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms because EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was helpful for their EFL learning. Students agreed that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was beneficial to students' EFL learning if their EFL teachers used Mandarin for:

- translating previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin;
- introducing the culture in English-speaking countries;
- providing the objectives of the teaching activities, such as exercises, practice, and tests;
- encouraging students to speak English;
- evaluating students' answers or practice in English;
- comprehension checks;
- building up close rapport with students;
- announcing administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans.

Approximately the same percentages of students and teachers (77.21% and 77.27% respectively) in this study believed that students would understand the English grammar better if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin to explain English grammar. Three times more students than teachers agreed with the statement that "students are more willing to speak English during EFL classes when EFL teacher encourages students in Mandarin than in English" (30.70% and 9.10% respectively, Table 16).

Students and teachers gave the similar estimations about EFL teachers' actual total Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms which was from 21% to 40%. It is interesting that in all different Mandarin usage contexts students estimated a little more EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount than EFL teachers did, except for explaining English grammar.

Students estimated that EFL teachers' most frequent Mandarin usage contexts were:

- providing activity objectives and,
- announcing administrative items.

These two Mandarin usage contexts were also the two Mandarin usage contexts that students desired the most in the future.

Students estimated that EFL teachers' least frequent Mandarin usage contexts were:

- encouraging students to speak English and,
- comprehension checks.

These two Mandarin usage contexts were also the two Mandarin usage contexts that students desired the least in the future.

Students' estimated and desired contexts for the most frequent and the least frequent Mandarin usage by EFL teachers are identical in these four contexts; this indicates that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in these four contexts may converge with students' needs in non-English major EFL classrooms.

In this study, 17.27% of the students desired that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount should be between 0 and 20%; 54.68% of the students thought it should be from 21% to 40%; 20.62% of the students thought it should be ranging from 41% to 60%. 7.43% of the students could accept more than 60% of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the future. Students participated in this study wanted more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers compared to students involved in Tang's (2002) study. Tang (2002) reported that 63% of the students thought EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount should be limited in the range from 5% to 10% of the class time; 30% of the students answered it should range from 20% to 30% of the class time.

When comparing students' estimated EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount and students' desired Mandarin usage by EFL teachers in the future, the findings can be summarised as follows:

- Students hoped to receive a little less Mandarin usage (the total Mandarin usage) from their teachers in general.
- Students desired less Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers for translating previous English words or expressions. This is the only Mandarin usage context in which students hoped to receive less Mandarin usage amount by their EFL teachers.
- Student wanted a little more amount of Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers in the following ten contexts from a to j:
  - a) teaching English grammar;

- b) introducing the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs);
- c) providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests);
- d) providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests);
- e) encouraging students to speak English;
- f) evaluating students' answers or practice in English;
- g) answering students' questions asked in Mandarin;
- h) checking if students have understood the content of the EFL class;
- i) building up close rapport with students;
- j) announcing administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).

Duff and Polio's (1990) study reported that students were satisfied with their foreign language teachers' actual first language amount in classrooms. Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) held the opposite opinion: students were not satisfied with teachers' actual first language usage and they wanted more first language usage amount from their teachers. In this study, a mixed result can be extrapolated:

- EFL teachers used a little more Mandarin usage for translating English words or expressions than the amount that students actually needed in classrooms; therefore, students desired a little less Mandarin amount for translation by their teachers.

- While in the ten Mandarin usage contexts from a to j, such as teaching English grammar, introducing the culture in English-speaking countries, and providing objectives of teaching activities, students were not satisfied with EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount as they desired more amount of Mandarin used by their teachers in these Mandarin usage contexts.

#### **8.4 Research question 3: What are the teachers' attitudes towards their usage of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?**

Teachers' responses to teachers' questionnaires in this study show that 81.82% of the teachers agreed that it was beneficial for their EFL teaching if EFL teachers spoke Mandarin in classrooms. Only 4.54% of the teachers disagreed on this statement, and 13.64% teachers neither agreed nor disagreed on this statement (see Table 14). When compared to the previous studies, it can be found that the first language usage was considered as natural and inevitable (Macaro, 2001) by the majority of teachers. Liu (2010) reported that 80% of the EFL teachers agreed with the positive effects of teachers' Mandarin usage in university EFL classrooms in Mainland China; whereas only 8.3% of the teachers had negative views on EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. 72% of the teachers in Tang's (2002) study thought it was necessary to use Mandarin in classrooms. All of the 19 teacher participants in Schweers's (1999) study admitted the necessity of using the first language in foreign language classrooms. By contrast, some different results were found in research studies

conducted in the context of the higher education in Mainland China. Song (2009) reported that EFL teachers held neutral attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms; while Cheng (2013) even found that EFL teachers had negative attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms.

Compared with their students, the EFL teachers in this study desired less teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classes in the future (about 0-20%). Teaching grammar (see Table 19, Survey question 4.3) was the only context in which teachers expected more Mandarin usage than their students.

Compared with their students, the EFL teachers who participated in this study were more likely to believe that it could save class time if teachers used Mandarin to:

- provide instruction of teaching activities, such as exercises, practice and tests;
- answer students' questions asked in Mandarin;
- announce administrative items, such as timetable, and exam plans.

EFL teachers estimated that the most frequent Mandarin usage contexts were:

- explaining English grammar;
- announcing administrative items.

EFL teachers also desired Mandarin usage the most in these two contexts listed above.

There are differences between the least frequent Mandarin usage contexts estimated by EFL teachers and the least frequent contexts desired by EFL teachers. EFL teachers estimated that the least frequent Mandarin usage contexts in their actual teaching were:

- encouraging students to speak English;
- evaluating students' answers or practice in English.

The least desired Mandarin usage contexts for EFL teachers were:

- encouraging students to speak English in class;
- introducing English culture.

The College English curriculum requirement (Department of Higher Education of Ministry of Education of P.R.China, 2007) urges EFL teachers in Mainland China to reach the teaching objective “to develop students’ ability to use English in a well-rounded way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future studies and careers as well as social interactions they will be able to communicate effectively” (p.18). However, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Mainland China or university departments provide no specific requirement to EFL teachers concerning language choice in EFL classrooms. EFL teachers are encouraged to use English as much as possible.

The teachers' interviews in this study provided an opportunity for more in-depth examination of EFL teachers' attitudes towards teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms in higher education in Southeast Mainland China. The four EFL teachers all abide by the principle of EFL teaching: help students' to develop English language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; as well as translating skills between English and Mandarin. All of the four EFL teachers interviewed agreed with the "use as much as possible English" principle, even though there was no formal department policy or requirement in relation to their language choice in classrooms. However, all the four EFL teachers believed that Mandarin could be included in EFL classes and they admitted their own Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms.

The four EFL teachers involved in teachers' interviews in this study used Mandarin for different purposes. They believed that using Mandarin was inevitable and effective as it helped improve students' comprehension of teaching content and saved class time. Mandarin usage was believed to be beneficial when it was used for teaching English grammar, difficult words, sentence structures or cultural differences; doing translation exercises; giving instructions; helping students to concentrate in classes.

All of the four EFL teachers agreed that using Mandarin could help students learn better English grammar, even though English grammar was seldom taught in non-English major EFL classrooms in tertiary education in Southeast Mainland China.

The four EFL teachers held different opinions about whether teachers' Mandarin usage could help students to master the new vocabulary. Two EFL teachers agreed; one teacher disagreed; while the fourth teacher did not give any explicit response to this question as she seldom taught new vocabulary in classrooms. Three of the four EFL teachers often used Mandarin to announce administrative items; and two EFL teachers believed that using Mandarin to announce administrative items could save class time. Three of the four teachers denied the relationship between teachers' Mandarin usage and the build-up of student-friendly learning environments. These three teachers believed that they could not receive more feedback from their students even when they used Mandarin to encourage their students.

As shown in the four EFL teachers' responses to the interview questions, there is no requirement about EFL teachers' language choice in EFL classrooms, EFL teachers made their own judgments about "use as much English as possible" in their teaching. However, the four EFL teachers held different views about the statement of using "as much as English as possible". In this study, Teacher A, B and D from University A did not give any explicit meaning to this term. Teacher C from University B thought the range of "as much as possible" was that EFL teachers should use 70% to 80% of English in their teaching. Teacher C used English 74.84% and 63.58% (see Table 12) in her teaching according to the results of the class audio-recording sessions. When examining the Mandarin usage amount of the other three teachers from University A, it was found that Teacher A's and Teacher B's Mandarin usage amount were higher

than 50%, in one of Teacher A's class audio-recording session 74.83% of Mandarin was used (see Table 12). Teacher C used the least amount of Mandarin (10.95% and 0.78%). Apparently, EFL teachers had different understandings of this expression "as much as possible".

From the results obtained from class audio-recording sessions and teachers' interviews in this study, it was found that there existed the discrepancy between EFL teachers' attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and their actual practice. This result was in line with Song's (2009) study in which she reported that EFL teachers' attitudes towards the first language usage were not necessarily consistent with their actual practices in classrooms. Teacher D was pessimistic about using English without incorporating Mandarin in the teaching to accomplish teaching tasks. However, she used the least amount of Mandarin among the four EFL teachers interviewed (10.95% and 0.78% respectively in two class audio-recording sessions).

From analysing the results obtained from the questionnaires, the class audio-recording sessions and teachers' interviews, it was found that EFL teachers were not conscious about their Mandarin usage. Among the four EFL teachers involved in class audio-recording sessions and teachers' interviews, two of them (Teacher A and B) used much more Mandarin amount than what they thought; only Teacher C used the similar amount of Mandarin in her teaching practice as what she estimated she should use. Liu (2010) found that EFL teachers were less conscious about EFL teachers'

code-switching from English to Mandarin; EFL teachers' code-switching might occur automatically or unconsciously. Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) also reported that EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin was more often and longer than what they believed. Teacher C in this study was the only EFL teacher whose actual Mandarin usage amount was consistent with the amount she thought optimal (74.84% and 63.58% in two class audio-recording sessions, see Table 13).

In the questionnaires, EFL teachers' estimations of their own Mandarin usage amount were all below students' estimations. EFL teachers' underestimation of their own Mandarin usage amount may also reflect the deep-rooted belief that EFL teachers should use "as much as possible" English in classroom. Cheng (2013) has suggested that this "reflects a stereotypical belief upheld by some Chinese foreign language teachers that English can only be effectively taught in English, and teachers' resorting to the mother tongue implies low language proficiency" (p. 1280). This belief is also reflected in the answers of students' and teachers' questionnaires in this study with regard to their desired EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in the future. Students' desired more EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount than their EFL teachers' actual Mandarin usage amount in ten contexts (see Section 8.3); while EFL teachers desired less Mandarin usage amount in the future in all the Mandarin usage contexts (see Table 21). This difference may be the indication that EFL teachers thought they used too much Mandarin in their actual teaching practice.

## 8.5 Research question 4: When do teachers use Mandarin in non-English major EFL classrooms?

Regarding Mandarin usage contexts, compared to the previous studies conducted in Mainland China (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002) and in other countries (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Polio & Duff, 1994; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002), similar first language usage contexts were found, such as translation, grammar, objective, instruction and comprehension checks. However, there were other differences in the first language usage contexts when comparing the results of this study and the findings of the previous research studies.

The first language has been suggested to be used for explaining grammatical rules; explaining tasks and activities to students (Cook, 2001); and translation between the first language and the target language (Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002). Results based upon class audio-recording sessions in this study showed that all of the four EFL teachers involved in class audio-recording sessions used Mandarin the most frequently for *Translation*. *Translation* took up 53.57% of all the usage contexts. *Instruction* was the second most common Mandarin usage context in teachers' class audio-recording sessions (about 20%). Another well accepted Mandarin usage context was *Encouraging students* (about 6%). However, the four EFL teachers did not use Mandarin in all Mandarin usage contexts. For example, Teacher D did not use Mandarin in most of the usage contexts (see Table 44).

Similar to the findings from the studies of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) and De La Campa and Nassaji (2009), *Translation* was found to be the most frequent first language usage context in this study. In non-English major EFL classrooms in this study, teachers' main teaching tasks were explaining texts to students and asking students to do exercises in classrooms. When asked about the purposes for which EFL teachers used Mandarin, one teacher interviewed stated that she used Mandarin for doing translation exercises (see Table 74). Another EFL teacher thought it was necessary for her to use Mandarin when she taught some difficult words or sentences (see Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.186-190). She often translated the difficult words or sentences into Mandarin. Additionally, two EFL teachers believed that translation from English to Mandarin was helpful for students to learn new vocabulary (see Table 77).

Among the sub-categories of *Translation*, the four participating EFL teachers translated different contents (see Table 45): Teacher A translated sentences the most frequently (86.11% of all her translations); while Teacher D translated sentences the least frequently (16.67% of all her translations). Teacher B and C translated phrases the least frequently in their teaching as documented in the class audio-recording sessions (17.78% and 19.38% respectively).

The second most common usage context in this study was *Instruction* (about 20%). *Instruction* was sub-classified into five categories, *Procedural instruction*, *Word*

*instruction, Phrase instruction, Sentence instruction and Text instruction. Procedural instruction* means EFL teachers used Mandarin to give instructions of the procedure in Mandarin. *Procedural instruction* is similar to the first language usage context in Cook's (2001) study: explaining tasks and activities to students. *Word instruction, Phrase instruction and Sentence instruction* are three usage contexts in which EFL teachers used Mandarin to provide extended or related topics to facilitate students' understanding. These three Mandarin usage contexts are similar to the first language usage context found in the study of Liu (2010): facilitating students' understanding by quoting others' words. Liu (2010) suggested that citing others' words related to the teaching content was more efficient for facilitating students' comprehension in EFL learning processes. In this study, both the student and the teacher participants believe that using Mandarin to give related or extended information about the English words, phrases or sentences is effective for facilitating students' understanding about the teaching content.

Another common Mandarin usage context is called *Other* which includes using Mandarin to call students' names; to ask help from students; to tell some conjunctive words; and to give personal comment. In this study, the four EFL teachers used Mandarin in different contexts (Table 47):

- Teacher A is the only teacher who used Mandarin to give personal comments about the teaching contents;
- Teacher A used Mandarin to tell conjunctive words and to give personal

comments;

- Teacher C is the only one who used Mandarin to ask help from her students;
- Teacher C used Mandarin to call students' names in Mandarin and to ask help from her students;
- Teacher B used Mandarin only for telling conjunction words;
- Teacher D used Mandarin only for calling students' names in Mandarin.

Some first language usage contexts in previous studies did not appear in this study.

The second most frequent first language usage context called Metalinguistic uses (see Section 2.5.2) in Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) study did not exist in this study.

Metalinguistic uses refer to:

- comment on the target language form (such as spelling), and comment on culture;
- contrast between the target language and the first language (such as spelling, and cultural practices in two languages).

De La Campa and Nassaji (2009) have suggested a similar first language usage context but called it "L1-L2 contrast" (see Section 2.5.2) which means that the first language utterances are used to contrast the second language forms or cultural concepts with the first language forms or concepts. In Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) study the first language is English and the target language is French, both languages are Indo-European languages. In De La Campa and Nassaji's (2009) study,

the first language is English and the target language is German, both are Germanic languages. However, in this study, the first language is Mandarin, which belongs to Sino-Tibetan language family (Language family, n.d.). Due to the linguistic distance between Mandarin and English, the Metalinguistic uses as the first language usage context did not appear.

Managing the class (such as giving feedback, checking comprehension, providing activity objectives) and teacher reaction to students' requests in the first language (such as answering students' questions in the first language about the target language, translation upon students' requests) are two other contexts in which the first language was used frequently in Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie's (2002) study. These contexts are similar to the first language usage contexts here called *Objective* (code 4), *Responses to students' questions* (code 8), and *Comprehension checks* (code 9). However, these three first language usage contexts were not found to be frequent in this study (see Table 44).

In the research studies conducted in the context of tertiary education in Mainland China, the researchers (Cheng, 2013; Liu, 2010; Tang, 2002) have found teaching grammar is a main Mandarin usage context in EFL classrooms. Cheng (2013) has found that using Mandarin to teach English grammar is the first frequent Mandarin usage context. However, *Grammar* did not appear as one of the most frequent teachers' Mandarin usage contexts in this study. The reason is that EFL classes in this

study contained very little English grammar as the teaching content. The EFL university teachers in this study considered university students should have mastered English grammar in their middle school (see Section 7.5.4).

The results of this study show that using Mandarin to encourage students to speak English is also a very common Mandarin usage context in these non-English major EFL classrooms (Table 44). However, it did not exist in previous research studies (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Liu, 2010; Polio & Duff, 1994; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002; Tang, 2002). In teachers' interviews, the EFL teachers had different opinions about the effectiveness of Mandarin usage to encourage students to give feedback to EFL teachers. Two of the EFL teachers believed that students would give more feedback if they used Mandarin; while the other two EFL teachers held the opposite opinions. No matter how the interviewed EFL teachers thought about the Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English in classrooms, the results of the analysis about the Mandarin usage context elicited from eight class audio-recording session show that using Mandarin to encourage students is common in non-English major EFL classrooms. EFL teachers' frequent Mandarin usage for encouraging students to speak English can be explained by the learning and studying style in Mainland China. Deeply influenced by Confucian Heritage Culture (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995), students in Mainland China are considered to be silent and passive (Tsui, 1996) as they are used to more listening and less speaking in classrooms (Liu & Littlewood, 1997). Chen and Goh (2011) have suggested that students' inactive

participation in classrooms is one of the main factors to the difficulties that EFL teachers encounter in their teaching practice of oral English in the context of the higher education in Mainland China. Facing inactive students, EFL teachers may be forced to use Mandarin to encourage students to speak more English in classrooms.

## **8.6 Research question 5: Why do teachers resort to using Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes?**

From the interviews with the four EFL teachers, all of the four teachers expressed their desire to give students more English input to help develop the students' English proficiency levels (see Section 7.4.1). They hoped to use as much English as possible. However, on the contrary, they used considerable Mandarin in their actual teaching in non-English major EFL classrooms. The results of eight class audio-recording sessions show that the four EFL teachers used Mandarin in their teaching in different contexts; their Mandarin usage amount ranges from 0.78% to 74.83% with an average of 40.73% (Table 13).

It is impossible to ban the use of first language in foreign or second language classes as some theorists have suggested (Asher, 1977; Cook, 1991; Turnbull, 2000; Weinreich, 1968). In this study, the EFL teachers who participated in the teachers' interviews also agreed that they could not accomplish their teaching objectives by using English exclusively in EFL classes. Limited class time, students' low English

proficiency levels, and EFL teachers' low competence were the major reasons for EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom. In addition, teaching content which did not engage the students' interest was also a factor related to teachers' using Mandarin in EFL teaching.

The advantages of using Mandarin in EFL classes given by the four EFL teachers interviewed can be summarised as follows: 1) to help students' comprehension of the teaching content; 2) to help teachers to explain difficult words, expressions, and especially grammar or syntactic structures; 3) to help to explain difficult language points and cultural differences; 4) to save class time (see Table 75). The first three advantages were consistent with the findings in Tang's (2002) study which stated that explaining meanings of words was the most frequent occasion in which the three EFL teachers used Mandarin. Tang (2002) also found that EFL teachers chose to use Mandarin to explain some abstract words or words specifically existing in English language cultures. The last advantage is directly related to the very limited class time available for EFL classes in these university contexts. Macaro (2001) has suggested that time pressure is one of the major reasons in how much the first language is used by teachers in classrooms. The non-English major EFL classes are compulsory for university students in Mainland China. Tang (2002) has also suggested that using Mandarin is less time-consuming in EFL classrooms in higher education in Mainland China. In teachers' interviews in this study, the EFL teachers mentioned the very limited class time repeatedly (see Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.116-120; Interview

excerpt C.21.05.2012.69-72; Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.66-68; Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.71-75). They felt it was essential to incorporate Mandarin in EFL classrooms as it was efficient and time saving. For example, three of the four EFL teachers interviewed agreed that using Mandarin to announce administrative items could save valuable class time (Table 78). For the purpose of completing the teaching tasks in the limited time available, the EFL teachers thus chose to use Mandarin in EFL classrooms.

Students' English proficiency levels were a decisive influence on EFL teachers resorting to using Mandarin in their classrooms. In teachers' interviews, Teacher D stated that there was no unchangeable ratio of English and Mandarin, students' English proficiency levels decided the amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage. As Teacher D stated, EFL teachers could exclusively use English when they taught very high English proficiency level EFL students. However in some cases, some low English proficiency level students could understand nothing in English, EFL teachers were then forced to use Mandarin to help students understand the teaching content (see Section 7.3.3). Students' answers to survey questions showed that EFL teachers used different amounts of Mandarin in classrooms. The students' answers echoed the teachers' answers in the interviews. In the teachers' interviews, EFL teachers said they used different amounts of Mandarin when they taught different level EFL students (Table 73). This statement accounts for a great divergence in the amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in the EFL class audio-recording sessions. This finding is

consistent with results of the previous studies in which student' language proficiency levels are considered as a major factor in teachers' language choice (Cheng, 2013; De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Liu, 2010; Macaro, 2001; Song, 2009; Tang, 2002). The four EFL Teachers interviewed estimated that different English proficiency level students could understand different amounts of EFL teachers' English speaking (Table 70). As Song (2009) suggested, students' foreign language or second language proficiency levels are a factor in relation to the amount of students' first language used by teachers in foreign language or second language classrooms. In Cheng's (2013) study 94% of the EFL teachers considered students' English proficiency levels as the most significant factor to EFL teachers' language choice in classrooms. Similar finding was also found in Liu's (2010) study, 85% of teachers believed that students' English proficiency was the first factor leading to EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin in classrooms. Two of the three EFL teachers interviewed in Tang's (2002) study considered students' low English proficiency levels as the main reason that teachers resorted to using Mandarin in classrooms. However, Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) hold opposite opinions as they believed that students' or teachers' English proficiency levels are not influential to EFL teachers' code-switching from English to Mandarin.

The EFL teachers' low competence or more precisely, their English proficiency levels were also related to EFL teachers' language choice in classrooms. This result is in line with findings in two research studies conducted in the context of the higher education

in Mainland China: Cheng (2013) and Liu (2010) both listed teachers' English proficiency levels as the second most important factor to EFL teachers' language choice. In addition, as Chen and Goh (2011) argued, many EFL teachers are not confident about their knowledge of English because they are not native speakers of English. However, this result is in contrast to the findings in the study of Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010). Van Der Meij and Zhao (2010) have thought neither students' nor teachers' English proficiency levels are related to EFL teachers' language choice or the first language usage in classrooms. In the teachers' interviews in this study, all of the four EFL teachers were not confident to accomplish all the teaching tasks in English exclusively without using Mandarin (see Section 7.3.1). When these four EFL teachers were not familiar with some items or some new knowledge, they could not find the exact words or expressions in English, they often resorted into using Mandarin (see Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.48-50). As Cook (2001) claimed, using the first language in foreign language or second language teaching could help avoid misunderstanding and help elicit meanings. A failure of comprehension (Cook, 2001) increased target language input modification (Macaro, 2001). A failure of comprehension may lead to the failure of language learning. In this study, based on the results of the students' questionnaires, low English proficiency level EFL students needed more teachers' Mandarin usage amount than high English proficiency level EFL students.

Along with the limited class time, students' and teachers' English proficiency levels,

the teaching content is also found to be related to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms in this study. The teaching content in non-English major EFL classes was explaining the text and completing exercises on the textbook. As Pan and Block (2011) have pointed out the current EFL teaching and learning in tertiary education in Mainland China is exam-centred: the accumulation of English knowledge, especially the command of English grammar, is still the focus of the exams; while the real or realistic practices in English has not been give due attention. Liu (2003) has expressed the same concern about the negligence of the development of students' intellectual communicative competence. The failure of course design is related to students' reluctance in learning EFL classes. It is a fact that Oral tests were excluded from the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) test system from the implementation of CET-4 in 1987 to 1999.

Teacher B in this study was worried about her students who were not interested in her teaching. Teacher B believed that the course design needed to be improved to arouse students' interest and enthusiasm in EFL learning (see Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.287-288). Three of the four EFL teachers interviewed emphasised the importance of students' oral practice when they were asked about the ideal way to teach EFL classes (see Section 7.4.1). Teacher A hoped to have more interaction between her and students; Teacher B wanted to give more exercises requiring paraphrasing or summarising tasks in order to help her students express themselves in English; Teacher C's ideal way of teaching EFL classes involved more freedom for

students to express themselves in English learning processes. It appeared that the EFL teachers were not satisfied with the current EFL course design which is still exam-centred and teacher-centred. Students are not motivated to learn in EFL classes and they consider EFL learning a process of accumulation of knowledge. In addition, the limited class time for EFL does not permit students to have much oral practice in classrooms; the time constraint also forces EFL teachers to accomplish teaching tasks by using Mandarin in classrooms. Therefore, the students in this study accepted the practice of learning English by using Mandarin (see Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.116-120).

Students' English proficiency levels, EFL teachers' own English competence, limited class time and non-engaging teaching content contributed to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classroom. EFL teachers were faced with a dilemma: they had a strong belief that they should use as much English as possible to ensure sufficient English input to their students; but in reality, EFL teachers felt they had no choice but resort to using Mandarin in their teaching to maximise efficient use of the limited EFL classroom time available.

### **8.7 Research question 6: Is there any relationship between students' attitudes towards non-English major EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' own English proficiency levels?**

From the comparisons between high English proficiency level students and low English proficiency level students at University B, it was found that students with comparatively lower English proficiency levels were more likely to agree with the positive effects of their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. Students with low English proficiency levels were more like to believe that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage was beneficial to their EFL learning in general and in all the different contexts.

According to students' estimations, EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount varied with students' English proficiency levels: EFL teachers used Mandarin from 21 to 40% in some contexts or even 41% to 60% of the time for low English proficiency level EFL students; and they used Mandarin less than 40% or even less than 20% of the time for higher English proficiency level EFL students. The differences in EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage for teaching different level EFL students can be explained by EFL teachers' answers in their interviews. Teacher C and D both thought that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount should not be fixed; Teacher C even gave different ratios between English and Mandarin in EFL teaching according to students' different English proficiency levels: from the 5% to 60% of the Mandarin usage amount for different level students (see Section 7.4.2).

Low English proficiency level students (Level 1) stated that EFL teachers used Mandarin the most frequently (about 41% to 60% of the time) for:

- announcing administrative items,
- providing activity objectives,
- providing activity instruction.

While high English proficiency level students (Level 3 and Level 4 students) thought that their EFL teachers used Mandarin the most frequently (about 21% to 40% of the time) for:

- announcing administrative items,
- providing activity objectives,
- translation of previous words or expressions.

Announcing administrative items and providing activity objectives were the two most frequent Mandarin usage contexts for all students no matter what English proficiency levels they had.

When teaching English low proficiency students (Level 1 student in this study), EFL teachers used Mandarin the least frequently (about 21% to 40% of the time) in the three contexts:

- comprehension checks,
- Answering students' questions asked in Mandarin,

- evaluating students' answers or practice.

In comparison, when teaching high English proficiency students (Level 3 and Level 4 students), EFL teachers used Mandarin the least frequently (less than 20% of the time) in the following contexts:

- encouraging students,
- comprehension checks,
- evaluating students' answers or practice.

Low English proficiency level students (Level 1) desired more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers in the future compared with high English proficiency level students.

When comparing students' estimated EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage and their desired amount in the future, low English proficiency level students appeared to desire less Mandarin usage by EFL teachers than their teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage, whereas high English proficiency level students desired more Mandarin usage from EFL teachers for their future EFL learning practices.

The results of the English proficiency Level 1 students desiring less EFL teachers' Mandarin usage than their EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage might be explained by the EFL teachers actually using a little more Mandarin than the amount

that low English proficiency level students actually needed. It might further be implied that EFL teachers felt less confident about low English proficiency level students' ability to understand English speaking, and thus the teachers used more Mandarin than students actually needed in EFL classrooms.

## **8.8 Other issues related to EFL teaching in Mainland China**

### **8.8.1 Indifferent students**

A number of studies depicted students from Mainland China as passive and silent learners in foreign language classrooms (Chan, 1999; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996a; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; Tsui, 1996). However, before conducting this study, I had not imagined that students in EFL classes at these two universities in Southeast Mainland China would be so inactive, passive, or even indifferent and that very limited discussions or questionings from students would be recorded in class audio-recording sessions. Although this study focused on teachers' Mandarin usage, and only teachers' speaking was analysed, when transcribing observation notes, which were used to remind me of what had happened during the class recording sessions, students' speaking or the interactions between students and teachers were recorded in my researcher journal. These observational notes brought another dimension to the study.

Two EFL teachers expressed their concerns about students' indifference in EFL classrooms. Teacher B seldom received feedback from her students no matter what

language she chose to use. Students passively received the English input. Teacher B thought that neither teachers, nor students, had clear objectives of the teaching or learning within the EFL course; in addition teachers and students did not share the same objective. Teacher B believed that many students were forced to attend EFL classes as it is a compulsory course for obtaining the Bachelor's degree; she guessed that many high English proficiency level EFL students were not interested in the teaching content as it was too easy for them. Teacher B also assumed that after the expansion of the universities since the year 2000, more students have been enrolled into universities with lower English abilities. Those low English proficiency level EFL students could find themselves unable to participate in the teaching and learning activities because they did not understand the English. For accomplishing the teaching tasks EFL teachers often chose to resort to using Mandarin, however, three EFL teachers interviewed (Teacher A, B and C, see Section 7.5.2) in this study expressed their concern about too much Mandarin usage by EFL teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms. Cheng (2013) has suggested that EFL teachers do not want to use Mandarin in EFL classrooms because their students will become dependent on Mandarin. In this study Teacher A and B thought that students might become increasingly dependent on EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and then lose opportunities to be exposed to sufficient English input which is vital to improve students' English abilities, especially their oral ability.

Students' low motivation was related to the failure of course design. The characteristics of EFL course design can be summarised as follows: a large class size, very limited class time, and text book driven teaching content. First, a large class size combined with different English proficiency level EFL students often made it difficult for EFL teachers to cater for every student's English needs. In one EFL class, there were often more than 30 or even 40 students with varying English proficiency levels. Different English proficiency level students had different demands for language learning. EFL teachers could not satisfy each student's demand. Second, limited class time meant that teachers had to proceed with the teaching tasks very quickly without providing enough time to give students time to practise their newly learned knowledge. In the class recording sessions, EFL teachers sometimes had to answer questions themselves as no student responded to their questions. Little interaction between teachers and students occurred during the class recording sessions. Students seldom spoke during the teaching and learning processes. Third, the teaching content did not seem interesting enough to attract the students' attention. Text explaining and exercises drills as the two main parts of teaching and learning content could hardly engage non-English major EFL students' interest. When asked about their ideal way to teach EFL classes, three teachers gave their own desired method or approach of how to teach. More students' oral practice was the common suggestion of these three teachers. EFL classes in Mainland China are still teacher-centred. Students are not given much freedom to have oral practice. They are passive receivers of knowledge.

From the interview with Teacher A, I was informed that some innovative attempts had been made to provide EFL students with more courses, such as a writing course, and a listening and speaking course in the language lab. However, for some reasons, these innovative attempts were suspended. EFL classes at University A resumed the old teaching content practices of text explaining and text exercise drills.

The situation at University B appeared to be more progressive than that at University A. University B classified students into four different English proficiency levels based on the students' university entrance exam scores. Students with similar English proficiency levels were put into the same classes. This classification appeared to reduce EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount. EFL teachers no longer needed to help the relatively low level EFL students to catch up by using Mandarin in classroom. Results obtained from class recording sessions showed that Teacher C from University B used less Mandarin than Teachers A and B from University A.

### **8.8.2 Teaching method(s) applicable for higher education students in Mainland China**

In Mainland China it is a government policy to have English as a core subject offered at middle schools and universities (Ministry of Education of the PRC, 2006). EFL classes are designed for Year 1 and Year 2 non-English major students in universities. Prior to discussing the teaching methods which are more applicable for Chinese students, several points should be kept in mind. First, the aim of EFL classes are

explained in College English curriculum requirements (Department of Higher Education of Ministry of Education of P.R.China, 2007) in Mainland China, the teaching objective is written as: “to develop students’ ability to use English in a well-rounded way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future studies and careers as well as social interactions they will be able to communicate effectively” (p. 18). Secondly, English is a foreign language for students, and the EFL classes are compulsory for the fulfillment of higher education requirements. Thirdly, all EFL teachers in this study are native speakers of Mandarin. Finally, the EFL classes are designed specifically for non-English major university students. The EFL classes often contain two major kinds of teaching or learning activities: teachers were explaining the texts to students; and students were completing English exercises.

As discussed in the Literature Review (Chapter 2), each of the eight teaching methods examined for foreign or second language learning has both merits and drawbacks. To find out which method(s) is/are applicable for university EFL classes, I need to return to the analysis of their characteristics and then investigate the teaching of EFL class in the context of university education in Southeast Mainland China.

In the Grammar Translation method (see Section 2.2.1), the teachers teach the target language by using students’ first language. Second language teachers did not need to be the native speaker or have near to a native speaker proficiency in the target language. Emphasis was placed on grammatical rules and new vocabulary in the

target language and oral proficiency was neglected. This method is not applicable for higher education students in Mainland China, as it cannot meet the requirements of the teaching objective of the Department of the Ministry of Education of PR China 2007's policy. The Ministry of Education of Mainland China recognises that English teacher can use the first language in classroom for some specific purpose, such as explaining and translating some abstract English words. However, it still stipulates that English teacher should use as much English as possible (Ministry of Education of the PRC, 2000). The Ministry of Education even emphasises university students' listening and speaking abilities in English (Ministry of Education of the PRC, 2006). The Grammar Translation method, as a sole teaching method of foreign language or second language teaching, is not appropriate in current language teaching and learning processes in Mainland China. Students will have low competence in speaking and listening, and they cannot effectively communicate in English after learning in EFL classes by using the Grammar Translation method.

In the Direct method (see Section 2.2.2), the target language becomes the medium of instruction. In this study, if EFL classes are taught through the Direct method, then English becomes the medium of teaching and learning activities. The EFL students should then be immersed in English and avoid using Mandarin as English becomes the means of instruction and communication in EFL classrooms. Learning English is then believed to be analogue to learning Mandarin. No Mandarin will be permitted, no translation will occur between English and Mandarin. New words will be taught

without translation, they will be taught through known words, demonstration, images, objects, and miming. Grammar will be taught inductively.

Is the Direct method ideal for EFL classes in the higher education in Mainland China?

In theory, foreign or second language learning cannot be equivalent to the first language acquisition, as foreign language, or second language, learners have more mature mental statuses, more cognitive development, and higher social skills (Cook, 2001). Therefore, the learning processes for foreign languages cannot solely resemble the processes of first language learning. This study found that the four EFL teachers involved in class audio-recording sessions cannot complete teaching tasks using English exclusively for three reasons. First, when EFL teachers teach English grammar, it is hard for them to avoid using Mandarin. Although, university students have already learned English grammar in the middle school, EFL teachers still find it difficult not to use Mandarin to help students understand English grammar. According to Teacher B, many students are not familiar with grammatical terms in English (see Interview excerpt B.24.05.2012.228-235). Secondly, students' English proficiency is a major concern for EFL teachers. As Teacher D noted, students' English proficiency levels decided EFL teachers' English usage amount: she could not teach new words exclusively in English. In some cases, Teacher D repeated her articulation many times; however, her students did not give any response to her (see Interview excerpt D.12.06.2012.47-49). Finally, limited class time influences EFL teachers to use Mandarin to teach English as it is more effective and time-saving (see Table 78). In

the teachers' interviews for this study, none of the four EFL teachers were optimistic in accomplishing the teaching goals by using English exclusively in EFL classes

According to the Audio-lingual method, a foreign language can be taught without using learners' first language. A foreign language can be taught through repetitive drills (see Section 2.2.3). This method can be applied to teach a large number of learners, and it is often carried out in a language laboratory. Teachers provide the correct words or expressions; students' practice through repetition. However, this method has two drawbacks if applied in EFL classes in the higher education context. First, the Audio-lingual method requires abundant time for students to repeat over and over again what teachers tell them. Limited class time is always a major concern for EFL teachers (see Section 6.6.3). In the teachers' interviews, EFL teachers mentioned the limited class time on several occasions. One major reason that they chose to use Mandarin was to accomplish their teaching objectives in the very limited class time available. EFL teachers do not have enough time to give to their students an opportunity to repeat a word, an expression or a sentence many times to the extent that the students finally mastered it. The second drawback of the Audio-lingual method is that static repetitive drills and memorization of standard phrases cannot provide EFL students with real or realistic communication in English. According to Rivers (1964), the Audio-lingual method cannot help EFL students to promote their English speaking ability to a high proficiency levels.

However, if an EFL lesson is taught using the CLT approach (see Section 2.2.4), too much attention will be given to activities among students, it is difficult for the teachers to monitor and correct students' errors, especially in the class with a large number of students. Although in a CLT classroom, students are presumed to make errors, they still need teachers' correction to make progress in the target language learning processes. The result of this is that students' fluency in English is promoted, but not accuracy. Secondly, some low level EFL students cannot find solutions about how to participate into classroom communications. As in some extreme cases, some students do not understand English sentences at all (see Interview excerpt C.21.05.2012.64). Students' limited English listening and speaking abilities may hamper their English learning in a CLT classroom. Finally, the CLT approach requires foreign or second language teachers to have an excellent mastery of two languages, the target language and students' first language. In this study, one EFL teacher explicitly expressed that she was not confident about her own oral English abilities: Teacher B in this study admitted that she had some difficulties in explaining unfamiliar items or abstract concepts to the students in her class using English (see Section 7.3.1). Thus the expectation of dual competence in L1 and L2 seems unrealistic.

Other teaching methods, such as the Total Physical Response (TPR) method (see Section 2.2.5), the Silent Way method (see Section 2.2.6), the Community Learning method or the Language Immersion (see Section 2.2.7) are not suitable to the

university context in Mainland China. EFL classes are designed for adult EFL students to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing abilities; EFL students cannot use body movements like children to learn English in the Total Physical Response (TPR) method or study with a silent EFL teachers through the Silent Method. The large size of EFL classes makes it impossible to apply the Community Learning method in EFL classrooms. Finally EFL classes are just one course for non-English major university students, other classes of their majors are still taught in Mandarin. It would be extremely hard to find immersion teachers to teach EFL students in all the other subjects in the students' programmes.

## **8.9 Summary**

In this study, a wide divergence of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was found (0.78% to 74.83%). This wide difference of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was consistent with the previous studies (Duff & Polio, 1990; Kim & Elder, 2005). A higher amount of students' first language usage (Mandarin) was also found compared to some previous studies (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Macaro, 2001; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002; Song, 2009). Students' age was found not to be related to the amount of students' first language used by foreign or second language teachers.

Similar to the previous study (Liu, 2010; Macaro, 2001; Schweers, 1999; Tang, 2002), the majority of students (59.95%) and teachers (81.82%) in this study agreed that EFL

teachers' Mandarin usage was beneficial for EFL teaching and learning in higher education in Mainland China. Students and teachers both estimated that EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount was ranging from 21% to 40%. Students were not satisfied with EFL teachers' actual amount of Mandarin usage as they desired more Mandarin usage by their EFL teachers except for translating English words or expressions into Mandarin. EFL teachers in this study desired less Mandarin usage than their students did in EFL classes in the future. The only exception was that the EFL teachers wanted more Mandarin usage for teaching English grammar than the students did.

In the teachers' questionnaires, EFL teachers underestimated their amount of Mandarin usage which reflects the EFL teachers' belief about using English as much as possible in EFL classrooms. There is no doubt that EFL teachers in this study had the tacit agreement about using English as much as possible in EFL classrooms; however their understanding about "as much as possible" were different. Two of the four EFL teachers participating in class audio-recording sessions in this study used much more Mandarin than what they thought optimal or reasonable. Teachers' attitudes towards the first language usage and their actual practice are not always consistent. This indicates EFL teachers were not always conscious about their Mandarin usage in classrooms as discussed in the previous studies (Liu, 2010; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010).

The most frequent Mandarin usage by the EFL teachers in this study occurred for

*translation* and *instruction* in the non-English major EFL classrooms, which was also the most frequent first language usage contexts in other studies (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002). Some first language usage contexts in the previous studies did not exist in this study: Metalinguistic uses in the study of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) and L1-L2 contrast in the study of De La Campa and Nassaji (2009). Grammar was not found frequent in this study although it was the first frequent Mandarin usage context in Cheng's (2013) study. However, the first language context of using Mandarin to encourage students to speak English found in this study did not appear in any previous studies.

It is impossible to totally exclude the use of first language in foreign or second language classes (Asher, 1977; Cook, 1991; Turnbull, 2000; Weinreich, 1968). It was found that EFL teachers used Mandarin for different reasons in this study. Limited class time, students' low English proficiency levels, EFL teachers' low competence and uninteresting teaching content all together attributed to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms in higher education in Southeast Mainland China.

It was found that students' English proficiency levels were related to their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. Low English proficiency level students were more likely to agree with the effectiveness of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in classrooms. From students' estimations about EFL teachers' actual Mandarin

usage in classrooms, the results demonstrate that EFL teachers used different amount of Mandarin according to students' English proficiency levels. This difference coincides with teachers' answers in teachers' interviews: EFL teachers believed that they should use different amount of Mandarin when teaching different level EFL students.

Students' low motivation in relation to learning in EFL classes appeared to be mainly related to features of the course design. Large class sizes incorporating different English proficiency level students, not enough time to practice and uninteresting teaching content, all together contributed to the demotivation exhibited by the EFL students in this study.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Conclusion**

#### **9.1 Study in context**

This study investigated the use of Mandarin in non-English major EFL classes in two universities in Southeast Mainland China. The participants were 417 non-English major EFL students and 22 non-English major EFL teachers from these two universities. The data were collected through three procedures, class audio-recording sessions, students' and teachers' questionnaires, and four EFL teachers' interviews. The data from both the quantitative and qualitative components of the research were reported in three parts. First, the findings based on the quantitative analysis of class recording sessions, students' questionnaires and teachers' questionnaires were analysed and discussed (see Chapter 5); second, the findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of class audio-recording sessions were analysed and discussed (see Chapter 6); and third, the findings of the qualitative analysis of the four EFL teachers' interviews were analysed and discussed (see Chapter 7).

## 9.2 Key findings

Results obtained from the class audio-recording sessions show a great divergence of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount, ranging from 0.78% to 74.83%, with an average of 40.73%. In comparison to previous studies, a higher amount of students' first language (Mandarin) usage by EFL teachers was found in this study. EFL teachers used Mandarin most frequently for translation and instruction; these activities comprised 53.57% and 20.5% (respectively) of all EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in all contexts.

The students and the EFL teachers all agreed that EFL teachers' usage of Mandarin in classrooms was helpful for teaching and learning processes. Teachers' estimations of their amount of Mandarin usage were lower than students' estimation, and even lower than their actual Mandarin usage amount. This underestimation reflects the teachers' dilemma: EFL teachers hold the pedagogical belief to limit their amount of Mandarin usage to ensure sufficient English input; however, they resort to using Mandarin in their EFL teaching in order to cover the curriculum content efficiently within the university time constraints.

The situation was further complicated by teachers' beliefs about the students' English proficiency levels. These were a decisive factor in relation to EFL teachers' amount of Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms. The less competent the students were in English

the more Mandarin the teachers used in EFL classes. Teachers' own English competence was another important impact related to EFL teachers' Mandarin usage amount in non-English major EFL classes. Some teachers were not confident with their own English capabilities so resorted to using Mandarin in their EFL classes to make sure the students understood the tasks to be completed.

Neither teachers, nor students, could explicitly identify the teaching and learning objectives of their EFL classes. There seemed to be a dearth of information at both the PRC Ministry of Education (MOE) level and at the individual university level, regarding clear and precise instructions for the staff delivering the EFL courses. EFL classes were still teacher-centred; students were not provided with much time to practise their new knowledge. Moreover, the teaching content of non-English major EFL classes was text driven. Many students in this study seemed reluctant to engage with the two major activities in EFL classes: teachers' explaining the text; and students' undertaking exercise drills on the textbooks.

The classification of different English proficiency level students and into which classes they should be placed needs further consideration at the university level in order to help each student achieve maximum results from their EFL classes.

### **9.3 Contributions to new knowledge**

The findings from this study make several contributions to the new knowledge. First, this is the first study to report the actual amount of EFL teachers' Mandarin usage in non-English major EFL classrooms in Mainland Chinese universities. Second, it has made the first attempt to examine the relationship between students' attitudes towards their EFL teachers' Mandarin usage and students' English proficiency levels in the context of Chinese higher education by quantitative analysis. Third, the study's findings add substantially to our understanding of students' and teachers' attitudes toward first language usage in foreign language or second language classrooms; the usage contexts in which teachers use the first language; and the reasons why teachers resort to using the first language in non-English major EFL classrooms.

### **9.4 Limitations of this study**

Several limitations to this study need to be acknowledged. First, the data in this study was collected from EFL classes of non-English major university students and their EFL teachers. Therefore, the findings are context bound and generalization to other English classrooms is the reader's interpretation. Further, the small sample size of teacher participants limited the potential for transferability of the results. 22 teacher participants answered the teachers' questionnaires, four EFL teachers' eight class sessions were audio-recorded, and these four teachers were then interviewed. Finally,

when examining the relationship between students' English proficiency levels and their attitudes towards EFL teachers' Mandarin usage, students of three different English proficiency levels (Level 1, 3 and 4) from University B were selected as the sample. At University B, students were allocated into different levels according to their University Entrance Exam scores. This study assumed that the classification levels were valid and consistent from the first day to the time this study was conducted. Any inconsistency in levels could affect the interpretation of the results.

## **9.5 Issues observed during this study**

I became aware of a number of interesting issues during the study through anecdotal evidence that I had recorded in my researcher journal. First there appeared to be an apparent lack of professional training for EFL university teachers' in this study. The teachers incidentally commented that they received no formal training regarding EFL teaching and learning principles and practices. The teachers appeared to be compensating for this lack of pedagogical knowledge by using Mandarin in their classroom teaching. The teachers seemed to find it difficult to handle some of the teaching situations, for example, how to teach difficult English concepts when they assumed the students would have had no experience with the concepts. When the teachers could not find effective pedagogical techniques to teach English words, phrases, clauses, concepts they would resort to using Mandarin.

Second, the EFL teachers in this study had limited research ability. They were often facing a heavy teaching load, especially after the university expansion which allowed more students with lower English abilities to enroll into universities. Many of the EFL teachers gave priority to teaching rather than doing research into their own academic work. This resulted in a limited knowledge about the advances in teaching and learning approaches and new research results related to EFL language teaching and learning. A number of EFL teachers in this study were used to translating English into Mandarin directly in their teaching practice as they felt confident and secure; this teaching approach contributed to the over usage of Mandarin by teachers in non-English major EFL classrooms.

Finally, students' traditional learning styles in Mainland China may be another factor related to EFL teachers' over use of Mandarin. Whether a myth or a reality, although it was not a research question under investigation in this study, it appeared that the students in this study reflected a passive learning style. The students appeared to expect to receive knowledge rather than to be actively engaged in the co-construction of knowledge. They expected their teachers to provide the relevant information. Simple transmission of information was the norm.

## 9.5 Recommendations

There are a number of conclusions which can be drawn from this study providing supporting evidence for improving EFL teaching and learning activities in university contexts in Southeast Mainland China.

1. Using Mandarin in EFL classrooms in a university context involving adult learners is necessary and beneficial in some circumstances. Teachers can incorporate Mandarin into their teaching for purposes such as explaining English grammar, teaching new words, and announcing administrative items. The complex interaction of adult learners, competing higher education learning demands and diverse experiences of English proficiency demand a multi-approach to EFL teaching in such an environment.
2. Teachers should attempt to limit their own amount of Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms as they used more Mandarin than they estimated. Over-use of Mandarin in EFL classroom teaching situations is not beneficial for long term improvement of university students' EFL speaking, listening, reading and writing knowledge and usage.
3. When teaching low English proficiency level EFL students, teachers may have used more amounts of Mandarin than students actually needed as teachers'

underestimated students' abilities of understanding English sentences. However, this is a situation that needs further investigation: What is the balance required between the use of Mandarin that facilitates EFL university students' growth in the acquisition of English skills and the overuse of Mandarin that inhibits EFL skill acquisition?

4. Universities can make innovative attempts to switch EFL classes from teacher-centred to student-centred, by providing EFL students with more learning time in classroom. For example, universities can choose new textbooks which emphasise students' oral practice in classroom instead of the texts just being explained by EFL teachers. Technological advances in e-learning books and interactive Blogs permit efficient and effective EFL oral language practice activities which maximise active participation rather than passive transmission of knowledge.
5. Universities can create more opportunities for EFL students to practise English after class, especially learning and practising English in an authentic language environment. For example, universities can provide online classes from universities in English speaking countries; invite teachers who are English native speakers to teach a part of EFL classes; involve university students in assessment activities that require active engagement in oral speaking practices; and support students to undertake intensive overseas short courses in their vacation periods at English speaking universities.

6. Universities in Mainland China should develop their own internal EFL professional development courses as part of the work requirements of an EFL staff member. Expecting EFL teachers to be part of a Community of EFL Practitioners will facilitate the growth in knowledge regarding new teaching and learning processes and procedures.

These recommendations raise interesting opportunities for further research in this area of EFL teaching and learning to adult students in Mainland China universities. Further research will add new understandings of the challenges facing EFL educators in Mainland China. Meeting the future demands of the complex, and sometimes competing, needs of the political, cultural and economic goals and objectives of MOE requires dynamic and innovative solutions.

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## Appendix 1

### Consent Form - 2011

#### RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

#### Prescribed Consent Form For Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires, Focus Groups or Disclosure of Personal Information

COLLEGE OF	Design and Social Context	
SCHOOL/CENTRE OF	Education	
Name of participant:		
Project Title:	Teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in Chinese universities	
Name(s) of investigators:	(1) Yuhong Lu	Phone: _____
	(2) _____	Phone: _____

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped/photographed ☐ Yes ☐ No (delete if inapplicable)
5. I acknowledge that:
  - a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
  - b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  - c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me. The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law. If I participate in a focus group I understand that whilst all participants will be asked to keep the conversation confidential, the researcher cannot guarantee that other participants will do this.
  - d) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study will form part of the PhD thesis to the School of Education at RMIT University but also may be published in journal articles or at conference presentations. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5).

## Participant's Consent

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness to signature)

*Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.*

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer,  
RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V,  
Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure are available at:  
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research>

## **Appendix 2**

### **Plain Language Statement for University Student Participants (presented on RMIT letterhead)**

10<sup>th</sup> August 10, 2011

Dear student,

My name is Yuhong Lu. I am a PhD student in School of Education in the Design and Social Context College at RMIT University, Australia. The title of my research is: Teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms in Chinese universities.

You are invited to participate in this study. You have been approached because you are having EFL classes in the university environment, and the thesis topic is about teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in Chinese universities. This PhD study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee. The Ethics Register Number is CHEAN B-2000550-08/10.

The purpose of this study is to study the amount and the functions of Mandarin used in EFL classes, students' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' Mandarin usage, and reasons that teachers resort to using Mandarin in their teaching. Should you agree to participate, you will be invited to complete a student questionnaire. I estimate that the survey questions will be answered within twenty minutes.

Data collected in this study will remain confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Data may be published in seminars, journal articles or presented at conferences. Your name and the identity of your university will not appear in these publications. I am aware of privacy policies and will respect your privacy and anonymity and store all data accordingly.

Please be advised that your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously

supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice.

If you are willing to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it to me.

Should you require any further information, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my supervisors Professor Heather Fehring at +61 3 9925 7840 ([heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au](mailto:heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au)) and/or Professor Annette Gough at +61 3 9925 6580 ([annette.gough@rmit.edu.au](mailto:annette.gough@rmit.edu.au)); or myself.

If you have further questions about this project please feel free to contact the secretary of RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Yuhong Lu

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is +61 3 9925 1745.

Details of the complaints procedure are available from: [www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec](http://www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec)

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Plain Language Statement for University Teacher Participants (presented on RMIT letterhead)**

10<sup>th</sup> August 10, 2011

Dear Madam/Sir,

My name is Yuhong Lu. I am a PhD student in School of Education in the Design and Social Context College at RMIT University, Australia. The title of my research is: Teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms in Chinese universities.

You are invited to participate in this study project. You have been approached because you are working as an EFL teacher in the university environment, and the thesis topic is about teachers' Mandarin usage in EFL classrooms in Chinese universities. This PhD study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee. The Ethics Register Number is CHEAN B-2000550-08/10.

The purpose of this study is to study the amount and the functions of Mandarin used in EFL classes, students' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' code-switching to Mandarin, and reasons that teachers resort to using Mandarin in their teaching. Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to answer a questionnaire, and/or allow me to audio-record EFL classes provided by yourself, and participate in an interview. I anticipate two class sessions and I estimate that our interview will be conducted within one hour.

Data collected in this study will remain confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Data may be published in seminars, journal articles or presented at conferences. Your name and the identity of your university will not appear in these publications. I am aware of privacy policies and will respect your privacy and anonymity and store all data accordingly.

Please be advised that your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice.

If you are willing to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it to me.

Should you require any further information, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my supervisors Professor Heather Fehring at +61 3 9925 7840 ([heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au](mailto:heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au)) and/or Professor Annette Gough at +61 3 9925 6580 ([annette.gough@rmit.edu.au](mailto:annette.gough@rmit.edu.au)); or myself.

If you have further questions about this project please feel free to contact the secretary of RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Yuhong Lu

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is +61 3 9925 1745.

Details of the complaints procedure are available from: [www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec](http://www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec)

## **Appendix 4**

### **Student Questionnaire**

**THANK YOU for taking part in this study.**

#### **SECTION 1**

***Instruction for Section 1: This section inquires a few details about yourself.  
For the following questions, please answer or tick where appropriate:***

1. How old are you: \_\_\_\_\_ years old
  
2. Are you a first year student or a second year student?  
☐ First year  
☐ Second year
  
3. What is your gender?  
☐ Male  
☐ Female
  
4. What is your major discipline that you are studying at University?  
☐ Liberal Arts  
☐ Science  
☐ Engineering  
☐ Business and Economics  
☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What level of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes are you attending?  
☐ Level 1  
☐ Level 2  
☐ Level 3.

## SECTION 2

*Instruction for Section 2: Please read each statement carefully and circle the appropriate number on the right which best describes how **CONSISTENT** these statements are with **YOUR BELIEFS**. Please select only one number for each statement.*

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree**
- 2 Strongly Disagree**
- 3 Disagree**
- 4 Neither Agree Nor Disagree**
- 5 Agree**
- 6 Strongly Agree**
- 7 Very Strongly Agree**

1. In general, it is beneficial for my English learning if my teacher speaks Mandarin in EFL classrooms.      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

2. In EFL classes, if my teacher translates previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, I usually understand them better.      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

3. If my teacher speaks Mandarin to explain English grammar, I understand the English grammar better.      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

4. I usually understand better if my teacher speaks Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs).      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

5. It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests).      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

6. It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests).      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

7. I am more willing to speak English during EFL classes when my teacher encourages us in Mandarin than in English.      1      2      3      4      5      6      7

8. I usually understand better if my teacher speaks Mandarin to evaluate our answers or practice in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. It saves class time if my teacher speaks Mandarin to answer our questions asked in Mandarin.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. We students give more feedback to our teacher when he/she speaks Mandarin to check if we have understood the content of the class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. It is more effective if my teacher speaks Mandarin to build up close rapport with us during EFL classes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. It saves class time if my teacher speaks in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### SECTION 3

*This section refers to your opinion about how much Mandarin your teacher ACTUALLY USES in your EFL classes.*

*Instruction for Section 3: Please circle the number which best represents your estimation to each of the questions below. Please select only one number for each statement.*

- 1 Almost Never (0-20% of the time)**
- 2 Some of the time (21-40% of the time)**
- 3 Half of the time (41-60% of the time)**
- 4 A lot of the time (61-80% of the time)**
- 5 Almost Always (81-100% of the time)**

1. How often does your teacher speak Mandarin in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How often does your teacher translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin in EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
3. When teaching English grammar, how much Mandarin does your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
4. How much time does your teacher talk in Mandarin when he/she introduces the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs)?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Upon providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin does your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
6. When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin does your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
7. How much Mandarin does your teacher speak when encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5

8. When evaluating students' answers or practice in English, how often does your teacher talk in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5
9. How often does your teacher speak Mandarin when he/she answers students' questions asked in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5
10. How much Mandarin does your teacher speak when checking if students have understood the content of the EFL class?	1	2	3	4	5
11. For the purpose of building up close rapport with students, how much Mandarin does your teacher talk in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
12. How much time does your teacher talk in Mandarin when he/she announces administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans)?	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION 4

*This section refers to your opinion about how much Mandarin your teacher SHOULD USE in your EFL classes.*

*Instruction for Section 4: Please circle the number which best represents your opinion to each of the questions below. Please select only one number for each statement.*

- 1 Almost Never (0-20% of the time)**
- 2 Some of the time (21-40% of the time)**
- 3 Half of the time (41-60% of the time)**
- 4 A lot of the time (61-80% of the time)**
- 5 Almost Always (81-100% of the time)**

1	How often should your teacher speak Mandarin in EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
2.	How often should your teacher translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin in EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
3.	When teaching English grammar, how much Mandarin should your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
4.	How much time should your teacher talk in Mandarin when he/she introduces the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs)?	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Upon providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin should your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
6.	When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice, and tests), how much Mandarin should your teacher speak?	1	2	3	4	5
7.	How much Mandarin should your teacher speak when encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5

8. When evaluating students' answers or practice in English, how often should your teacher talk in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

9. How often should your teacher speak Mandarin when he/she answers students' questions asked in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

10. How much Mandarin should your teacher speak when checking if students have understood the content of the class.?	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

11. For the purpose of building up close rapport with students, how much Mandarin should your teacher talk in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

12. How much time should your teacher talk in Mandarin when he/she announces administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans)?	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

**Thank you for your participation.**

**Appendix 5**  
**Teacher Questionnaire**

**THANK YOU** for taking part in this study.

**SECTION 1**

*Instruction for Section 1: This section inquires a few details about yourself.  
For the following questions, please answer or tick where appropriate:*

1. How old are you: \_\_\_\_\_ years old
  
2. What type of students are you teaching?  
☐ First year students  
☐ Second year students  
☐ Both
  
3. What is your gender?  
☐ Male  
☐ Female
  
4. How many years have you been teaching EFL classes? Please specify below.  
\_\_\_\_\_ year(s).
  
5. What is your educational background?  
☐ Bachelor  
☐ Master  
☐ PhD.

## SECTION 2

*Instruction for Section 2: Please read each statement carefully and circle the appropriate number on the right which best describes how **CONSISTENT** these statements are with **YOUR BELIEFS**.*

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree**
- 2 Strongly Disagree**
- 3 Disagree**
- 4 Neither Agree Nor Disagree**
- 5 Agree**
- 6 Strongly Agree**
- 7 Very Strongly Agree**

1. In general, it is beneficial for my English teaching if I speak Mandarin in EFL classrooms. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. In EFL classes, if I translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin, students usually understand them better. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. When I speak Mandarin to explain English grammar to students, they understand English grammar better. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Students usually understand better if I speak Mandarin to introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. It saves class time if I speak Mandarin to provide objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. It saves class time if I speak Mandarin to provide instruction of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Students are more willing to speak English during EFL classes when I encourage them in Mandarin than in English. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. I am usually better understood if I speak Mandarin to evaluate students' answers or practice in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

9. If I speak Mandarin to answer students' questions asked in Mandarin, it saves class time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

10. I have more feedback from students when I speak in Mandarin to check if they have understood the content of the class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

11. It is more effective if I speak Mandarin to build up close rapport with students than in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

12. It saves class time if I speak in Mandarin to announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### SECTION 3

*This section refers to your opinion about how much Mandarin you ACTUALLY USES in your EFL classes.*

*Instruction for Section 3: Please circle the number which best represents your estimation to each of the questions below. Please select only one number.*

- 1 Almost Never (0-20% of the time)**
- 2 Some of the time (21-40% of the time)**
- 3 Half of the time (41-60% of the time)**
- 4 A lot of the time (61-80% of the time)**
- 5 Almost Always (81-100% of the time)**

1. How often do you speak Mandarin in EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How often do you translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin when you teach EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
3. When teaching English grammar, how much Mandarin do you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
4. How much time do you talk in Mandarin when you introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs)?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Upon providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests), how much Mandarin do you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
6. When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests), how much Mandarin do you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
7. How much Mandarin do you speak when encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
8. When evaluating students' answers or practice in English, how often do you talk in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5

9. How often do you speak Mandarin when you answer students' questions asked in Mandarin?	1	2	3	4	5
10. How much Mandarin do you speak when checking if students have understood the content of the class.?	1	2	3	4	5
11. For the purpose of building up close rapport with your students, how much Mandarin do you talk in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
12. How much time do you talk in Mandarin when you announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans) in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION 4

*This section refers to your opinion about how much Mandarin you **SHOULD USE** in your EFL classes.*

*Instruction for Section 4: Please circle the number which best represents your opinion to each of the questions below. Please select only one number*

- 1 Almost Never (0-20% of the time)**
- 2 Some of the time (21-40% of the time)**
- 3 Half of the time (41-60% of the time)**
- 4 A lot of the time (61-80% of the time)**
- 5 Almost Always (81-100% of the time)**

1. How often should you speak Mandarin in EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How often should you translate previous English words, phrases or sentences into Mandarin when you teach EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
3. When teaching English grammar, how much Mandarin should you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
4. How much time should you talk in Mandarin when you introduce the culture in English-speaking countries (such as historical events, holidays, and customs)?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Upon providing objectives of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests), how much Mandarin should you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
6. When providing instructions of teaching activities (such as exercises, practice and tests), how much Mandarin should you speak?	1	2	3	4	5
7. How much Mandarin should you speak when encouraging students to speak English during EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5
8. When evaluating students' answers or practice in English, how often should you talk in Mandarin in your EFL classes?	1	2	3	4	5

9. How often should you speak Mandarin when you answer students' questions asked in Mandarin in your EFL classes? 1 2 3 4 5

10. How much Mandarin should you speak when checking if students have understood the content of the class? 1 2 3 4 5

11. For the purpose of building up close rapport with students, how much Mandarin should you speak in your EFL classes? 1 2 3 4 5

12. How much time should you talk in Mandarin when you announce administrative items (such as timetable, and exam plans) in your EFL classes? 1 2 3 4 5

**Thank you for your participation.**

## **Appendix 6**

### **Teacher Interview Questions**

#### **Section 1. Teacher background**

1. Please tell me something about your academic background in terms of your teaching discipline/s. Please expand.
2. Is your background in linguistic or literature? Please elaborate.
3. How long have you been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes? Have you been teaching Year 1 students, or Year 2, or both?

#### **Section 2. University department policy or requirements**

4. Does your university department have any policy about language choice in EFL classrooms?  
If yes, please explain or expand.
5. Has your university department given you any requirement on how you should teach EFL classes? If so, please explain.

#### **Section 3. Teachers' spoken English**

6. Do you feel confident to talk in English all the class time to accomplish teaching tasks in EFL classes? Why or why not?
7. Do you feel comfortable to talk in English exclusively during EFL classes? Why or why not?
8. How much do you think your students can understand your English speaking? When they do not understand your English, what do you usually do (such as repetition, or translation)? Does your solution work? If yes, why? If no, why?

#### **Section 4. Teacher's philosophy of teaching**

9. What is the ideal way do you think to teach and learn English in EFL classes? Why?
10. Do you think Mandarin could be spoken by teachers in teaching EFL classes? If so, what should be the ratio of English and Mandarin in your teaching? If no, why do you think Mandarin should be excluded in your teaching of EFL?

### **Section 5. Teacher's actual EFL teaching practices**

11. Do you use Mandarin in your teaching in EFL classes? For what purposes do you use Mandarin?
12. What are the advantages or disadvantages of teachers' Mandarin speaking in EFL classrooms? Please elaborate.
13. Do you think speaking Mandarin is necessary in your teaching of EFL? If yes, in what circumstances do you think speaking Mandarin is most necessary or important in your teaching? Why?
14. Do you think it can help students better understand English grammar if you talk in Mandarin? Why or why not, please explain?
15. Do you think translating English words, expressions or sentences into Mandarin can help students learn more quickly these new items? Why or why not, please explain?
16. Do you think it can save the class time if you announce administrative items (such as timetable, or exam plans) in Mandarin? Why or why not, please explain?
17. Do you think if you speak Mandarin in EFL classes, it can help develop a learner-friendly environment, so you can have more interaction with students? Why or why not, please explain.

## Appendix 7

### Confirmation of Candidature



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[www.rmit.edu.au](http://www.rmit.edu.au)

6<sup>th</sup> July, 2011

Dear Yuhong,

#### **Re: Completion - Confirmation of Candidature PhD (Research)**

I am pleased to inform you that your application for Confirmation of Candidature has been finalised. Both reviewers have passed your Confirmation of Candidature without change.

I wish you well in your studies. Should you have any queries regarding the next stage of your Ethics application, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Mann on 9925 2974 or visit the website <http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=6sqqx7sd0wkp>

Yours sincerely,

Louise Prentice  
Research Administrator  
School of Education

Research Office  
9925 7877  
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## Appendix 8

### Ethics Approval

 **RMIT University**  
*Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee*  
*Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor*  
Phone: 9925-2974  
Email: [lisa.mann@rmit.edu.au](mailto:lisa.mann@rmit.edu.au)

21 September 2011

Dear Yuhong,

Design and Social Context  
College Office

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**Re: Human Research Ethics Application – Register Number CHEAN B-2000550-08/10**

The Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) committee member, Dr Emma Barrow, assessed your amended ethics application for the following research project:

***Teachers' code-switching to Mandarin in EFL classrooms in Chinese universities***

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved at a Low Risk classification by the committee. This approval will be reported to the University Human Research Ethics Committee for noting.

Your ethics approval expires on **16 October 2014**.

Please note that all research data should be stored on University Network systems. These systems provide high levels of manageable security and data integrity, can provide secure remote access, are backed on a regular basis and can provide Disaster Recover processes should a large scale incident occur. The use of portable devices such as CDs and memory sticks is valid for archiving, data transport where necessary and some works in progress. The authoritative copy of all current data should reside on appropriate network systems; and the Principal Investigator is responsible for the retention and storage of the original data pertaining to the project for a minimum period of five years.

You are reminded that an Annual /Final report is mandatory and should be forwarded to the College Ethics Subcommittee Secretary by mid-January 2012. This report is available at <http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=6sqqx7sd0wkp> or can be located by following the link under Policy at <http://www.rmit.edu.au/dsc/chean>.

Should you have any queries regarding your application please seek advice from the Chair of the College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) Associate Prof Heather Fehring on (03) 9925 7840, [heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au](mailto:heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au) or contact Lisa Mann on (03) 9925 2974 or email [lisa.mann@rmit.edu.au](mailto:lisa.mann@rmit.edu.au).

On behalf of the DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network I wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Mann  
Ethics Officer  
DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN)

cc. Assoc Prof Heather Fehring, School of Education