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THE EXPLORATION OF RECIPROCAL PEER COTEACHING IN A CHINESE COURSE:
AN ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT ON LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

PHD THESIS

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2014
Declaration

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr Ann Devitt, my wonderful supervisor, for her highly valuable and professional guidance, advice, encouragement and inspiration throughout my research study.

My sincere gratitude also goes out to Dr Sean Devitt for being my supervisor over the first three years and guiding me to lay the important foundations for the remainder of my study.

I would also like to thank the staff members both of the School of Education and of the Graduate Studies Office in Trinity College Dublin for the assistance they provided.

With a special emphasis, I would like to thank my parents, wife and sons as well as my sisters for their constant love and support.
Abstract

This research study explored the impact of the implementation of reciprocal peer coteaching (RPCoT) on student language teachers' personal and professional development in the context of a programme of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland. The study expands on existing research focused on surfacing student teachers' beliefs about language teaching and learning through reflection on learning experiences, in this case the experience of learning a new language as a novice. This study was carried out as an action research project in three cycles from 2009 to 2011. In each of the three cycles, the student language teachers participated in a beginners' Chinese course and reflected on the process and outcome of this experience to inform their own teaching. RPCoT was implemented through each of the three cycles to optimise student language teachers' involvement in and engagement with their learning process. This RPCoT was led by student teachers in groups but guided by the classroom teacher of the Chinese course. The implementation of RPCoT in this context was underpinned by a dynamic understanding of the Zone of Proximal Development. The study explored the impact of RPCoT within the full class cohort and within peer teaching groups. The four key areas of impact of the RPCoT implementation were in learner motivation, learner autonomy, teacher empathy and in some cases transformative aspects of the experience. Both learner motivation and learner autonomy were considered to be the impact areas of student teachers' development as learners, facilitated by the sense of shared responsibility and interdependence generated through RPCoT. The development of student teachers' understanding, perspectives and even identity was explored through the lens of transformative learning. The concept of empathy explored how they gained better understanding of their school pupils' language learning. Transformative learning and empathy underpin student teachers' professional development.
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List of Abbreviations

1. AR: Action Research
2. RPCoT: Reciprocal Peer Coteaching
3. STs: Student teachers
4. ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development
5. ITE: Initial teacher education
Chapter 1. Introduction

Many researchers have focused on fostering student teachers' (STs) reflection during initial teacher education (ITE) (Devitt & Czak, 1981; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Moon, 1999; Deborah, 2000; Martin, 2005; Ottesen, 2007; Devitt et al, 2012). In her research project, Devitt (2012) argues that learning an exotic language helps STs to experience apprenticeship in an immediate and emotive context. According to her, such an ITE programme allows STs to increase their awareness of some of the problematic concepts they encounter during their ITE and, as a result, gain better understanding of the learning process of their school pupils. The current research study expands on her work and explores the impact of the implementation of reciprocal peer coteaching (RPCoT) on STs' personal and professional development within a setting where STs learn Chinese as an exotic language.

This chapter sets the context and research questions for this research study and provides the outline for the thesis. Section 1.1 sets out the background to the study which includes an introduction to both the ITE programme at the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin and the current research study through a Chinese course as part of the ITE programme. RPCoT is employed as a teaching approach in this study. STs are invited to act as both peer teachers and peer learners in turn during their learning process. Section 1.2 sets out the research questions for the study, focusing on the role of RPCoT in STs' personal and professional development. The outline of the current study is presented in section 1.3. It describes what each chapter of this study focuses on.

1.1. Background of the study

The current ITE programme has been run at the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin for about three decades. The students of the ITE programme are mainly Irish and occasionally from other European countries. They work in Irish post-primary schools and come to university with the objectives to develop their "ability and willingness to act as reflective practitioners, adopting critical insights into practice as appropriate" (The School of Education, 2012). That is to say, one area of emphasis of their ITE programme is to increase their ability to reflect on their learning process during which their professional development is generated. The Modern Language ITE programme includes a module on learning a new, exotic, language with dual learning
outcomes to learn the subject language and to develop their pedagogical knowledge and reflective skills. This language course runs as a beginners' language course for 5 to 10 weeks and is designed to enable STs to gain the feelings about learning a new language as beginners. These feelings then tend to help STs to better understand their school pupils' language learning. Different languages, such as Japanese, Russian and Chinese, have been used to represent the exotic language since the beginning of the existence of the course. Chinese language has remained as the subject language since October 2008.

The researcher has been acting as both a teacher on this Chinese course and a researcher since 2008. In order to highlight his dual role in this study, he is referred to as the teacher researcher. The current PhD study focuses on STs' personal and professional development through this Chinese course, in particular through the use of RPCoT as a methodology. The teacher researcher aims to find out if STs can be encouraged to proactively participate in their learning process and reflect on their learning process by attending this Chinese course. Action research (AR) is employed as the research methodology. The current study took place across a period of three years from 2009 to 2011. These three years are considered as three cycles in this research study. After each cycle, the teacher researcher makes relevant adjustment in terms of the structure of RPCoT. This adjustability of the structure of this study is ensured by the nature of AR, which will be introduced in chapter 3.

When STs attend this Chinese course, they are required to achieve a certain level of Chinese. STs' objectives for learning Chinese will be detailed in section 3.3.1. Each week, they are introduced to a new topic with different language items. RPCoT is adopted to stimulate STs' learning and maximise their participation in the learning process as both peer learners and peer teachers. In cycle 1, RPCoT covers the new content. STs’ feedback shows that RPCoT is not a good approach to introducing the new teaching content. The teacher researcher makes adjustment in response to STs' feedback. Therefore, in cycle 2 and cycle 3, peer teachers cover the revision as opposed to the new content during RPCoT sessions. STs act as both peer teachers and peer learners in turn throughout the three cycles. STs as peer learners directly learn with and from peer teachers. STs as peer teachers directly conduct peer teaching and help peer learners to learn the subject knowledge. When STs contribute to each other's learning and benefit from each other's contributions, their mutually beneficial relationship is strengthened.
As the implementation of RPCoT in this study is mainly driven by STs, RPCoT tends to enable them to learn proactively. The course is designed to promote STs' autonomous learning throughout their participation in RPCoT. As set out in section 1.1, this Chinese course introduces STs to an exotic language and puts them in the shoes of beginners of Chinese. STs' participation in the Chinese course is meant to increase their ability to reflect on their professional development. When STs engage themselves in the implementation of RPCoT, they jointly "own" the classroom along with the teacher researcher. Their active participation in RPCoT leads to their self-reflection on learning and reflection on the learning of others. Both types of reflection are recorded in their weekly journals and final group reports. This study aims to explore how STs' learning experience through RPCoT can deepen their understanding of what they are doing as teachers, and develop their ability for taking charge of their learning as autonomous learners.

1.2. Research questions and their elaboration

Central to this study are two main research questions of:

1) Can the implementation of RPCoT allow STs to experience a personal development as language learners;

2) Can the implementation of RPCoT allow STs to experience a professional development as school teachers.

In terms of the first question, the teacher researcher seeks to deal with the following chain of reasoning:

- STs learn a language which is represented by Chinese in this context. This is a compulsory part of their ITE programme. Throughout the learning, it is intended that they gain a certain amount of knowledge of Chinese language and Chinese culture.

- STs conduct RPCoT in the Chinese course and act both as peer teachers and peer learners in turn. Peer teachers are required to conduct peer teaching in groups. In order to take the responsibility to help peer learners to enhance their knowledge of Chinese, peer teachers within peer teaching groups cooperate with each other and prepare for peer teaching. In terms of the cooperation among peer teachers, their efforts are also referred to as coteaching in this study. Peer learners learn from peer teachers. They appreciate peer teachers' teaching and support their teaching by participating in peer teaching sessions actively.
• When STs as a whole are encouraged to take proactive participation in learning, they tend to reflect on their learning and act accordingly. During this process of learning, they show certain degree of independence from the teacher researcher. As a result, their ability for taking charge of their learning is developed.

In terms of STs' professional development in the second question, the teacher researcher seeks to deal with the following chain of reasoning:

• STs' motivation for further education is a triggering factor in the current study. STs attend the ITE programme in order to enhance their knowledge of teaching modern languages in post-primary schools and become better teachers. This stage is the departure point for STs' professional development.

• STs learn an exotic language which is represented by Chinese in this context. This approach brings STs back to the situation where they can act as beginners of Chinese. This approach allows them to understand or recall the feelings which people would have when learning a new language.

• Throughout RPCoT sessions, STs have opportunities to reflect on both their own learning experience and the learning experience of their peers. STs act as both peer learners and peer teachers in turn in this study. Every ST has a chance to gain feelings about being both peer learners and peer teachers. Observing others and reflecting on them serve as a mirror showing STs what they are like in general.

• Some ST experience development as transformative learning, moving from technical knowledge to communicative knowledge then to emancipatory knowledge, as set out in 2.8. The combination of these three types of knowledge represent STs' fundamental change.

• Their professional development is also linked with the empathic growth which enables them to better understand their school pupils and their language learning.

The above mentioned two questions also share the following three similarities in terms of their reasoning.

• AR cycles are used to explore and support the validity of STs' development as both learners and professionals. The research study is carried out as an AR study which contains three cycles in order for the teacher researcher to gain richer data and better understanding of STs' learning and developmental processes;
• RPCoT is implemented throughout the current study. RPCoT differs from the traditional teacher-student relationship. It emphasises STs’ proactivity and exercises their ability to learn and to think. Therefore, RPCoT is used as a means for the development of learner autonomy and transformative learning throughout the three AR cycles.

• Reflection is a key component of STs’ participation in this course. It allows STs to record their experience creatively. STs’ reflective data are an essential course for the teacher researcher to understand and discuss relevant themes in this study.

1.3. Thesis outline

The thesis is presented in six chapters in this study. Chapter 1 introduces the research study and sets it in context. Chapter 2 reviews the research literature relevant to this study. Section 2.1 introduces this chapter. Section 2.2 outlines the Vygotskian construct of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and its relevance in supporting this study. Section 2.3 explores cooperative learning in terms of its elements, benefits and its relationship with RPCoT. Section 2.4 focuses on peer teaching in terms of the relationship between the ZPD and peer teaching. This section also reviews the types of peer teaching and the benefits of peer teaching. Section 2.5 reviews the elements of coteaching and its types and benefits. Section 2.6 reviews two impact areas RPCoT, i.e. learner motivation and learner autonomy, as well as the relationship between them. In section 2.7, the review of empathy includes its components and benefits. Empathy is used to explore how STs gain better understanding of their school pupils’ learning process. Section 2.8 highlights transformative learning in terms of students’ change, developing process, their cooperation with others and their reflection.

Chapter 3 deals with the methodology for this study. Section 3.1 outlines AR. This section begins with the introduction to the principles of AR. The manifestations of AR indicate the rich and diverse range of contexts, different models and categorisations of AR. The relationship between AR and the current study explains why AR is chosen as the research methodology for this study. The limitations of AR are introduced in terms of the theoretical challenges and practical challenges for AR. Validity and transferability are the foci of the theoretical challenges while timeframe and AR data form the practical challenges. The ethical issues in AR are also explored in this chapter. Section 3.2 focuses on qualitative data which are the major data for this study. This section
begins with the principles of qualitative data. The relationship between qualitative research and AR explains why AR can be considered as a type of qualitative research. Observations, interviews, questionnaires and journals are introduced as the data collection tools in this study. In terms of qualitative analysis, coding, data presentation, data discussion and the generation of theory are presented. In section 3.3, the AR cycles, research instruments and procedure of data analysis in the current research study are discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 presents the research findings. This chapter presents the collected data under different themes. Section 4.1 explains the motivation for presenting research data under different themes. In section 4.2, the cooperative relationship among STs consists of two types of relationship, namely, the cooperative relationship between peer learners and peer teachers. In section 4.3, RPCoT proves to be a motivating factor for both peer learners and peer teachers. In section 4.4, RPCoT plays both positive and negative roles in STs' language learning. Section 4.5 presents that RPCoT for STs' professional development through reflection.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings. It explores the in-depth meanings of the themes presented in chapter 4. Section 5.1 focuses on group solidarity both within coteaching groups and within the class cohort. Section 5.2 discusses how and why STs' motivation is increased. Section 5.3 explores what impact RPCoT has on learner autonomy. Section 5.4 focuses on the impact of RPCoT on STs' subjective reflection and objective reflection. Section 5.5 discusses STs' professional change. Section 5.6 explores the operationalisation of the ZPD as the touchstone to RPCoT. Section 5.7 compares the current RPCoT model with the previous studies which formed the foundation for the current study.

Chapter 6 closes the thesis, setting out the main contributions of the study, its implications, the future work. In section 6.1, the contributions of the study are explained around the implementation of RPCoT, and the impact of RPCoT on the outcomes of the study. In section 6.2, the implications of the study include the use of an exotic language in STs' education course, language teacher education across languages, the role of STs' professional knowledge during their educating process, and the implication of the current model for similar studies in other fields. In section 6.3, a number of limitations are addressed through future research projects.
Chapter 2. Review of literature

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has introduced the background of this study, the main research questions and set out the thesis outline. The current study explores the Reciprocal Peer Coteaching (RPCoT) language learning experience undertaken by student teacher participants. This chapter explores the literature in relation to the conceptual underpinning of RPCoT, its core components and the dimensions of students' personal and professional development which are derived from the impact areas of RPCoT. Figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between the different concepts in the literature review chapter. RPCoT is generated from cooperative learning, peer teaching and coteaching, and its implementation is underpinned by the Zone of Proximate Development (ZPD). As set out in section 2.2, the cyclic nature of RPCoT is underpinned by a dynamic understanding of the ZPD where the process of preparing to teach generates a ZPD between peer teachers and peer learners, allowing peer teachers to play a guiding role in their peers' learning. When student teachers (STs) coteach with their fellow coteachers and all STs experience reciprocal peer teaching, their learning process is also represented by the concept of cooperative learning in section 2.3.

RPCoT comprises two key components (see Figure 2.2). The first component is peer teaching which allows STs to contribute to their peers' learning. The second component is peer teaching in groups which allows STs to become coteachers and coteach with their peers. This type of coteaching is led by STs and guided by the classroom teacher of the Chinese course. In order to gain a thorough understanding of RPCoT, both peer teaching and coteaching are examined in section 2.4 and section 2.5 respectively. Among the types of peer teaching, reciprocal peer teaching which allows all STs to avail of a mutually beneficial learning environment is highlighted. In order to understand the above-mentioned type of coteaching, coteaching is analysed in terms of its types and the benefits which coteaching may create.

The current study emphasises the personal and professional development aspects of the language learning experience which are underpinned by cooperative learning and the ZPD as well. Section 2.6, section 2.7 and section 2.8 therefore explore the key impact areas of RPCoT, i.e. the interrelated dimensions of learner motivation and
autonomy, empathy and transformative learning. The review of learner motivation explores the literature on learner motivation and in particular the relationship between motivation and learner autonomy. Both learner motivation and learner autonomy are considered to be the impact aspects of STs' personal development as learners. The changed understanding of learning through the RPCoT experience can also impact on them professionally as teachers. The concept of empathy includes its key components and benefits, and explores how STs gain better understanding of their school pupils' language learning in this study. Both empathy and transformative learning underpin STs' professional development. The development of STs' understanding, perspectives and even identity is explored through the lens of transformative learning. Transformative learning in this context explores the process which witnesses STs' general change in a RPCoT setting. Section 2.9 summarises the chapter by including some research projects which have been conducted under the framework of RPCoT and propose a model for the current research study.

Figure 2.1. The mapping of literature review
2.2. Vygotsky and the Zone of Proximal Development

As set out in Figure 2.1, the ZPD is the supporting theory for the current research project. It underpins all the concepts which are involved in the literature review chapter. This section sets out the underlying understanding of the Vygotskian psychological new-formation which refers to individuals' development of higher mental functions. New-formation is generated in a social context whereby individuals' cooperation is essential and leads to their internalization. The process of new-formation is driven by mediators such as psychological tools and signs. The ZPD is created on the basis of Vygotsky's concept of new-formation. As a symbolic space, it describes individuals' possible development which their potential allows them to generate under the guidance of more knowledgeable people.

2.2.1. The background of the Zone of Proximal Development

New-formation is referred to by Vygotsky as individuals' development of higher mental functions. Vygotsky uses the metaphor to suggest that individuals begin to learn by beginning on the interpersonal plane which is represented by the social context and in which they carry out their learning process through mediation. Individuals then switch onto the intrapersonal plane where they internalize what they have learnt. Based on Vygotsky's claim, Chaiklin argues that "new-formation leads to the restructuring of the existing functions to the formation of a new structure. This new-formation results in a transition to the next age period" (2003: 49). The concept of new-formation is central to Vygotskian understanding of the development of higher mental functions and its central components of social context, mediation and internalization are explored in the
sections below as they are fundamental to the structure of the RPCoT intervention in this study.

### 2.2.1.1. Social context

From Vygotskian perspectives, the social context is the condition in which personal development is generated. In terms of the significance of social impact in relation to human development, Vygotsky points out that "above all, in the widest sense of the word [social], it means that everything that is cultural is social" (1981: 164). He defines "culture [as] the product of social life and human social activity" (1981: 164). Scribner understands Vygotsky's awareness of the social aspect of learning and how he grasps its significance in both individuals and their developmental activities. "Vygotsky's special genius was in grasping the significance of the social in things as well as people. The world in which we live is humanized, full of material and symbolic objects (signs, knowledge systems) that are culturally constructed, historical in origin and social in content" (1990: 92). Gutierrez claims that "a fundamental premise of a sociocultural approach to language learning is the notion of knowledge being social and created in interaction" (2006: 230). Lantolf and Beckett in their analysis of the Vygotskian view of sociocultural theory posit that sociocultural learning is "a way of capturing the notion that human mental functioning results from participation in, and appropriation of, the forms of cultural mediation integrated into social activities" (2009: 460).

Many researchers expand on the social aspect of Vygotsky's view of the connections between individuals and the cultural environment in which they are situated. Co-construction is a crucial feature of the social context and correlates to the social aspect of individuals' new-formation. Cole argues that individuals' development is a structure of joint activity in any context where they "exercise differential responsibility by virtue of differential expertise" (1985: 155). In line with Cole, Van der Veer and Valsiner argue that messages located in the cultural environment are analysed and reassembled in novel ways because "the individual is a co-constructor of culture, rather than a mere follower of the enculturation efforts of the others" (1991: 395). John-Steiner and Meehan also acknowledge that "within a Vygotskian perspective, the social construction of development is a fundamental assumption of the theoretical framework" (2000: 40). Wells argues that learning refers to ways in which individuals participate "through his or her engagement in particular instances of social activities with others" (2000: 56). In line with John-Steiner and Meehan, and Wells, Putney et al suggest the

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benefits which individuals gain during the process of cooperating with others. As they argue, "members of a group construct cultural tools and practices through joint activity, and individuals learn the means of constructing knowledge as they engage in joint activity" (2000: 104).

2.2.1.2. Mediation

Mediation is a concept which penetrates Vygotsky's writings. He argues that direct teaching of concepts is fruitless and leads to "empty verbalism, a parrotlike repetition of words by the child, simulating a knowledge of the corresponding concepts but actually covering up a vacuum" (1986: 150). He then points out the importance of mediation in individuals' learning processes. According to him, individuals' psychological development of higher mental functions is generated through mediation and learning processes are mediated by tools. He states that among psychological tools or signs are "language; various systems for counting; mnemonic techniques; algebraic symbol systems; works of art; writing; schemes; diagrams, maps, and mechanical drawings; all sorts of conventional signs" (1981: 137). However, it should be noted that Vygotsky did not propose a unified definition of mediation. Researchers have suggested different forms of mediation. Wertsch suggests implicit mediation and explicit mediation. According to him, mediation is explicit when "an individual, or another person who is directing his individual, overtly and intentionally introduce a 'stimulus means' into an ongoing stream of activity [and when] the materiality of the stimulus means, or signs involved tends to be obvious and nontransitory" (2007: 180). Wertsch continues to state that implicit mediation tends to be less obvious and more difficult to detect. It is "part of an already ongoing communicative stream that is brought into contact with other forms of action [and] involves signs especially natural language, whose primary function is communication" (2007: 180-181). When Wertsch's categorisation is rather abstract, Thompson (2013) proposes ten concrete forms of mediation. According to him, these forms include:

- Direct instruction from a teacher or more capable peer;
- Modelling of a behaviour or task by an expert that the learner initially imitates and ultimately internalizes and appropriates;
- Feedback, either oral or written, that offers guidance on performance;
- Questioning to assess or assist performance;
- Reassurance and reinforcement of partially understood concepts;
- Redirection and recursion through the learning process;
• Joint exploration involving critical thinking, problem-solving, or making decisions;
• Peer collaboration involving critical thinking, problem-solving, or making decisions;
• Scaffolding of a task, or of part of a task, by the teacher in order to provide a constructive framework for the learner’s developing mental processes;
• Cognitive restructuring whereby perception, memory, and action are re-evaluated and re-ordered.

Moll’s (2014) categorisation of forms of mediation derives rather from the form rather than the function of the mediator. He suggests that the five forms of mediation help produce qualitative transformations both in individuals and their environments:

• Social mediation: interactions with other human beings, especially interactions whereby social groups incorporate a person into cultural practices;
• Instrumental or tool mediation: the use of artifacts, such as a spoon or a pencil, created culturally and inherited socially, to engage in human practices;
• Semiotic mediation: the use of symbol systems, such as language, writing, art, and mathematics;
• Anatomical mediation: the use of the body, such as the hands and arms, which permit manipulation of the environment and representation of self in social life;
• Individual mediation: the person’s subjectivity and agency in mediating his or her learning activities.

Both Thompson and Moll have provided the specific basis on which the development of higher mental functions may be generated. Thus, mediation is directly linked with the learning process. Different learning activities may be designed and carried out according to appropriate forms of mediation. According to Levykh, successful learning is always mediated by cultural and psychological ‘human’ tools which help humans master the natural world around them and, at the same time, master themselves. “Learning is a dynamic process that emerges as a result of the appropriation of cultural and psychological tools that mediate behavioral mastery, thus leading to the development of personality” (2008: 94).

2.2.1.3. Internalization

From Vygotsky’s perspectives, individuals’ development shows that “all higher mental functions are internalized social relationships” (1981: 164). That is to say, internalisation is the goal which individuals aim to achieve and serves as an indicator
for the outcomes of individuals' new-formation. In essence, Vygotsky argues that personal development which is generated in a social context leads to internalization. He states that individuals develop to higher mental functions through mediation. He claims that "the fundamental quality of elemental functions is that they are totally and directly determined by environmental stimulation" (1978: 38). As he clarifies, the learning process that initially represents external activities is reconstructed and moves internally. This movement corresponds to his claim that individuals transform from the interpersonal plane onto the intrapersonal one. Such a transformation demonstrates that individuals' level first "appears on the social level, and later on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (1978: 56-57).

Lee and Smagorinsky acknowledge Vygotsky's view in this regard. According to them, Vygotskian "learning is mediated first on the interpsychological plane between a person and other people and their cultural artifacts, and then appropriated by individuals on their intrapsychological plane" (2000: 2). Many other researchers show their support to Vygotsky's argument on internalization. Among them, Kozulin argues that "the essential element in the formation of higher mental functions is the process of internalization" (1990: 116). Dixon-Krauss points out that "Vygotsky's concept of internalization is the progressive transfer from external social activity mediated by signs to internal control" (1996: 10). Lantolf focuses on a second language learning context. For him, internalization allows learners to "construct a mental representation of what was at one point physically present (acoustic or visual) in external form. This representation, in turn, enables them to free themselves from the sensory properties of a specific concrete situation" (2003: 350). In line with Kozulin, Dixon-Krauss, and Lantolf, Levykh argues that newly formed systems become part of an individual personality after being internalized because "one of the main themes in Vygotsky's scientific inquiry is the social nature of cultural development: what was once social (occurring through interactions with people) becomes individual" (2008: 86). In conclusion, he points out that "in every step of cultural development, and as a result of struggle, there is always the appearance of a central neoformation, the newly formed psychological system that guides the development" (2008: 100).

2.2.2. The Zone of Proximal Development
Section 2.2.1. sets out the understanding of learning as a process of new-formation on the social plane which is mediated and internalised. The ZPD is the key construct in this process. Many papers on the operationalisation of the ZPD address both theoretical challenges (Suppes, 1974; Stipek, Gillen, 2000; 2006; Gredler, 2009; Gredler, 2012; Flint, 2014) and practical challenges in classrooms (Gutierrez, 2006; Zuckerman, 2007; Hakkarainen & Bredikyte, 2008; Bozhovich, 2009; Kravtsova, 2009; Sokolova et al, 2009). The ZPD symbolises the journey which they carry out within a specific period of time. As Vygotsky defines, the ZPD is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (1978: 86). According to him, “the actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively” (1978: 86-87). That is to say, the ZPD links both the past and future learning processes of learners. It “appeals to the whole personality and builds upon the students’ previous affective and intellectual knowledge and experience” (Levykh, 2008: 99). Vygotsky further explains that learning within the ZPD awakens and internalises a variety of developmental processes that are able to operate only when the individuals are interacting with others. The ZPD is generated on the basis of the concept of new-formation and contains all the essential aspects of new-formation. However, the following two elements, such as the role of others and the maturation of individuals, are mostly pointed out by researchers in relation to the ZPD. They are the concrete representation of the aspects of new-formation.

### 2.2.2.1. Role of others

As the definition of the ZPD indicates, the others who are more capable play essential roles in helping individuals to progress when their guidance is appropriate. According to Vygotsky, when others’ instruction is useful and moves ahead of development, “it impels or wakens a whole series of functions that are in a stage of maturation lying in the zone of proximal development” (1987: 212). As Dixon-Krauss suggests, in order for individuals to operate within the ZPD, there have to be two factors: “1) Individuals must be engaged in an instructional activity that is too difficult for her to perform independently. 2) [Their] performance[s] must be supported by an adult or capable learners” (1996: 15). As Tudge points out, “collaboration with another person, either an adult or a more competent peer, in the zone of proximal development leads to
development in culturally appropriate ways" (1990: 157). Like Tudge, Lake points out that the ZPD involves more advanced person(s) in the target learning domain “that can negotiate the point of learning in a way that leads to development” (2012: 38).

Dixon-Krauss points out the role of the more capable people’ involvement as mediator which also refers to Thompson’s direction instruction. For Dixon-Krauss, the teacher interacts with students and continuously analyses and reflects on their learning processes and strategies. “From this analysis, the teacher decides how much and what type of support to provide for his students” (1996: 20). Dixon-Krauss further states that the teacher’s role in supporting learning within the zone of proximal development involves three key elements: “1) The teacher mediates or augments the child’s learning; 2) The teacher’s mediational role is flexible; 3) The teacher focuses on the amount of support needed” (1996: 16). As McNamara proposes, “the presence of assistance can provide valuable insights into an individual's potential for growth” (1997: 454).

Researchers also argue that not only do the more capable people help less capable people learn, but also encourage them to take control of their learning tasks. Johnson points out that assistance should begin at an implicit level and become progressively more explicit and “should only be offered when it is required and should be withdrawn as soon as the novice reveals signs of self-regulation, or control over the task” (2004: 136). When acknowledging the importance of letting less able people take control over their learning tasks, Poehner points out the importance of encouraging less able learners to conduct independent learning and “extend independent performance to levels they could not reach alone” (2008: 15). Poehner and Lantolf emphasise that mediation is not only a matter of offering assistance, but the assistance has to be appropriate. According to them, assistance should aim at helping “to move the individual toward independent, agentive performance and to be able to transfer what is appropriated in a given circumstance to future situations" (2010: 316).

2.2.2.2. Maturation

A key component of the ZPD is the learners’ maturation which represents the process of internalization. For Vygotsky, the focus of the ZPD is on “the very process by which higher forms are established” (1978: 64). According to him, the ZPD “defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in process of maturation, functions that will
mature tomorrow but are currently in embryonic state” (1978: 86). As his metaphor indicates, these functions are the ‘buds’ or ‘flowers’ of development as opposed to the ‘fruits’ of development. This orientation acknowledges that learners’ increase of knowledge occurs within a certain zone between learners’ actual level and their level of potential development, and moves towards their level of potential development. Many researchers have further elaborated Vygotsky’s view of maturation. According to Bodrova and Leong, Vygotsky chooses the word zone to conceive of development as a continuum of behaviours or degrees of maturation. The reason for describing the zone as proximal is that “the zone is limited by behaviors that will develop in the near future. Proximal refers not to all the possible behaviors that will eventually emerge, but to those closest to emergence at any given time” (1996: 35). Wells applies the ZPD to “any situation in which, while participating in an activity, individuals are in the process of developing mastery of a practice or understanding a topic” (1999: 333). Chaiklin clearly points out that the development of the ZPD must be related to learners’ maturation, “not concerned with the development of skill of any particular task” (2003: 3).

The maturation of learners’ knowledge takes place in the form of ongoing cycles. Lee claims that Vygotsky “saw language acquisition as evolving through a series of spiraling stages, each with a particular function in terms of shaping the problem-solving skills of humans” (2000: 192). The newly developed level of knowledge in the previous ZPD is referred to as the actual level of knowledge in the next ZPD. The new ZPD is at the higher level than the previous one. When learners have reached the newly developed level of knowledge in the current ZPD, they leave it for a new ZPD which initiates their further development. In line with Vygotsky, Griffin and Cole argue that “the appearance of new leading activities provides for the emergence of new functional systems. As a new leading activity appears, it provides for the reorganization and internalization of prior stages by transforming them into the everyday, in contrast to the new leading activity” (1984: 51). Levykh argues that the ZPD “takes into consideration past and present achievements while also bringing to light processes that are about to be developed in the very near future” (2008: 90).

As Kaufman argues, teachers are also learners in within a ZPD learning context. They “observe and identify students’ ZPD; design appropriate, authentic, and meaningful learning modules; and provide instructional support and scaffolding to propel students to construction of higher levels of understanding” (2004: 304). The teacher's
engagement allows him/her to adapt the classroom learning to students' needs. Lake elaborates the relationship between the teacher and students which the ZPD has impact on. For him, the ZPD "is an environment out of which the teacher and the student co-construct and create knowledge together rather than just moving in the 'top-down' approach" (2012: 39). Similarly, Levykh focuses on the mutual relationship between the teacher and students. As he points out, the ZPD "establishes creative teaching-learning environments in the here and now that promote mutual respect and trust... Both students and teachers are part of this collaborative educational inspiration" (2008: 99).

2.2.3. The Zone of Proximal Development and Reciprocal Peer Coteaching

The ZPD refers to learner's potential for future development and describes development. According to Wells, the concept of artefact-mediated joint activity involves change and transformation of participants and settings over time. As he points out, in classroom settings,

1) The classroom is seen as a collaborative community; 2) Purposeful activities involve whole persons; 3) Activities are situated and unique any activity is situated in place and time; 4) Curriculum is a means, not an end; 5) Outcomes are both aimed for and emergent; 6) Activities must allow diversity and originality. (2000: 60-61)

In the area of classroom learning, some papers focus on L2 learning (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Kinginger, 2002; McCafferty, 2002; Maftoon & Sabah, 2012; Kahn, 2012; Shabani, 2012). As Fani and Ghaemi understand, the ZPD in the L2 learning context is referred to as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or peer" (2011: 1551). The development of RPCoT in this study draws on a socio-cultural theory of learning in particular the construct of the ZPD. As set out in section 2.2.2.1, class instruction by more capable people is a form of mediation within the process of the ZPD. The RPCoT approach is a key mediating feature of the context in which students as both peer coteachers and peer learners cooperate with each other and help each other to learn. This approach correlates to Vygotsky's claim that "development and maturation of the child's higher mental functions are products of this cooperation" (1978: 148).
According to Figure 2.1, the ZPD is integral to RPCoT. Figure 2.3 elaborates the four stages of the process of the maturation of both peer teachers and peer learners in terms of their language learning within the dynamic process of generating a ZPD. Peer teachers are represented by the grey faces while peer learners are represented by the white faces. As illustrated in table 1, stage I is when all STs, including both peer teachers and peer learners are at the same level of Chinese. As set out in section 1.1, all STs are beginners in terms of learning Chinese. Their goals are to achieve certain amount of knowledge throughout the Chinese course. Stage II highlights the fact that peer teachers need to generate a ZPD before they can teach their peers. Namely, they need to consolidate their language competence before conducting peer teaching. This stage overlaps with the process of their preparation for coteaching, as set out in Figure 2.5. Stage III emphasises that the process of peer teaching helps peer learners to reinforce their language level and narrow the gap between their own level of Chinese and their peer teachers' level of Chinese under their peer teachers' guidance. Peer teachers' teaching activities are the mediation through which peer learners progress. Stage IV shows that all STs, including both peer teachers and peer learners, are at the same level of Chinese again after a peer teaching session. These four stages together illustrate the continuous process during which peer teachers collectively develop their language knowledge, mediated by resources and support from the main teacher, in order to generate a ZPD between them and their peers. The peer teaching session then acts as a leading activity in the maturation of their peer learners' language knowledge, drawing all the peers to the same level at the start of a new ZPD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage I</td>
<td>All STs, including both peer teachers and peer learners are at the same level of Chinese before a peer teaching session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage II</td>
<td>Peer teachers generate a ZPD before conducting peer teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage III</td>
<td>Peer learners mature through ZPD under the guidance of peer teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage IV</td>
<td>All STs, including both peer teachers and peer learners, have matured through a ZPD and are at the same level of Chinese again after a peer teaching session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Explanation of the four stages of the maturation of both peer teachers and peer learners
Figure 2.3. The process of maturation of both peer teachers and peer learners
2.3. Cooperative learning

The previous section outlined the theoretical underpinning of RPCoT and in particular the construct of the Zone of Proximal Development. This section explores in particular the group dimensions of the RPCoT model within the framework of Cooperative Learning. The term cooperation is often used loosely to describe how people work together. However, different definitions can be compared within the precise framework for cooperation. While this study is not implemented as a cooperative learning study, the core principles of cooperative learning underpin the two dimensions of the research structure of this study, according to Figure 2.1. Cooperative learning shares certain principles with both coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching. However, cooperative learning emphasises learners' learning process. Coteaching focuses on coteachers' teaching process. Reciprocal peer teaching highlights the peer teaching element and reciprocal nature. An accepted definition of cooperative learning is that of Johnson and Johnson (2013) whereby cooperation allows people to work together in order to accomplish shared goals. In the extension of this understanding, they further point out that cooperative learning is carried out by students in small groups: They "work together to maximize everyone's learning. Within cooperative learning groups, students discuss the material to be learned with one another, help one another to understand it, and encourage one another to work hard" (p.449). These aspects are of vital importance to the implementation of coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching which, at the same time, support and stimulate the cooperation processes.

2.3.1. Elements of cooperative learning

While this study does not implement the methods associated with cooperative learning, the success of RPCoT model is underpinned by the core principle of cooperative learning. Johnson et al (1993) suggest five essential elements of cooperative learning: positive interdependence; individual and group accountability; promotive interaction; learners' interpersonal and small group skills; and group processing.

According to Johnson et al (1993), positive interdependence between learners is the most important element of cooperative learning. Johnson and Johnson argue that "interdependence among individuals' goals can be positive (e.g. cooperation) or negative (e.g. competition)" (2013: 449). They further advocate positive
interdependence. According to them, cooperative learners are in ‘sink or swim together’ learning situation. Positive goal interdependence allows learners to establish mutual or joint goals. Individual learners “perceive that they can attain their goals if and only if their groupmates attain their goals” (2013: 458). That is to say, cooperative learning cannot succeed unless all group members succeed. Researchers argue that positive learner negotiation helps to strengthen learner interdependence. According to Johnson and Johnson (2005), negotiation is a process by which people tend to reach an agreement that specifies what each gives to and receives from one another. Johnson and Johnson (2013) suggest two types of negotiation: distributive negotiations and integrative negotiations. For them, the goal for distributive negotiations is to maximise learners’ own outcomes while minimising their peers’ outcomes. The goal for integrative negotiations is to maximise joint benefits for learners and their peers. As they put it, “maintaining a high-quality relationship with other group members usually is more important than is getting your way on any one issue” (2013: 367). Jaques advocates that decisions about learning tasks and content can be made cooperatively by learners. According to him, cooperative learning allows learners to make efforts by negotiating with each other. When group members work cooperatively through different tasks, they benefit from their cooperation and “learn from each other as each contributes their learning to the whole class” (2000: 79).

In terms of individual accountability and group accountability, Johnson et al (1993) point out that the group must be accountable for achieving the goals which are set out by all the group members. At the same time, each member must be accountable for contributing their share of the work. For Johnson and Johnson, learners in cooperative groups have to do their share of the work. In doing so, individual learners should be “accountable for his or her progress as well as for the progress of his or her groupmates” (2013: 458). In line with Johnson and Johnson, Gilles argues that cooperative learning requires learners understand that “they will be held accountable for their individual contributions to the group, that free-loading will not be tolerated, and that everyone must contribute” (2007: 5). In terms of the development of individual accountability in cooperative learning, Johnson and Johnson state that “an underlying purpose of cooperative learning is to make each group member a stronger individual in his or her own right” (2013: 458). Gilles also argues that cooperative learning allows learners “to listen to what others have to say and how they say it, share ideas and perspectives, give and receive help, seek ways of resolving difficulties, and actively work to construct new understandings and learning” (2007: 1-2).
In terms of promotive interaction, Johnson et al argue that learners promote each other’s success by “sharing resources and helping, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other’s efforts to learn” (1993: 1:7). They suggest that promotive interaction is preferably carried out in face-to-face talks about group tasks. In line with Johnson et al, Gilles also proposes the face-to-face promotive interaction. According to him, promotive interaction allows learners to understand that “they must actively encourage each other’s equal participation in the discussions” (2007: 4) about the group’s tasks. As he describes, this type of interaction helps learners to become “more willing to reach out to others, listen to what they have to say, and actively work to include others’ ideas in the group discussions” (2007: 4). Johnson and Johnson argue that promotive interaction is derived from positive interdependence. For them, promotive interaction occurs as learners “encourage and facilitate each other’s efforts to accomplish the group’s goal” (2013: 89). For them, promotive interaction enables learners to help each other, exchange needed resources, challenge each other’s conclusions and reasoning, advocate the exertion of effort to achieve mutual goals, influence each other’s efforts to achieve these goals in a mutually trusting environment.

Johnson et al (1993) state that learners’ interpersonal and small group skills need to be developed in cooperative learning. Apart from the academic subject knowledge, students are also required to learn how to function as part of a group. In consistency with Johnson et al, Gilles (2007) argues that learners need to learn how to communicate effectively with each other. This communication contains three dimensions: 1) Learners need to know how to express their own ideas; 2) Learners need to know how to acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of others; 3) Learners need to know how to handle disagreements and resolve conflicts.

Johnson et al (1993) point out that group processing allows group members to discuss their achievement and effective working relationships. For Gilles, group processing is a formative assessment and represents learners’ reflection on the processes of learning. As he argues, group processing also encourages learners to reflect on their roles as group members. This reflection helps them “to determine if there are any decisions they need to make to streamline the group’s functioning and enhance how members contribute to the group” (2007: 5).
Central to the above examined five elements of cooperative learning is the categorisation of Johnson et al (1993). Section 2.3.2 sets out the key benefits associated with cooperative learning and section 2.3.3 goes on to outline the relationship between cooperative learning and RPCoT.

2.3.2. Benefits of cooperative learning

Cooperative learning provides a framework for student learning in group settings. Littlewood points out the impact of cooperative learning on learner motivation. He indicates that cooperative learning encourages “learners [to] take an active role in shaping their own learning and thus redefining the educational status quo” (2002: 34). This view is validated in the findings of Daniels (1994), Clinton and Kohlmeyer (2005), Christopher et al (2010), Kim et al (2012), and Sears and Pai (2012). Sharan points out that the key benefits of cooperative learning are to improve student academic achievement and promote high-level thinking “as well as positive interpersonal and inter-group relations among students” (1990: 285). In line with Sharan, Johnson et al compare cooperative learning with competitive and individualistic efforts and conclude that cooperative learning “results in (a) higher achievement and greater productivity; (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem” (1993: 1:6). Studies of Hancock (2004), Liao (2006), Vreven and McFadden (2007) and Law (2011) have demonstrated learners’ academic improvement in cooperative learning contexts. Learning and thinking skills which are suggested by Sharan (1990) and Johnson et al (1993) is also pointed out by Boud who acknowledges that cooperative learning includes “critical thinking, problem solving, sensemaking and personal transformation, the social construction of knowledge” (2001: 7) and gives learners the opportunity to exercise critical thinking and clarify thoughts. In the extension of Boud’s claim, Gilles emphasises that learners develop their personal growth through a comparison with others. As a results, they “learn to listen to what others have to say and how they say it, challenge their own perspectives, and develop new or alternative positions or arguments that are logical and that others will accept as valid” (2007: 7). Learners’ development to learning and thinking skills is validated in the findings of Sarobol (2012) and Ning (2013). In addition to the group relationship and social values in Sharan (1990) and Johnson et al (1993), Johnson and Johnson further suggest that the civic values of cooperative learning consist of “work for mutual benefit, common good;
equality of all members; trusting, caring relationships; view situations from all perspectives; unconditional worth of self, diverse others" (2013: 448). Tennant claims that cooperative learning experiences “establish a common base from which each learner constructs meaning through personal reflection and group discussion” (1991: 197). Tenant’s common base is described by Ushioda as peer-group solidarity. According to her, by cooperating with each other, learners “harness their sense of peer-group solidarity” (1996: 46). As she explains, cooperative learning requires great demands on students’ capacity to work proactively. Learners are responsible for their decision-making on learning plan, learning contents and assessment, and contribute to the team work. Ushioda points out that learners need to work with their peers by “minimizing their perception of external direction and control from the teacher” (1996: 46). For her, cooperative learning is led by students rather than teachers. It allows learners to take responsibility for and control of their learning. This benefit of cooperative learning is validated in Dornyei (1997), Tan et al (2007), Lei et al (2008), and Peterson and Schreiber (2012).

2.3.3. Cooperative learning and Reciprocal Peer Coteaching

As set out in section 2.4.2, Boud’s (2001) argument on the components of reciprocal peer teaching highlights that learners are interdependent with each other and they learn with and from each other. Learners need to have the ability to contribute to the learning of others and have the skills in organising and planning activities. They also need to give to and receive from each other feedback on learning. As set out in section 2.5.1, coteaching emphasises the group solidarity of coteaching groups, coteachers’ individual accountability and their interdependence with each other. Coteachers give each other mutual support. Coteachers should also monitor their coteaching progress. The conclusion may be drawn that all these five elements of cooperative learning fundamentally overlap with the elements of coteaching, although the former one emphasises learners’ learning process and the latter one focuses on coteachers’ teaching process. However, small group skills and group accountability are not emphasised in Boud’s reciprocal peer teaching as his concept may require peer teaching be conducted both in groups and as individuals.

As set out in section 2.3.1, Johnson et al’ (1993) five core elements of cooperative learning include positive interdependence; individual and group accountability; promotive interaction; learners’ interpersonal and small group skills; and group
processing. They underpin both reciprocal peer teaching and coteaching to different degrees. As the combination of reciprocal peer teaching and coteaching, RPCoT is, therefore, supported by the key elements of cooperative learning, such as positive interdependence; individual and group accountability; promotive interaction; learners' interpersonal and small group skills; and group processing. However, learners' interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing are considered but not used in the current study, according to the implementation of coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching in the current context. The other three elements, including positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, and promotive interaction, are directly relevant to the current RPCoT model.

As Figure 2.4 illustrates the whole process of reciprocal peer teaching in this study. Cooperation refers to the relationship between peer learners and peer teachers in terms of reciprocal peer teaching. All STs belong to the same Chinese class. Each of the STs plays the role as both peer teachers and peer learners in turn. They all help their peers to learn and benefit from their peers' help. As whole, they share a mutually beneficial relationship with each other. The collective cooperation among all STs for the duration of the course enhances all STs' learning, group solidarity and promotes their interdependence with each other. Figure 2.5 emphasises the cooperative relationship among coteachers within coteaching groups. Coteachers contribute to the preparation for their coteaching sessions and, at the same time, benefit from the contributions which are made by their fellow coteachers within the same coteaching groups. As set out in section 2.3.1, coteaching mainly overlaps with cooperative learning in terms of their key elements. However, as pointed out in the same section, the elements of cooperative learning, i.e. learners' interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing are not closely associated with the current study. Therefore, coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching in this specific context share the same foundation, supported by cooperative learning.
Research has concluded the benefits of promoting cooperation in the fields of peer teaching, coteaching and cooperative learning. These benefits indicate the value of each of these research fields and also connect these fields together when the current RPCoT project is derived from the commonalities between these fields as set out in Figure 2.1. As Scharle and Szabo summarise,

*Promoting cooperation ... encourages the learners to rely on each other and not only on the teacher. Group work also creates opportunities for feedback from peers: learners will do things to please the group rather than to please the teacher. Finally, pair and*
group work (as compared to whole class work) may ... get a higher proportion of students actively involved in completing a task. (2000: 8)

Based on other researchers' findings, Villa et al also conclude the outcomes of cooperative learning as follows:

When students experience cooperative group learning, they show more frequent and open communication, deeper understanding of other perspectives, more clearly differentiated views of each other, improved self-esteem, more successful achievement and productivity, and increased willingness to interact with others who are different from them. (2008: 103)

2.4. Peer teaching

The previous section examined the cooperative dimension of the RPCoT model. This section explores the particular dimension of cooperation realised in peer teaching, the process of how peer teachers teach peer learners and supports the hierarchical relationship between the peer teachers who guide peer learners' learning and the peer learners who are guided by peer teachers. In the area of peer teaching, many researchers have focused on how it can be conducted and what benefits peer teaching may create. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, peer teaching is one of the key components of RPCoT and is one of the impact areas of the ZPD. Section 2.4.1 sets out the Vygotskian underpinning theoretical framework. Section 2.4.2 outlines and categorises the types of peer teaching. Section 2.4.3 outlines the positive outcomes of peer teaching for learners identified in the literature.

2.4.1. The Zone of Proximal Development and peer teaching

The concept of the ZPD supports and informs the rationale for peer teaching. According to Jennings and Di, "teaching with Vygotsky's approach becomes a guided active pursuit rather than a forced passive submission to teaching" (1996: 85). They also point out the impact of the ZPD on peer teaching. According to them, peer teaching allows both the peer teacher and the peer learner to benefit from working together. The peer learner benefits from modelling and interacting with the peer
teacher, whereas the peer teacher learns how to be tolerant and understanding of individual differences. Peer teacher also "learns to respect others for who they are and what they are able to do. While learning to organize and teach what he knows, he also learns to reflect on and monitor his own thought processes" (1996: 89). The ZPD which is operated by a social relationship of cooperation between more capable people and less capable people represents the learning process and context of both peer learners and peer teachers. Boyd argues that individuals live in and are influenced by the social world. They have important differences among them "in the way they live, learn, work, and develop" (1989: 79). Tudge and Rogoff emphasise the importance of peer interaction deriving from Vygotskian theory. In terms of learners' joint contributions to the learning process, they claim that "a crucial factor is the extent to which partners enter into each other's frame of reference and attempt to arrive jointly at solutions to problems" (1999: 44). Within a certain group, more able students are peer teachers. They work as mediators and help their less able peers. If the ZPD applies to peer teaching, 'guidance' will become 'teaching' which is undertaken by peer teachers. That is to say, peer teachers help peer learners to gain new-formation of their knowledge and master their learning objectives. Research has suggested that peer teachers are capable of teaching. Goodlad and Hirst claim that peer teaching should enable learners to "help each other and learn by teaching" (1989: 13). They further argue that if the peer teacher is a student who is only a year or two ahead, he or she "can readily show a fellow student the way through a problem, indeed, often re-formulating the problem with a student at a similar stage of the course can be sufficient to promote learning" (1989:63). Brown argues that peer teachers "can explain ideas to each other in a common, informal language" (2000: 7). For Boud, peer teachers and peer learners "share the status as fellow learners and they are accepted as such. Most importantly, they do not have power over each other by virtue of their position or responsibilities" (2001: 4).

2.4.2. Types of peer teaching

The origins of peer teaching can be traced back to the period of Greek and Roman education (Dillner, 1971; Bonner, 1977; Wagner, 1982; Topping, 1996). However, from its birth to the 1960s, peer teaching roughly followed a similar format which required more capable students as peer teachers to teach less capable students as peer learners (Dillner, 1971; Bonner, 1977; Wagner, 1982; Goodlad & Hirst, 1989; Topping, 1996). This traditional peer teaching is concluded by Wagner as "the concept of
students teaching other students in formal and/or informal school learning situations that are delegated, planned, and directed by the teacher" (1982: 5).

Over the last few decades, research has explored other types of peer teaching according to peer teachers and peer learners’ knowledge levels. Brown (2000) suggests three types of peer learning, which are peer learning in the same class groups, cross-year peer learning, pairing or reciprocal learning with a partner from the same class. In line with Brown, Falchikov (2001) suggests four types of peer tutoring. Same-level equal status peer tutoring is where participants within a cohort have equal status. Same-level unequal status peer tutoring involves one institution and is where participants have unequal status. Falchikov points out that teacher-of-the-day is a model of the same-level peer tutoring involving one institution and students of unequal status. She reviews four research articles (Grasha, 1972; Goldschmid & Goldschmid, 1976; Dart & Clarke, 1991; Ney, 1991) on the teacher-of-the-day model which encourages students to participate in learning more actively, take more responsibility for learning and benefit more from learning. However, students’ gains are more associated with peer teachers than with peer learners. Cross-level peer tutoring involves one institution and is where unequal status derives from existing differences between tutors and tutees. Cross-level peer tutoring may also involve two institutions. Boud (2001) highlights that reciprocal peer teaching creates benefits for both peer learners and peer teachers within a given class or cohort and “emphasizes students simultaneously learning and contributing to other students’ learning” (2001: 4). For him, the ultimate goal of peer learning is to increase the knowledge of both peer learners and peer teachers. As he puts it, peer learning is “a two-way, reciprocal learning activity (and) should be mutually beneficial and involve the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants” (2001: 3). For him, this mutually beneficial relationship among all learners allow them to learn as well as to “develop skills in organizing and planning learning activities, working cooperatively with others, giving and receiving feedback and evaluating their own learning” (2001: 3). He adds that reciprocal peer learning focuses on “the learning process, including the emotional support that learners offer each other, as much as the learning task itself” (2001: 4).

Overall, the above mentioned researchers’ categorisations of peer teaching are based on the degree by which peer teachers are more capable than their peer learners. These categorisations can be divided into three basic categories. The first one is when peer teachers are genuinely more capable than peer learners. This possibility falls into
Brown's peer learning in cross-year peer learning, and Falchikov's same-level unequal status peer tutoring and cross-level peer tutoring. The second category suggests that peer teachers might be more capable than peer learners. But their capability might arise temporally or in a particular area. This possibility falls into Brown's peer learning in the same class groups and Falchikov's same-level equal status peer tutoring. The third category is similar to the second one in terms of peer teachers' level of subject knowledge. However, it further emphasises the reciprocal relationship between peer teachers and peer learners. They contribute to each other's learning and, at the same time, benefit from each other's contributions. This category falls into Brown's pairing or reciprocal learning with a partner from the same class and Boud's reciprocal peer learning. All the three categories of peer teaching enrich the scope of peer teaching and the ways in which peer learners and peer teachers may participate. They provide the structural basis for the implementation of peer teaching in different contexts. The third category, i.e. reciprocal peer teaching, is focused on in the current study.

2.4.3. Benefits of peer teaching

Research suggests that peer teaching creates a number of benefits for learners who take part in it. Hunter and Russ (2000) argue that peer learning improves learners' learning experience in four aspects. For them, peer learning can engage learners as active participants in the learning process, create a more interactive environment, encourage questioning, discussion and debate, and develop higher-level skills which benefit students in their working lives. In other words, students who directly participate in peer learning and share views and ideas can gain useful skills in group learning and independent thinking. In line with Hunter and Russ, Brown (2000) summarises that peer learning may lead to learners' "changes in skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes" (2000: 4). He concludes that peer learning benefits learners in six aspects: increasing knowledge; memorising, reproducing and practising; applying knowledge and skills; understanding; seeing, hearing or doing something in a different way; and changing as a person. Sampson and Cohen acknowledge that the benefits of peer teaching "include managing learning and learning how to learn, developing communication skills and building confidence through self and peer assessment” (2001: 21). Sampson and Cohen also argue that peer learning enables peers to "learn through listening to each other's opinions and expressed values and beliefs; and [to] giv[e] and receiv[e] feedback from each other" (2001a: 37). Some studies, such as Zhang (2006), Razak and See (2010) and Li (2011), have demonstrated learners'
academic improvement in peer teaching settings while many other research studies suggest that learners gain a few benefits during their learning process. In Liu and Luo’s (2008) study of 96 students, peer teaching encourages students’ active participation in learning activities, develops their collaborative spirit and responsibility for learning, increases their self-confidence, language competence and learning strategies. Sharif et al’s (2012) study of four peer learners and one peer teacher also shows that the peer teacher’s strong support, small age gap, good rapport and sensitivity create a friendly environment where peer learners feel comfortable to express themselves. Biggs (1999) argues that not only does peer learning improve learners’ achievement of subject knowledge, but also improve their reflective learning and social skills. Ritterman emphasises the importance of learners’ reflection on peer learning and its association with their own situation. According to her, “learning is likely to have greater impact and more influence on behaviour where the members of the group identify closely with the task being undertaken and recognise its relevance to their own situation” (2000: 30). She further points out that “some of the most significant benefits are likely to be in terms of the capacity to contribute meaningfully to the students’ individual development as critical being with the capacity for critical self-reflection and congruent critical action” (2000: 37). Zou et al’s (2012) study of 32 students demonstrates that peer teachers learn through reflecting on their own experience.

The five beneficial outcomes which are concluded by Boud are exclusively associated with reciprocal peer learning, but also apply to peer teaching in general. According to Boud (2001: 8-9), the first beneficial outcome of reciprocal peer teaching is to allow learners to work with others. It emphasises learners' sense of responsibility for their own and others' learning and development of increased confidence and self-esteem through engaging in a community of learning and learners. Second, critical enquiry and reflection tend to challenge existing ways of thinking and provide “opportunities for formulating questions rather than simply responding to those posed by others”. Third, the communication and articulation of knowledge, understanding and skills refer to concept development “which often occurs through the testing of ideas on others and the rehearsing of positions that enable learners to express their understanding of ideas and concepts”. Fourth, managing learning and how to learn indicates that the participation in peer learning “requires students to develop self-management skills and managing with others. This demands different kinds of self-responsibility as it involves obligations to others and maintaining one's positions in a peer group”. Fifth, self and peer assessment indicates that peer learning settings are associated with formative
assessment which "provides opportunities for giving and receiving feedback on one's work and a context for comparing oneself to others". A number of studies have validated the benefits of reciprocal peer teaching. In King's (2002) study of a ninth grade world cultures' class, students actually think deeply about the material, integrate it with prior knowledge and construct new knowledge. They are motivated to continue discussions, negotiate their differences and arrive at negotiated meanings. In Miravet et al's (2014) study of 39 students, students show capability of explaining subject content, looking for information and preparing meaningful discourses. They establish the climate of trust and participate actively during the entire session and interact with their classmates. They highly acknowledge the support of their peers and their group solidarity is strengthened. In Backer et al's (2012) study of an experimental group and two comparison groups, students in the experimental group increasingly use monitoring and evaluation skills.

2.5. Coteaching

The previous section examined the literature in relation to peer teaching as a teaching and learning methodology. This section explores how coteachers work cooperatively within coteaching groups, as illustrated in Figure 2.2. In the current research study, coteachers and peer teachers are used as different terms. The former one emphasises the relationship among peer teachers within the same teaching groups. The latter one highlights the relationship between peer teachers and peer learners. The introduction to coteaching is one of the key components of RPCoT. The research on coteaching has defined it with different emphases. However, Murphy and Scantlebury's definition is representative and relevant to the current research study in particular. Figure 2.6 sets out the dimensions of their definition. According to them, coteaching is "two or more teachers teaching together, sharing responsibility for meeting the learning needs of students". They also point out that coteaching is a learning process for coteachers. It is "at the same time, (coteachers') learning from each other" (2010: 1). Murphy and Scantlebury highlight two dimensions of coteaching. First, coteachers work cooperatively while seeking to help students to learn. Second, the process of coteaching enables coteachers to learn from each other and share valuable ideas with each other. In order to clarify Murphy and Scantlebury's definition, the elements of coteaching, the types of coteaching, and the benefits of coteaching are examined in detail in this section. This detailed examination of coteaching also suggests the design
of the current RPCoT structure which has also been explored in a number of research projects which will be summarised in section 2.9.

Coteachers' cooperation with each other

Coteachers' learning from each other

Figure 2.6. Murphy and Scantlebury's (2010) dimensions of coteaching

2.5.1. Elements of coteaching

Effective coteaching depends upon a number of key elements. These elements illustrate what qualities coteachers should have in order to teach and how they can coteach successfully. Villa et al (2008) argue that five elements facilitate the cooperative process of coteaching: face-to-face interactions, positive interdependence, interpersonal skills, monitoring coteacher progress, and individual accountability. In terms of face-to-face interactions, coteachers need to decide how and when they should meet and how they can communicate if formal meetings are not scheduled. Positive interdependence which is also considered an essential component of cooperative learning in section 2.3.1 indicates that coteachers are equally responsible for the learning of all students to whom they are assigned. They carry out their responsibilities by sharing their knowledge, skills and material resources. Interpersonal skills refer to the verbal and nonverbal components of trust, trust building, conflict management, and creative problem solving. They should encourage each other to improve their social skills and give each other feedback. Monitoring coteacher progress indicates that coteachers should frequently check with each other to evaluate students' learning outcomes, coteachers' communication skills, and the learning activities. Individual accountability acknowledges and emphasises each coteacher' contributions to the coteaching process. Bacharach et al (2010) examine three elements which allow student teachers as coteachers to play the role of classroom teachers. For them, these elements include sharing and managing resources, mutual support, and equal partnership (i.e. shared leadership, ownership and responsibility for teaching and classroom management). Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) have somewhat different understandings of positive interdependence. They argue that certain coteachers prefer
to be aware of their individual tasks and responsibilities in advance in order to deliver successful coteaching sessions. According to them, "by determining each team member's task for each lesson, teachers can prepare instruction more effectively and be better able to obtain the materials necessary to meet their students' needs" (2010: 103). Beninghof (2012) examines the essential elements of coteaching somewhat differently. He suggests the coordinated or shared dimensions of coteaching. First, coordinated coteachers make plan together, share instructional responsibilities and cooperatively reflect on their practices. Second, heterogeneous groupings are possible. Different educators can be involved in coteaching relationships. Third, coteachers are simultaneously engaged in the instructional process. Coteaching requires coteachers' active engagement for the entire duration of teaching.

Gallo-Fox (2010) advocates the solidarity of coteaching groups. As she explains, the process of coteaching allows coteachers to co-construct their practice, share their ideas, thoughts and perceptions about teaching. Sometimes coteachers have different views about practice. Coteachers' different perspectives can become apparent when they discuss which pedagogical and curricular approaches to use. She emphasises that "regardless of their differing views about teaching, the coteachers needed to come to an agreement about what form their coteaching practice would take in their shared classes" (2010: 107). The importance of group solidarity is also recognised by Juck et al who argue that "when teachers lose respect for each other, co-planning and a shared responsibility for enacting the curriculum decline" (2010: 243). In line with Juck et al, Gurgur and Uzuner (2010) argue that disharmony which occurs between coteachers affects the ability of the teachers who have different personalities and come from different cultural environments to cooperate. As Gallo-Fox explains, coteachers' cooperation allows them to "create a community of practice in which the coteachers share ideas, co-construct and problematize their practice" (2010: 108). Coteachers' cooperation is also associated by certain researchers such as Murphy and Scantlebury (2010) with coteachers' cogenerative dialogues. Tobin and Roth (2006) describe coteachers' cogenerative dialogues as the conversations among participants in relation to teaching and learning in the classroom. The participants identify and review collectively what will help students to learn and what will not work. Murphy and Scantlebury also consider coteachers' cooperation as cogenerative dialogues which provide "a format for teachers, students and/or other classroom participants' joint reflections on cotaught lessons" (2010: 3). These researchers have emphasised the importance of coteachers' interpersonal skills which enable them to facilitate
cooperation before, during and after their coteaching sessions. The group solidarity is strengthened by coteachers' shared responsibility which is ensured by their individual accountability.

The above-mentioned elements mainly emphasise both the group solidarity of coteaching teams and coteachers' individual accountability. Coteachers are interdependent with each other and, need to cooperate with each other, share ideas and resources with each other. They need to offer each other mutual support. Coteachers' active engagement is also emphasised. Individual coteachers' accountability is taken into account as they share the equal partnership. Coteachers should also monitor their coteaching progress. These elements suggest how STs in the current study should contribute to their coteaching sessions as well as cooperate with each other. As outlined in section 2.3, the cooperative dimension of the RPCoT model is of key importance for the success of the model and for STs development. The issue of homogeneity or heterogeneity of coteaching groups is addressed more fully in section 2.5.2.

2.5.2. Types of coteaching

Research has suggested a number of types of coteaching which can be applied to different coteaching contexts. Villa et al (2008) outline four types of coteaching: supportive coteaching, parallel coteaching, complementary coteaching and team teaching. Supportive coteaching indicates that one teacher plays an instructional role and the other teacher(s) offer support to different groups of students in rotation. Parallel coteaching takes place when coteachers work with different groups of students in different sections of the classroom. Complementary coteaching indicates that coteacher(s)' actions are to enhance the instruction provided by their fellow coteacher(s). When conducting team teaching, coteachers share leadership and responsibilities. They divide lessons according to their strengths and expertise. They simultaneously deliver lessons and alternate their leading and supporting roles. As set out in Table 2, The modules of both Murphy and Beggs, and Beninghof correspond to or can be grouped into Villa et al's categorisation. Murphy and Beggs (2010) point out eight ways of operationalising coteaching. All these ways suggest the supportive role which student teachers or a child play. The key distributions are between degrees of leadership of coteachers. According them, coteaching may be implemented in the
following ways: 1) Equal teaching roles between the student teacher and the classroom teacher; 2) The student teacher leads and the classroom teacher guides; 3) The classroom teacher leads and the student teacher guides; 4) The student teacher leads and the classroom teacher assists; 5) The classroom teacher leads and the student teacher assists; 6) The student teacher and the classroom teacher each work with small groups; 7) The student teacher leads and the classroom teacher observes and vice versa; 8) A child as a coteacher. Beninghof (2012) suggests nine ways of operationalising coteaching in the classroom. In all these ways coteachers may or may not have special expertise in a particular area and may have equal or unequal leadership roles within the coteaching team. Duet model is when both teachers share the entire instructional process. Lead and support model is when teacher A does advanced planning in isolation. Teacher B is fully involved in daily planning, implementation, and assessment. Speak and add model is when teacher A leads and teacher B adds visually or verbally. Skill groups model is when teachers divide students into more homogeneous ability groups and provide levelled instruction. Station model is when teacher A leads the class while teacher B pulls a small group of students to the side of the room for direct instruction. Learning style model is when teachers plan lesson and divide responsibilities by learning modalities. Parallel model is when class is broken into two heterogeneous groups as each teacher takes a group. Complementary skills model is when teacher A focuses on curriculum. Teacher B focuses on access or complementary skills through mini-lessons or input. Adapting model is when teacher A leads, while teacher B wanders the room providing adaptations as needed.

The current research study is carried out in the form of Villa et al' Team coteaching, Muphy and Beggs's Equal teaching roles between the student teacher and the classroom teacher or Beninghof's Duet model. Namely, STs share leadership and responsibilities according to their interests and strengths. Their share of workload is based on group negotiation. However, unless specially emphasised, the teacher researcher shall use the term coteaching to represent the teaching approach in this study in the following chapters. The purpose for doing this is to merge this smaller term into the larger term RPCoT easily and reduce any unnecessary confusion. In addition, the context for coteaching in this study is very much fixed.
Table 2. The comparison of Villa et al, Murphy and Beggs, and Beninghof in terms of coteaching types or the ways of operationalising coteaching

2.5.3. Benefits of coteaching

Research has suggested five main benefits of coteaching. Villa et al (2008) propose the following five benefits. First, it allows coteachers to model their cooperative skills which students may experience and may imitate. Second, it allows coteachers to present different knowledge, skills and instructional approaches. Third, it provides coteachers the opportunities to structure their classes to more effective use with research-led strategies. Fourth, it increases coteachers' capacity to solve problems and generates novel methods to individualise learning. Fifth, it helps coteachers to become more empowered in terms of their decision making, skills, higher level thinking and generation of more novel solutions. Murphy and Scantlebury point out that coteaching serves as "a structure for teacher reflection on theory, praxis and practice" (2010: 3) when coteachers plan, teach and evaluate lessons together. Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) argue that coteaching enables coteachers to generate team-teaching autonomy
and "the ability to guide instruction together to meet the needs of a particular group of learners" (2010: 16), create opportunities to any new ideas and teaching strategies, and develops coteachers' mutual trust over time. Beninghof (2012) suggests that included in the benefits of coteaching are professional growth, improved instruction, differentiation of instruction, teacher access, behaviour management, student engagement, support for unidentified students, time on task, sense of belonging, acceptance of diversity, high expectations. Roth and Tobin acknowledge that coteaching helps coteachers to grow their subject knowledge and teaching skills when they coteach students. As they point out, coteaching "is a powerful context that provides new opportunities for enhancing student learning and for learning to teach" (2005: 5). According to Tobin and Roth (2006), coteaching enables coteachers to share ideas and learn from each other. This type of sharing of knowledge indicates that all coteachers are active contributors to their teaching.

Overall, these benefits from coteachers' perspectives mainly suggest that coteaching increases coteachers' subject knowledge, develops their teaching skills, encourage them to reflect on teaching. It enables coteachers to share ideas and learn from each other, and develop mutual trust over time. This is validated in the findings of Gurgur and Uzuner (2010), Morocco and Aguilar (2002) and Scruggs et al (2007). In terms of students' learning, coteachers present different knowledge, skills and instructional approaches which can improve the shared experiences. Bahamonde and Friend (1999) point out that students can benefits from coteaching as well. According to them, coteaching increases instructional options for all students. Students with particular abilities can have their talents nurtured because individualisation is offered by coteachers in a cotought classroom. Villa et al (2008) also argue that coteaching enables students to experience coteachers' cooperative skills and may imitate them. Students also benefit from coteaching when coteachers can present different knowledge, skills through different approaches. The other benefit which students gain from coteachers is that coteaching classes can be effective because coteachers tend to use research-proven strategies to help students to learn. In Park's (2014) paper with 28 students, coteachers show attentiveness to coteaching tasks to maximise the benefits of coteaching. In Johnston et al's (2000) study of 30 fifth-grade students, coteachers tend to utilise effective teaching strategies to teach skills. In Tobin's (2005) study of 29 students, coeachers use several methods to support students' literacy. The above mentioned coteaching studies are carried out in different learning contexts. However, they all correspond to the key benefits of coteaching. The benefits of
2.6. Motivation and autonomy

The previous sections explored the theoretical underpinning and core components of RPCoT. The sections that follow explore the possible impact areas of this model in terms of STs' personal and professional development. As shown in Figure 2.1, the implementation of RPCoT impacts STs' personal development in two areas: learner motivation and learner autonomy. This section explores the literature on these two areas independently and in relation to each other in the language learning context. The literature on motivation and learner autonomy in language learning have drawn together over time. Research has focused on motivation in terms of its different orientations, impacts on motivation and the relationship of motivation with learner autonomy and these areas will be explored here. Among the different orientations, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are relevant to the RPCoT structure in the current study. The increase of learner motivation is represented by the transferability of extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation. This transferability is dependent on STs' development of learner autonomy.

2.6.1. Learner motivation

Over the last few decades, many definitions of motivation have emerged. Johnson points out that motivation is the "tendency to expend effort to achieve goals" (1979: 283). Wlodwoski considers motivation as "the processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behaviour, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior, (c) continue to allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior" (1985: 2). MacIntyre et al argue that motivation is "an attribute of the individual describing the psychological qualities underlying behavior with respect to a particular task" (2001: 463). According to Nakata, motivation is mental process-oriented and moves towards a particular goal. These mental processes are "affected by personal and environmental factors" (2004: 11). Different definitions of motivation have led to its numerous understandings. As Dornyei points out, there is "little agreement in the literature with regard to the exact meaning of the concept" (1998: 117). Oxford argues that it is not a good idea to restrict motivation to a small set of motivational variables. For her,
motivation is "an extraordinarily complex, multifaceted, and important construct" (1996: 1). Loschmann also indicates that "there is no single theory of motivation, which has been universally accepted" (1997: 4). For him, motivation is "a versatile remedy" (1997: 5). In this section, motivation will be examined in relation to language learning in terms of the orientations of motivation and the levels of motivation. Johnson's (1979) basic definition will be used to for the current study.

2.6.1.1. Intrinsic and extrinsic orientations

Many researchers have made the distinction between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Deci (1978) argues that intrinsically motivated learners feel free to learn what interests them and develop their potential during their learning processes. Intrinsic motivation is a process of development rather than a still phenomenon. Deci and Ryan claim that intrinsic motivation is "in evidence whenever students' natural curiosity and interest energise their learning" (1985: 245). In their theoretical paper, Ryan and Deci argue that intrinsic motivation "reflects the natural human propensity to learn and assimilate [knowledge]" (2000: 54). They also point out that intrinsic motivation "results in high-quality learning and creativity" (2000: 55). Dornyei argues that "with intrinsically motivated behaviours the rewards are internal" (1994: 275). Ushioda claims that intrinsically motivated learning is "above all learning that has personal meaning and relevance, reflecting self-perceptions of skill, competence and potential" (1996: 41). She emphasises the importance of intrinsic motivation. She argues that intrinsic motivation "can provide the internal resources to sustain [individuals'] involvement in learning" (1996: 50). Schmidt et al argue that intrinsic motivation allow learners to "get rewards enough from the activity itself" (1996: 14). Unlike intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation is mainly associated with external rewards. As Schmidt et al point out, extrinsic motivation encourages people to do things "because of an external reward that may be obtained" (1996: 14). In line with Schmidt et al, Dornyei argues that extrinsically motivated learners perform in order "to receive some extrinsic reward or to avoid punishment" (1994: 275). Like Dornyei, Noels et al (2003) also argue that extrinsic motivation is closely linked with an instrumental end of learning activities.

Researchers also suggest that motivation consists of integrative motivation and instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985, 2001; MacIntyre et al, 2001; Schmidt et al, 1996; Dornyei, 2003). Gardner and Lambert argue that an integrative orientation "reflects a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture
represented by the other group" and an instrumental orientation "reflects the practical value and advantages of learning a new language" (1972: 132). Gardner points out that "subjects who select integrative reasons over instrumental ones as indicative of themselves evidence higher levels of motivational intensity" (1985: 53). However, his recent work reduces the significance of integrative orientation. Gardner argues that integrative motivation is "a complex of attitudinal, goal-directed, and motivational attributes" (2001: 13). Gardner's instrumental motivation allows learners to "focus on a more practical purpose [that] learning the language would serve for the individual" (2001: 10). As Schmidt et al point out, both instrumental motivation and integrative motivation are "properly seen as subtypes of extrinsic motivation, since both are concerned with goals or outcomes" (1996: 14). Based on the researchers' arguments, the main orientations of learner motivation are best described as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in the current research study. Extrinsic motivation includes integrative motivation and instrumental motivation, as shown in Figure 2.7.

![Figure 2.7. Main orientations of motivation](image)

2.6.1.2. Levels of learner motivation

Research suggests that learner motivation refers to processes and has different levels and that can be increased. Ushioda points out the changing nature of motivation. She argues that motivation is "a set of processes for sustaining learner involvement in learning" (1996: 2). Dornyei proposes three levels of motivation in second language learning, which are the language level, the learner level and the learning situation level.
He explains that the language level focuses "on orientations and motives related to various aspects of the L2" (1994: 279). Figure 2.8 illustrates Dornyei's levels of foreign language learning motivation (1994: 280). As it shows, the language level is in accordance with Gardner's (1985) integrative motivational subsystem and instrumental motivational subsystem. In his synthesis paper, Dornyei regards the learner level as "a complex of affects and cognitions that form fairly stable personality traits" (1994: 279). It contains two components: need for achievement and self-confidence. Self-confidence includes a number of components, such as language use anxiety, perceived L2 competence, causal attributions and self-efficacy. The learning situation level consists of three aspects: Course-specific motivational components, Teacher-specific motivational components and Group-specific motivational components. Each aspect contains a number of detailed components. Included in the course-specific motivational components are interest, relevance, expectancy and satisfaction. The teacher-specific components include affiliative drive, authority type, direct socialisation of motivation. The group-specific motivational components are goal-orientedness, norm and reward system, group cohesion, and classroom goal structure. Dornyei claims that these three levels of motivation are independent of each other and also "have enough power to nullify the effects of the motives associated with the other two levels" (1996: 78).

Dornyei's (1994) group-specific motivational components are particularly relevant to the current RPCoT approach. In the extension to Forsyth's (1990) argument in terms of the influence of group dynamics on student affects and cognitions, Dornyei (1994) claims that classroom learning takes place within groups which are organisational units and powerful social entities. He further points out that group goals and the group's commitment to these goals do not necessarily coincide with those of individual learners, but may reinforce or reduce them. Among the four components relevant to group motivation, both group goal and group cohesion indicate how STs in the current study participate in the Chinese course. In line with Shaw's claim that a group goal is an "end state desired by a majority of the group members" (1981: 351), Dornyei (1994) regards it as a composite of individual goals. Researchers claim that 1) group cohesion strengthens the relationship among members and between members and the group itself (Forsyth, 1990); 2) a positive relationship can be created between group cohesion and group performance (Evans & Dion, 1991); and 3) perceived group cohesion is an important motivational component in a L2 learning context (Clement et al, 1994). In response to the works of Forsyth (1990), Evans and Dion (1991), and Clement et al
Dornyei (1994) argues that group cohesion encourages group members to contribute to the group success and the group's goal-oriented norms have a strong impact on individual learners. Both group goal and group cohesion link motivation with cooperative learning, peer teaching and coteaching in this chapter. Namely, these two components correspond to positive interdependence and group accountability in cooperative learning, reciprocity of reciprocal peer teaching, and the group solidarity in coteaching.

In line with Dornyei (1994), McDonough points out that motivation is a general cover term and consists of a number of possible distinct concepts, "each of which may have different effects and require different classroom treatment" (1981: 143). Like McDonough, Ryan and Deci also argue that individuals "vary not only in level of motivation, but also in the orientation of that motivation" (2000: 54). Dornyei examines recent research on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and comes to a conclusion that sufficiently self-determined and internalised learning can allow extrinsic rewards to "be combined with, or even lead to, intrinsic motivation" (1994: 276).
nature of motivation in levels and orientations provides foundation and evidence for the possibility of increasing motivation. Dornyei’s three levels of motivation and their components provide the foundation for the ways of motivating foreign language learners, proposed by him in 2.6.1.3.

2.6.1.3. Motivating language learners

L2 learning is a complex process and motivation plays a major role in such a process (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Over the last two decades, many papers have focused on classroom motivation. In Dornyei and Csizer’s study (1998) with 200 teachers of English, they compile a concise set of ten motivational macrostrategies and point out that the most underrepresented area in the model is group-specific motivational components. Cheng and Dornyei’s (2007) study of 387 teachers of English bears a resemblance to a similar inventory generated by Dornyei and Csizer (1998). The most striking difference is that learner autonomy is not as highly valued by Chinese teachers as those in Western contexts. In Williams and Burden’s (1999) study of 4 school year groups, learners tend to judge their success by external factors such as teacher approval, marks, or grades. Certain papers are relevant to L2 motivation. In Bernaus and Gardner’s (2008) study of 694 university students learning English, their perceptions of learning strategies tend to be related to their attitudes and motivation at both the individual and class levels. In Jones et al’s (2009) study of 18 students, intentionally implementing the self-determination perspective can be an effective way to create enjoyable and interesting classes. In response to Figure 2.8, Dornyei’s (1994) synthesis paper suggests 30 components which help to motivate L2 learners. As illustrated in Table 3, these components fall into three major groups: language level, learner level and learning situation level. The motivating components at the language level are related to learners’ integrative and instrumental motivation. Included in these motivating components are the sociocultural component in the L2 syllabus; the systematic development of learners’ cross-cultural awareness; the promotion of their contact with L2 speakers; and the development of their instrumental motivation. The motivating components at the learner level are associated with the factors which learners possess during their learning process. The components at this level consist of the development of learners’ self-confidence; the promotion of their self-efficacy; the promotion of their perceptions of competence in L2; the decrease of their anxiety; the promotion of their motivation-enhancing attributions; and the encouragement for them to set attainable subgoals. The motivating components at the learning situation level
are divided into three sub-groups: course-specific motivational components; teacher-specific motivational components, and group-specific motivational components. The first sub-group focuses on how to make the course suitable enough to motivate learners. The second sub-group suggests the roles which the teacher plays in motivating learners to learn and enhancing their autonomous learning. The third group emphasises the impact of group learning. The different levels of motivation with different components underpin that learner motivation might be increased through different lens with different foci.

Many components at the learning situation level correlate with other concepts in this chapter. Relevant to reciprocal peer teaching are the components, such as increasing the attractiveness of the course content; increasing students' interest and involvement; facilitating peer learners' satisfaction. The group-specific motivational components share similar elements with both coteaching and cooperative learning in terms of the group's goal-orientedness, the internationalisation and maintaining of classroom norms, the group cohesion and the relationship among group members. Promoting learner autonomy is among both the course-specific motivational components and the teacher-specific motivational components. The relationship between motivation and learner autonomy will be further examined in 2.6.3. The commonalities drawn between motivation and other concepts underpin the interconnection of different concepts which provides the foundation for the STs in the current context to generate their development at different layers in a language learning situation.
Levels | Components
--- | ---
**Language level** | 1) Include a sociocultural component in the L2 syllabus; 2) Develop learners' cross-cultural awareness systematically; 3) Promote student contact with L2 speakers 4) Develop learners' instrumental motivation.
**Learner level** | 1) Develop students' self-confidence; 2) Promote the students' self-efficacy with regard to achieving learning goals; 3) Promote favourable self-perceptions of competence in L2; 4) Decrease student anxiety; 5) Promote motivation-enhancing attributions; 6) Encourage students to set attainable subgoals.
**Learning situation**

| Course-specific motivational components | 1) Make the syllabus of the course relevant; 2) Increase the attractiveness of the course content; 3) Discuss with the students the choice of teaching materials; 4) Arouse and sustain curiosity and attention; 5) Increase students' interest and involvement in the tasks; 6) Match difficulty of tasks with students' abilities; 7) Increase student expectancy of task fulfilment; 8) Facilitate student satisfaction |
| Teacher-specific motivational components | 1) Try to be empathic, congruent, and accepting; 2) Adopt the role of facilitator; 3) Promote learner autonomy; 4) Model student interest in L2 learning; 5) Introduce tasks in such a way as to stimulate intrinsic motivation and help internalise extrinsic motivation; 6) Use motivating feedback |
| Group-specific motivational components | 1) Increase the group's goal-orientedness; 2) Promote the internalisation of classroom norms; 3) Help maintain internalised classroom norms; 4) Minimise the detrimental effect of evaluation on intrinsic motivation; 5) Promote the development of group cohesion and enhance intermember relations; 6) Use cooperative learning techniques |

Table 3. Components of motivating second language students (Dornyei, 1994: 281-282)

In terms of increasing motivation in the L2 classroom, Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) point out three important conditions: 1) appropriate teacher behaviours and a good relationship with the students. In line with Alison and Halliwell (2002), Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) argue that it is essential that teachers establish relationships of mutual
trust and respect with the learners. They also acknowledge that teacher enthusiasm plays the most important role in conducting motivationally successful teaching. Enthusiastic teachers convey a great sense of commitment to and excitement about the subject; 2) a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom. This condition is best echoed by Dornyei’s (2007a) argument that educational context should provide both cognitively adequate instructional practices, and sufficient inspiration and enjoyment to build up continuing motivation in the learners; 3) a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms. According to Dornyei and Ushioda, “group characteristics have important motivational bearings, and central to these characteristics is the level of cohesiveness among the class members” (2011: 111). These three components will guide the current study in terms of creating positive and motivational learning conditions for STs.

2.6.2. Learner autonomy

In addition to motivation, learner autonomy is the other of the two areas which RPCoT impacts on in terms of STs’ personal development. It is popularly defined as a type of ability or capacity. For example, Holec describes learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning”. He explains that learner autonomy focuses on the responsibility which learners have and hold “for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning” (1981: 3). As he further clarifies, autonomous learners determine the objects, define the contents and progressions, select methods and techniques, monitor learning procedures and evaluate learning outcomes. For Little (1991; 2001), learner autonomy is a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. He states that autonomous learners will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of their learning. Little also points out that “the capacity for autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wide contexts” (2001: 4).

Learner autonomy has received a great amount of attention from researchers over the past four decades. In Uzlu’s (2012) study of 170 university students, the necessity for developing learner autonomy in foreign language teaching is emphasised. In Andrade and Bunker’s (2009) study, a critical review and synthesis of the literature on autonomy and self-regulation contributes to a new model for distance language learning. In Sun’s (2010) study of 23 students learning English in a university classroom, writing on blogs promotes their autonomous monitoring of their writing and positive attitudes toward
foreign-language writing. The possibility to develop learner autonomy in terms of developing learners' learning ability or capacity from 'lower' to 'higher' levels have been explored by some researchers (Little, 1991; Beeching, 1996; Broady & Kenning, 1996; Littlewood, 1999; Benson, 2001). The following sub-sections will underpin the way and the social conditions in which learners develop their learner autonomy. As examined in 2.6.2.1 and 2.6.2.2, learner autonomy is developed in the setting where learners take responsibility for learning and cooperate with each other as well as the classroom teacher. In Tamjid and Birjandi's (2011) study of 59 intermediate TEFL students at an Iranian University, learner autonomy is fostered through self- and peer-assessment. Learner responsibility underpins the way of increasing learner autonomy. Learner interdependence shows the social condition for the development of learner autonomy. The two components of learner autonomy, responsibility and interdependence, also correlate with both cooperative learning and the ZPD.

2.6.2.1. Responsibility

Taking responsibility for learning is an essential component of the development of learner autonomy. Holec states the ways in which learners take responsibility for learning. For him, these learners' responsibility is represented by “determining the purpose, content, rhythm and method of their learning, monitoring its progress and evaluating its outcomes” (1981: 3). For Broady and Kenning, the two key aspects of learner autonomy which education should foster are learners' capacity for independent thinking and responsibility for learning” (1996: 9). As these two researchers argue, learner autonomy is both a goal and a learning process. For Scharle and Szabo, taking responsibility is associated with "being in charge of something", "take an active part in making decisions about their learning" and "dealing with the consequences of one's own actions" (2000: 4). According to them, learners “accept the idea that their own efforts are crucial to progress in learning and behave accordingly” (2000: 3). Little points out that taking responsibility for learning is the first step in the process of developing learner autonomy. It is referred to as the involvement “in all aspects of the learning process – planning, implementation, evaluation” (2003: 4).

Broady and Kenning point out that “to develop autonomy, whether in teacher-led classes or outside the classroom, learners need opportunities to take responsibility” (1996: 14). Marshall indicates that “students are able to start shouldering responsibility for their own learning” (1996: 57). In the expansion of Marshall's claim, Scharle and
Szabo point out the condition in which learners’ responsibility can be taken. For them, “learners can only assume responsibility for their learning if they have some control over the learning process” (2000: 80). Dam suggests that taking responsibility for learning ensures better learning outcomes. “Giving learners a share of responsibility for planning and conducting teaching-learning activities caused them to be actively involved and led to better learning” (1995: 2). Benson considers learners’ responsibility for learning to be a type of control over learning and also points out that taking responsible action on learning indicates the development of learner autonomy. According to him, “the exercise of control in natural contexts of learning is likely to constitute positive evidence of autonomy” (2001: 53). Little describes learners’ responsibility as a “never-ending effort to understand the why, the what and the how of their learning” (2003: 4). Research has also suggests ways of developing learner autonomy. In Vanijdee’s (2003) study of 391 distance English learners at a Thai university, all the students surveyed had command of a minimum level of coping strategies, and many did much better, showing themselves to be dynamic autonomous learners. In Chan’s (2003) study of 508 undergraduates and 41 English teachers in Hong Kong, One major finding was that teachers generally regarded themselves as mainly/more responsible for the majority of the language-related decisions. They clearly saw one of their responsibilities to encourage what could be seen as autonomous practices, both inside and outside the classroom. However, they preferred the responsibilities for these activities to be taken mainly by themselves, rather than handed over to the students. It was suggested that students need to be given the opportunities to exercise their right, to choose a level of engagement appropriate to their own situations and circumstances.

As examined above, taking responsibility is a key component of developing learner autonomy. Learners need to be provided opportunities to take responsibility for learning. As set out in both 2.2 and 2.3, taking responsibility is also a core element of both the ZPD and cooperative learning. As stated in 2.2.2.1, one of the dimensions of the ZPD is that the more capable learners guide the less capable learners. From a different perspective, the less capable learners learn under the guidance of the more capable learners. Both of the two angles of looking at the process of the learning activities within the ZPD show the fact that responsibility for learning is taken. For the less capable learners, they take responsibility for their own learning in order to generate their personal maturation. For the more capable learners, they take responsibility for others’ learning in order to help them to generate personal maturation.
As discussed in 2.3.1, cooperative learning requires individual accountability. That is to say, individual cooperative learners need to be accountable for contributing to group learning. Their accountability underpins that they help others to learn. The foundation for them to act as accountable contributors is that they become stronger individuals in their own right. Learners' individual accountability, thus, demonstrates the fact that cooperative learning allows learners to take responsibility for their own learning as well as the learning of others. In a coteaching context, as set out in Figure 2.6, peer teachers take two types of responsibility. In order to help their peers to learn, they need to first enhance their knowledge level by taking responsibility for their own learning. Then they take the responsibility for guiding their peers to generate a ZPD. To summarise, learners need to take responsibility for their learning as well as the learning of others in generating learner autonomy, cooperative learning, and the ZPD.

2.6.2.2. Interdependence

In his review paper, Benson argues that the theory of autonomy "view[s] language teaching and learning as a social process, while sociocultural theory pays considerable attention to the individual in empirical work" (2007: 34). Learner autonomy is developed in a setting where learners are interdependent with others. Smith and Ushioda argue that "autonomy is now seen to develop out of (learners') interaction with others" (2009: 244). Boud argues that individual learners are interdependent with each other and autonomous approaches "do not imply treating learners in isolation from one another" (1988: 28-29). Kohonen states that autonomous learners are responsible for their own conduct in the social context and "able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts in constructive ways". That is to say, autonomy contains the notion of interdependence and learners should generate learning "with respect to social and moral norms, traditions and expectations" (1992: 19). Broady and Kenning point out the social aspect of autonomy. According to them, "among the strategies and activities associated with increasing metacognitive awareness and learning management skills are some that involve interaction with others" (1996: 16). In line with Broady and Kenning, Little emphasises the social context in which autonomous learners process interdependently. He points out that learners' capacity for reflection and analysis is developed in social interactions and "cooperation between two or more learners on a constructive task can only be achieved by externalizing" (1996: 214). He further argues that learners are social beings. Their "independence is always balanced by dependence" and "essential condition is one of interdependence" (2001: 5). The interdependent aspect of learner

Some researchers point out that the teacher is an inseparable component of the interdependent condition in which the autonomous learners are situated. Marshall points out that "a part of the teachers' job must be to help students develop as reflective practitioners of learning" (1996: 58). Like Marshall, Dickinson also suggests that "autonomy is achieved slowly, through struggling towards it, through careful training and careful preparation on the teacher's part as well as on the learner's" (1987: 2). Dickinson clarifies the teacher's role in developing learners' learner autonomy. According to him, the teacher should work closely with learners initially by helping them "to specify very clear objectives and select appropriate materials to meet those objectives". The teacher should also "ensure that the learners are well prepared to use the materials" (1994: 40). In line with Dickinson, Broady and Kenning claim that the teacher should prepare learners both for and through autonomy. For them, the teacher needs to provide learners with the "opportunities to take responsibility", "knowledge and skills" and "opportunities to reflect on, and assess" the learning experience (1996: 14). Scharle and Szabo also advocate some deviation from traditional teacher roles. As they point out, "as students begin to take charge of their learning, the teacher needs to take on the role of facilitator or counsellor in an increasing number (and type) of classroom situations" (2000: 5). Little claims that the teacher's role is associated with learners' responsibility for learning, use of target language, active participation in learning. According to him, in order to help learners to develop learner autonomy, the teacher

must consider how to get learners to accept responsibility for their learning, how to ensure that they use the target language to communicate, learn and reflect, and how to organize the classroom so as to engage them as fully as possible in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. (2003: 4)

The role which the teacher plays in developing learners' autonomy is also advocated by Kincheloe. For him, the teacher evaluates student work and is responsible for students' healthy and safe learning. The denial of the teacher's authority in students' learning is insincere and dishonest. The teacher should demonstrate his authority of the truth provider and acts as the facilitator of student inquiry and problem posing. According to him, "in relation to such teacher authority, students gain their freedom –
they gain the ability to become self-directed human beings capable of producing their own knowledge" (2008: 17). A number of studies have explored the role of the teacher and the relationship between students and the teachers. Power and reciprocity in the relationship between language learner and language learning adviser has explored in Ciekanski's (2007) study. In Inozu's (2011) study of 75 secondary schools students in Turkey, the teacher tried but did not succeed in fostering autonomy in his language learners who had been spoon-fed for many years. In Chan's (2011) study of a language teacher with 20 students learning English in Hong Kong, students increased an initial awareness of the different roles of the teacher and themselves, the existence of various learning preferences and approaches, and the choices over different learning practices and procedures.

Interdependence is a core component of learner autonomy. It is both an outcome and reason for learner autonomy. It also links autonomy and other concepts, such as the ZPD and cooperative learning. As set out in 2.2.2.1, one of the dimensions of the ZPD is cooperation-orientatedness. This dimension highlights the cooperative relationship between the more capable learners and the less capable learners. This relationship shows that the ZPD is generated within a team. Both the more capable learners and the less capable learners are situated in an interdependent learning situation. The guides need the subjects to transmit their knowledge to while the students need the guide to receive their knowledge from. As set out in 2.3.1, researchers (Johnson et al 1993; Johnson & Johnson 2013) consider learners' positive interdependence as one of the key elements of cooperative learning. According to them, cooperative learners work together to accomplish shared, mutual goals. Their successful learning outcomes are dependent on cooperation among each other. A conclusion may be drawn that learner autonomy, the ZPD and cooperative learning require that learners act in settings where they cooperate with others and rely on each other.

2.6.3. Motivation and learner autonomy

The concepts of learner motivation and learner autonomy have been examined in 2.6.2 and 2.6.2 in relation to language learning. This sub-section focuses on the relationship between motivation and learner autonomy. As illustrated in Table 3, a number of components of motivating language learners are associated with the development of learner autonomy. Included in these components are encouraging learners to set attainable subgoals; inviting learners to discuss the choice of teaching materials;
promoting and maintaining classroom norms; promoting the development of group cohesion and enhancing intermember relations.

Figure 2.9 shows Ryan and Deci’s possible range of learner motivation in terms of learners’ autonomous level. They argue that extrinsic motivation “can vary greatly in the degree to which it is autonomous” (2000: 60). They propose four types of extrinsic motivation. According to them, the least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is external regulation. They argue that externally regulated behaviours are “performed to satisfy an external demand or obtain an externally imposed reward contingency” (2000: 61). Their second type of extrinsic motivation is introjected regulation. They point out that introjection refers to a type of internal regulation. However, this type of motivation is still controlling, as it creates in people a “feeling of pressure in order to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancements or pride” (2000: 62). According to these two researchers, a more autonomous or self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is regulation through identification. Individuals identify with the importance of action and accept its regulation as their own. For them, integrated regulation is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. Integration occurs when individuals fully accept regulations of action and assimilate them. According to them, integrated forms of motivation “share many qualities with intrinsic motivation, being both autonomous and unconflicted” (2000: 62). However, as they argue, integrated regulation still remains extrinsic because behaviour motivated by integrated regulation still seeks “instrumental value with respect to some outcome that is separate from the behavior” (2000: 62). According to them, intrinsic motivation is stimulated by learners’ interest or enjoyment. Their argument suggests the links among different levels of motivation within the range and supports the possibility to develop learner motivation from the less autonomous form to the more autonomous form.
Gao and Lamb point out that "motivation is crucial in learners' autonomous learning" (2011: 1). Ushioda acknowledges that language teachers' awareness of motivating their students should be a basic task. However, she realises the disadvantages of traditional motivational theory which "does not seem to translate easily into classroom practice" (1996: 1). She, therefore, suggests that, in the new teaching contexts, teachers should "provide the right kinds of interpersonal support and stimulation so that learners will discover things they want to do for themselves" (2003: 96) and focus on how to "help learners to motivate themselves" (1996: 2). She points out that "the growth and regulation of motivation" should be fostered "from inside" (2003: 99-100). She further argues that that a key principle "which seems crucial to the maintenance of motivation... must emanate from the learner" (2008: 30). As she explains, students' self-motivation "implies taking charge of the affective dimension of that learning experience" (1996: 2) and "is realized in terms of how learners think and how they interpret relevant experience in order to optimize involvement in learning" (1996: 39). Little defines self-motivation as "a capacity of the learner for 'detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action'" (1991: 4). As Little (2001: 33) claims, the only basis for learners to apply their knowledge and skills to situations in the world outside the classroom is their self-motivation and self-regulation. That is to say, only when learners are self-motivated, they learn autonomously and implement their
classroom knowledge in their real lives. In essence, both Ushioda and Little's arguments are based on the assumption that autonomous learners are intrinsically motivated. As Ushioda points out, intrinsic motivation is typically self-sustaining, leads to voluntary persistence at learning, focuses on skill development and mastery and shows personal control and autonomy in the learning process. "The rewards generated by intrinsic motivation are usually defined in terms of positive feelings, such as enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction, self-indulgence" (1996: 19-20). In line with Ushioda, Scharle and Szabo argue that not any kind of motivation can serve as "a prerequisite for learning and responsibility development alike" (2000: 7). Only intrinsic motivation serves as the source for learners' inner drive or interest. According to them, intrinsically motivated learners are more able to identify with the goals of learning and more willing to take responsibility for the outcome. In Fang's (2010) of 45 university students learning English in Taiwan, fostering learner motivation to develop learner autonomy in the computer-assisted language learning environment was critical in an English as a foreign language context. In Spratt et al's (2002) study of 508 university students, motivation played a key role in students' readiness for their actual practice of autonomous learning in the form of both outside and inside class activities. Motivation is a key factor that influences the extent to which learners are ready to learn autonomously.

Some conclusions can be drawn regarding increasing learner motivation. Extrinsic motivation is derived from external rewards. Only when motivation becomes intrinsic, learners may have sustainable interest in learning. When they truly endeavour to increase their motivation from within, they take responsibility for learning and develop their learner autonomy. This study aims to optimise supports for learner autonomy and provide a motivational context for learning. These aspects will be explored fully in chapters 4 and 5.

2.7. Empathy

Along with transformative learning, the development of empathy in ST teachers is hypothesised as a professional development outcome of the RPCoT model. In theory, the RPCoT experience allows STs to relive their early language learning experiences and to gain a better understanding of their school pupils in terms of learning new languages. The concept of empathy has been embraced by many researchers over the last few
decades. As a result, it has been defined in a variety of ways. The following three aspects emerge from a careful examination of the definitions of empathy: affective empathy, cognitive empathy and, the perceived similarity between the empathiser and others. These three aspects are integral components of empathy. While empathy concerns the affective aspect and cognitive aspect, the empathiser’s awareness of others’ feelings is enhanced and his/her desire to help them is strengthened. The similarity of the empathiser’ learning experiences to those of others acts as a basis for ensuring the occurrence and development of both affective and cognitive empathy.

Affective empathy is generally referred to as the awareness of others’ state of mind or feelings. Hogan defines empathy with an emphasis on its affective side. For him, empathy is “the intellectual or imaginative apprehension of another’s condition or state of mind without actually experiencing that person’s feelings” (1969: 308). In line with Hogan, Stompe et al argue that empathy “is an affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of another’s emotional state or condition, and which is similar to what the other person is feeling or would be expected to feel in the given situation” (2010: 44). As Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright argue, empathy helps “to understand the intentions of others, predict their behaviour, and experience an emotion triggered by their emotion” (2004: 193). Certain researchers highlight the empathiser’s focus on others’ feelings. Cheon et al state that “the neural correlates of affective components of empathy may allow a perceiver to ‘feel’ what the target is experiencing” (2010: 33). For Howe, being empathic is entering into other people’s feelings. As he describes, “we have empathy, meaning ‘into feeling’ or ‘feeling into’ (2013: 9). Warren’s (2013) study of four White female teachers and their Black male students suggests that culturally responsive interactions are best negotiated in partnership with students, not through power or control of students. When teachers share affectively with students and attempt to adopt their points of view, it is likely that evidence of culturally responsive teaching will become part of the teaching outcomes.

Cognitive empathy is often referred to as the empathiser’s ability to respond to others’ state of mind or enter into their feelings and the actions he/she takes accordingly. Stompe et al argue that cognitive empathy “refers to the mental process of understanding and sharing others’ emotion and provides a proximate mechanism of altruistic behaviours and is strongly modulated by cognitive and social factors” (2010: 44). Baron-Cohen points out that empathy is the “ability to identify what someone else is thinking or feeling and to respond to their thoughts and feelings with an appropriate
emotion" (2011: 11). In Dewaele and Wei's (2012) paper of 2158 multilinguals of 204 different nationalities, multilingual participants (especially those using multiple languages frequently) score higher on cognitive empathy, which means that they will tend to be more skilful in conversations as they can see the world from their interlocutor's point of view.

Perceived similarity between the empathiser and others is referred to as the similar cultural background or similar experiences between them. Batson argues that "people feel for a stranger in need to the degree that they perceive the stranger to be similar to themselves. The suggestion is that perceived similarity on attributes unrelated to the need leads to increased empathy" (2005: 11). In line with Batson, Hall and Woods describes perceived similarity as a basis for liking and empathising with someone. According to them, this similarity is "also seen in reactions to fictional characters, where the perception of a character as similar to oneself and identifying with them will typically result in liking that character, and empathising with their situation and actions" (2006: 304). Hoffman points out the impact of perceived similarity across cultures on empathic levels. As he put it, "seeing that people in other cultures have similar worries and respond emotionally as we do to important life events, while sitting in the audience and feeling the same emotions, should contribute to a sense of oneness and empathy across cultures" (2000: 294). Unlike Hoffman, Cheon et al concern the impact of perceived similarity between the empathiser and others within a culture. For them, "individuals who share a similar cultural background should be attuned to the quality and intensity of verbal and non-verbal expressions of culturally-similar others, which may provide a basis for facilitated understanding and empathy towards the plight of culturally-similar others" (2010: 34).

A number of studies have validated that empathy is beneficial for the empathiser to think about and empathise with the experience of others (Davis, 1994; Howe, 2013). In Klis and Kossewska's (1996) study of 98 teachers working in primary schools and secondary schools, their questionnaire feedback showed that affective and cognitive components of empathy are related to extroversion, neuroticism, locus of control, self-esteem, and temperamental traits as strength of excitation and mobility of behaviour. The mechanisms underlying the development of empathy could be both physiological and social in character. Components of empathy should be specially trained during teachers training programmes. In Toremen's (2011) study of 30 academicians working at a university, their unstructured Interview feedback showed that in order for teacher
candidates to develop a social sensitivity and responsibility, they should be aware of the others' emotional, social and physical circumstances and have empathic considerations towards them. In de Oliveira's (2011) study, 152 pre-service and inservice elementary and secondary teachers experienced some of the feelings and linguistic challenges that English language learners in their current or future classes may experience. It is suggested that feeling like language learners can help teachers become more aware of what students may experience. In Palmer and Menard-Warwick' (2012) study of 7 prospective teachers participating in a study-abroad programme, preservice teachers recognise their own situations as similar in some way to the experience immigrant children might have as they enter schools in the United States. They connected the second language acquisition theories they were learning in class, with their own experiences learning Spanish and adjusting to a new culture. Discomforts and challenges during the learning process developed their empathy for immigrant students learning a new language and culture.

When transformative learning reflects learners' dramatic change in their life, empathy highlights how people enter into other's feelings and attempt to help others. The concept of empathy also underpins the rationale for using an exotic language for part of this Initial teacher education (ITE) programme. In this study, these two concepts are complementary and together show STs' professional change. This section has been co-presented by the teacher researcher as a conference paper (Liu & Devitt, 2013).

2.8. Transformative learning

The previous sections outline aspects of the personal and professional development experienced by students. This section explores the degree and quality of change as part of this experience. Figure 2.1 suggests that an outcome of RPCoT can be a transformative progressed learning experience. The study of transformative learning in terms of adult education has been conducted by a number of researchers since 1978 (Mezirow, 2000; Cranton, 2006; Roberts, 2007; Taylor, 2007, 2008; Snyder, 2008; Brock, 2010; Sands & Tennant, 2010; Grand, 2011; McAllister, 2011). Many researchers understand transformative learning from different perspectives. Elias (1997) claims that transformative learning allows for the expansion of people's consciousness and transforms their basic worldview and specific capacities of self. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) point out that transformative learning is about dramatic and
fundamental change in the way people see themselves and the world in which they live. Mezirow argues that

Transformative Learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action (2000: 7-8).

Fetherston and Kelly suggest that transformative learning "involves profound shifts in our understanding of knowledge, the world, and ourselves" (2007: 267). O'Sullivan and Morrell (2002) argue that transformative learning is a deep and structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. Shindler indicates that learners' attributes include "clarity of purpose, self-responsibility, bonds among students, and an increasing level of function over time" (2010: 5). Four key components of transformative learning which can be concluded between these definitions are change, process, reflection and cooperation. Section 2.7.1 focuses on the process component. Section 2.7.2 explores the change component. Section 2.7.3 highlights the cooperation component. Section 2.7.4 emphasises the reflection component. In transformative learning, learners' change begins with the change of their habits of mind and arrives at their resulting points of view. They tend to achieve three types of knowledge (i.e. technical knowledge, communicative knowledge and emancipatory knowledge) under the guidance of educators. These three types of knowledge demonstrate different stages of transformation. Learners' reflection on their process of learning and their cooperation with others are fundamental to the transformative process, as shown in Figure 2.10 which is the teacher researcher's conclusion of the different definitions of transformative learning. These components are linked with each other and support each other in order for learners to achieve the level of transformation. This study aims to explore STs' transformative learning in a RPCoT context with an emphasis on the impact of RPCoT on STs' professional change as school teachers.
2.8.1. Nature of change

Transformative learning entails a fundamental change in people’s personality (Boyd, 1989). According to him, transformative learning leads to conscious personality integration. Kasl and Elias further argue that the outcomes of transformative learning are "characterised by new frames of reference, points of view, or habits of mind as well as by a new structure for engaging the system’s identity" (2000: 233).

Mezirow argues that a frame of reference is "the structure of assumptions and expectations through which we filter sense impressions" (2000: 16). He points out that a frame of reference consists of two dimensions: a habit of mind and resulting points of view. According to him, a habit of mind is a set of assumptions and is comprised of broad, generalised and orienting predispositions and "acts as a filter for interpreting the meaning of experience" (2000: 17). By resulting points of view, he means that "frames of reference are the results of ways of interpreting experience" (2000: 16). Kegan argues that a change in a frame of reference includes two processes. The first process is the way in which people "make coherent meaning out of the raw material of our outer and inner experiencing" (2000: 52-53). The second process is called metaprocess. It affects the very terms of people’s meaning-constructing. Like Mezirow, Taylor agrees that frames of reference are “structures of assumptions and expectations” (2008: 5). For him, frames of reference structure individuals’ tacit points of view and impact their thinking, beliefs, and actions. Kitchenham (2008) shares similarity with Mezirow on the categorisation of the two dimensions of a frame of reference and proposes a habit of
mind and a meaning perspective. The latter one leads to a perspective transformation. If Mezirow's resulting points of view indicate the outcomes of frames of reference, Kitchenham's meaning perspectives emphasise the process of reaching their outcomes. A commonality can be drawn between Mezirow, Taylor and Kitchenham that a change includes both the departure point of a change and the outcomes of the change or the outcomes of transformative learning.

The implications of change in transformative learning have been described by many researchers. Mezirow argues that not only does it "make possible a more inclusive, discriminating and integrative perspective" (1991: 167), but also allows people to make choices of their ways of change. Clark argues that transformative learning "shapes people. They are different afterward" (1993: 47). According to Cranton and Carusetta, the change is represented by the fact that people's "views of the world become more open and better justified" (2004: 292). Cranton argues that people's change moves from "acquiring new knowledge, skills, or values" (2006: 2) to elaborating on them and then to reaching the point of seeing new aspect of themselves or the world around them.

Cranton (2006) suggests three types of knowledge which educators may foster in learners in transformative learning settings: technical knowledge, communicative knowledge and emancipatory knowledge. According to her, technical knowledge often provides the basis for transformative learning. It gives a learner the skills and knowledge that free them from constraints, change their concept of themselves as people, and perhaps redefine their notion of work. Communicative knowledge is constructed with the help of an educator as facilitator. Interactive methods, cooperative learning, dialogue, and group activities help students work through an understanding of themselves, others, and the social world they live in. When people create new personal and social knowledge, they often go on to question their pre-existing perspectives and move towards transformative learning. Emancipatory knowledge is fostered through a variety of reformist educator roles. Critical questioning, the presentation of diverse points of view, the examination of existing social norms, and the exploration of alternative and radical perspectives helps students become more open in their views and free from the constraints of unquestioned assumptions. The categorisation of knowledge types in transformative learning shows that educators not only pass knowledge to their students, but also lead them to the level where they can exercise their learning and reflective abilities. Dobson supports the ideas of technical knowledge
and communicative knowledge in transformative learning, with an emphasis on the latter one. He argues that the presentation and acquisition of knowledge previously known to learners is only a minor goal of transformative learning. In essence, transformative learning "must be an exchange that creates opportunities for, and welcomes, understanding that is new to both the students and teacher" (2008: 9). McAllister points out the function of communicative knowledge and emancipatory knowledge. She argues that for educators the objective in transformative learning is to help learners to reflect on their disorienting dilemmas and to "arrive at new understandings to better equip them for future practice and for the advancement of the profession" (2011: 45).

2.8.2. Process

Transformation is not an easy journey and transformative learning takes place during a process of learners' professional development. Mezirow (1991) argues that transformative learning begins when people encounter experiences that fail to fit their expectations and consequently lack meaning for them. He adds that transformative learning begins when people experience "an anomaly that cannot be given coherence either by learning within existing schemes or by learning new schemes" (1991: 94). According to Mezirow (2000), this disorienting dilemma is the first phase of transformative learning. For Cranton, people question what they know when they are "confronted with knowledge that directly contradicts previous accepted knowledge, particularly knowledge acquired from an authority figure" (2006: 62). Cranton and Wright suggest that transformative learning begins when a person "encounters an experience or event that is discrepant with his or her habitual expectations" (2008: 44). They claim that a disorienting dilemma has the potential to lead people to question assumptions. When people realise that they have doubts about their current situation, they need to think and learn something new. Ridley points out that "learners' capacity for reflective decision-making is relevant to how they approach task performance and, within certain tasks, how they seek to resolve actual problems which may arise" (1997: 19).

Cranton (2006) states that transformative learning is a process during which people develop their habits of mind and free themselves from constraints. Cranton and Carusetta (2004) consider transformative learning as a journey, during which people move to consciousness, to complex, integrated, and ambiguous understandings of the
world. This journey allows people to increase their self-awareness. Daloz (2000) argues that the changes towards more dependable frames of reference in transformative learning are in a process of development. According to McAllister (2011), transformative learning underlines a process which covers awakening people to disorienting dilemmas, engaging them in transformative learning, enabling them to reflect on their learning and change their habits of mind. Mezirow (1991; 1995; 1996; 1997; 2000) has emphasised on several occasions that transformative learning is a process. According to him, transformative learning is a process, during which people become critically aware of how and why their assumptions have come to constraints the way they perceive, understand, and feel about their world; during which people attempt to justify their beliefs; during which people use a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of their experience in order to guide future action; or during which people change their frames of reference. Mezirow (2000) argues that transformative learning requires that people participate in constructive discourses by availing of other participants' experience.

The process component which learners experience shows how they develop as professionals from one stage to another. It shows that transformative learning is not an easy practice. It involves learners' constant participation and efforts which enable them to change from how they were before to who they are now.

2.8.3. Cooperation

Cooperation also plays an important role during learners' transformative learning. Mezirow points out that people's personal meanings are "acquired and validated through human interaction and communication" (1991: xiv). O'Sullivan and Morrell (2002) argue that transformative learning involves people's self-understanding and their understanding of their relationships with others and with the natural world. Snyder argues that "the testing and validating of new frames of reference can only be achieved by engaging people in critical discourse with others" (2008: 165). For Cranton and Carusetta, the rationale for cooperation in transformative learning is that "people have different learning styles, teaching styles, philosophies of education, and personality preferences" (2004: 276).
Research has suggested a number of benefits of cooperation in transformative learning. Brookfield and Preskill (1999) list nine dispositions of democratic discussion, which include hospitality, participation, mindfulness, humility, mutuality, deliberation, appreciation, hope and autonomy. Cranton (2006) points out that cooperation allows people to become open to others’ points of view and share experiences and values within a group and acts as a stimulant for critical questioning. Belenky and Stanton suggest the term ‘connected knowers’ who “actually try to enter into other person’s perspective, adopting their frame of mind, trying to see the world through their eyes” (2000: 87).

Cooperation is a necessary component of transformative learning. However, this assumption does not deny the fact that cooperation paves the way for people’s individuation. According to Williams and Burden, people “will make their own sense of the ideas and theories with which they are presented in ways that are personal to them... (and that)... each individual constructs his or her own reality” (1997: 2). Boyd argues that the supportive structures which learning group members offer each other “facilitate an individual’s work in realizing personal transformation” (1989: 467). Mezirow (2000) points out that during the transformative learning process, people not only become acquainted with their peers’ tacit assumptions and expectations, but also become aware of their own ones. Cranton argues that the goal of transformative learning is individuation. According to her, individuation is “the development of the person as separate from the collective, which in turn allows for the person to join with others in a more authentic union” (2000: 189). Cranton and Carusetta (2004) illustrate that the process of individuation is separating individuals from the herd. For them, individuation allows individuals to know how they are different from and simultaneously the same as others. In line with Cranton and Carusetta, Dobson also argues that transformative learning is the process of differentiating individuals from the collective. For him, this process of differentiation is “to establish a unique and authentic identity through an increasing conscious unfolding of personality” (2008: 181).

Mezirow points out that educators in transformative learning “often reframe learner questions in terms of the learner’s current level of understanding” (1997: 10). According to him, educators seek to help learners to participate in their current learning context and critically assess the justification of new knowledge they encounter. Therefore, educators encourage learners to frequently challenge their identity, examine and assimilate assumptions. Cranton argues that educators help learners to foster
transformative learning by elevating them from a lower level to a higher level. They "bring the source, nature, and consequences of taken-for-granted assumptions into critical awareness" (2000: 195) in order for learners to take appropriate actions.

The cooperation component in transformative learning links transformative learning with both cooperative learning and the ZPD. The cooperation component in transformative learning tend to create a number of benefits, such as democratic discussion, openness, sharing, connected knowers, and individuality. However, in essence, transformative learning, cooperative learning and the ZPD all take place in a context where learners work together and are interdependent with each other.

2.8.4. Reflection

According to Figure 2.1, the RPCoT setting in the current research study tends to lead to three outcomes, among which transformation is developed through STs' reflection. Dewey's description of reflection from 1933 provides an important starting point for a discussion of reflection. He described reflection as "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends" (1933: 9). Many researchers associate reflection with learners' learning itself or the process during which learning takes place. According to Boud et al, reflection is referred to as "intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciation" (1985: 19). Sandars considers reflection as a metacognitive process which "occurs before, during and after situations with the purpose of developing greater understanding of both the self and the situation so that future encounters with the situation are informed from previous encounters" (2009: 3).

Reflection is an element inseparable from transformative learning. Fetherston and Kelly suggest that "reflection is key to the achievement of transformation" (2007: 268). Learners need to become reflective on their own assumptions in order to transform their frames of reference. For Mezirow (1997), learners' understanding, skills and disposition are a necessary part of transformative learning and allow them to become reflective of their own assumptions and to engage effectively in discourse to validate their beliefs. He claims that the goal of adult education is to help people to become reflective thinkers. According to Mezirow (2000), there are two types of reframing which
involve two different types of reflection respectively. Objective reframing involves critical reflection on assumptions of others. Subjective reframing involves critical self-reflection of one's own assumptions. He argues that self-reflective learning occurs "when learners critically re-evaluate themselves and their learning" (1985: 21). As he put it, self-reflective learning consists of three learning processes which are learning within present meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, and learning through meaning schemes. He points out that a meaning scheme refers to "the constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feeling which shapes a particular interpretation" (1994: 223). Mezirow points out that "learning to think for oneself involves becoming critically reflective of assumptions and participating in discourse to validate beliefs, intentions, values and feelings" (1998: 197). Cranton points out that self-reflection "involves being aware and critical of our subjective perceptions of knowledge and of the constraints of social knowledge" (2006: 13).

2.8.5. Benefits of transformative learning

Many research papers have demonstrated a number of benefits of transformative learning which consists of components of change (section 2.8.1), process (section 2.8.2), cooperation (section 2.8.3) and reflection (section 2.8.4). Biesta and Miedema (2002) argue that the pedagogical task of the teacher and the school should be a concern for the whole person of the student and the whole sense of identity of the student. They propose that a transformative conception of education can be used to redefine the framework for the tasks of schools and teachers. In Coombes and Danaher's (2006) study, an enabling programme at a University in Australia to serves as an alternative method of entry to undergraduate studies for students who have not completed their secondary schooling. Most of them prove to be extraordinarily adept at adapting to what is required of them in a relatively short space of time. They experience transformative changes when they succeed challenges. In Hale et al's (2008) study of 10 teacher participants from a Masters of Education degree programme in Bilingual Education at a US university. The findings reveal the value and transformative nature of building a bridge between narrative and ethnographic methods. The main themes derived from the teacher participants' feedback are awareness of self and others, consciousness of educational issues and their implications, and transformative action and advocacy. The authors suggest that, in order to experience transformative learning, educators must make a radical shift and reflect on how their values, beliefs, biases, and experiences influence and guide the
work they do with students. They also need to embrace new ways of challenging themselves to think differently about the world they live in and how that world affects the educational experiences of their students. In Sockman and Sharma’s (2008) study is focused on a course instructor with 14 students. Through peer feedback, reflective journal writing, and readings the instructor uncovers the obstacles and moves closer to a transformational model of instruction by explicating the learning process and beliefs behind her teaching practices. While reflecting through a course, she examines her beliefs and gains a deeper understanding of her instruction, and becomes better equipped to prepare other reflective practitioners. Hutchison and Rea’s (2011) research article was a study visit to The Gambia. On the trip there were academic staff and all students from the Faculty of Education at a British university and others. As the authors suggested, this kind of visit made a vital contribution to the profoundly transformative learning and induced more far-reaching changes in people than many other kinds of learning, which shape them and produce significant effects. In terms of this powerfully transformative experience, the authors suggested that one of the key ways to facilitate transformative learning is to place people in a cultural setting very different from the one they are used to, thus exposing ‘new’ discourses. They also suggested that some of the impact of the experience placed students outside their comfort zone and made them experience some anxiety, confusion and uncertainty. In Frederick et al’s (2010) study of 33 undergraduate teacher candidates in the USA, a sophomore-level Foundations of Education course is carried to examine the narratives of their transformation. Their experiences successfully support their transformative thinking regarding social justice. By the end of the course, many of them begin to take ownership over their learning and start viewing themselves as responsible change agents. They begin to examine education as embedded in larger social contexts, scrutinise their own schooling experiences and step outside of their own conceptions of education to initiate discussions of social justice.

2.9. Summary of Reciprocal Peer Coteaching

This chapter has explored the learning approach RPCoT. The chapter begins with the concept of the ZPD which is the supporting theory for RPCoT. It underpins all the concepts in the literature. It highlights that Vygotskian psychological new-formation refers to individuals’ development of higher mental functions and is generated in a social context whereby individuals’ cooperation is essential and leads to their
internalization. The process of new-formation is driven by mediators such as psychological tools and signs. The ZPD as a symbolic space describes individuals’ possible development which their potential allows them to generate under the guidance of more knowledgeable people. The ZPD is generated on the basis of Vygotsky’s concept of new-formation. In terms of cooperative learning, it shares certain principles with both coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching. Its core principles correspond to the two dimensions of the research structure of this study. The principles and benefits of cooperative learning are of vital importance to the implementation of coteaching and reciprocal peer teaching which, at the same time, support and stimulate the cooperation processes.

RPCoT comprises two key components: peer teaching and coteaching. Among the types of peer teaching, reciprocal peer teaching which allows all STs to avail of a mutually beneficial learning environment is highlighted. Coteaching has been analysed in terms of its types and the benefits which coteaching may create. Section 2.6, section 2.7 and section 2.8 have explored the key impact areas of RPCoT, i.e. the interrelated dimensions of learner motivation and autonomy, transformative learning and empathy. The review of learner motivation focuses the relationship between motivation and learner autonomy. Both learner motivation and learner autonomy show STs’ personal development as learners. The changed understanding of learning through the RPCoT experience is explored through the lens of transformative learning. The concept of empathy explores how STs gain better understanding of their school pupils’ language learning. Both transformative learning and empathy demonstrate STs’ professional development as language teachers.

The following research projects have been conducted under the framework of RPCoT and propose a model for the current research study. While these studies do not use the term RPCoT they do include the key elements illustrated in Figure 2.2 whereby students are invited to conduct coteaching in turn. Students in each of the three projects come from the same class or course. Students are all required to participate in these projects and divided into groups to prepare for their coteaching sessions. Students as peer teachers arrange different teaching activities and teaching resources as the forms of mediation. The classroom teacher plays a facilitating role in the projects. These studies explore the language learning potential of RPCoT with a focus on personal development of students. Assinder (1991) organises her students in 2 groups of 6 students to prepare video materials and coteach language. Her project
lasts for six hours per week for nine weeks. Her findings, collected from students' weekly oral feedback and questionnaires, suggest that the teaching model is enjoyed by students. From students' questionnaires, she learns that project increases students' subject knowledge and help them to exercise a number of learning activities. Her own observation also supports that her project has increased students' motivation, participation, 'real' communication, in-depth understanding of subject knowledge, responsibility for their own learning and commitment to the course, confidence and respect for each other, a number of skills and strategies, and accuracy.

Students were using language to get things done and to acquire and impart information and knowledge; thus all communications was genuine. The task stimulated the learners to mobilize all their linguistic resources, to try persistently to extend their linguistic limits... The giving over of control to the learners ... not only increased motivation, sense of purpose, responsibility and commitment, but allowed for different abilities learners styles. (1991: 227).

Assinder also points out the importance of the cooperative relationship among coteachers. For her, this relationship allows coteachers to negotiate meaning within the groups. The responsibility to coteaching groups encourages coteachers to gain a full understanding of the coteaching content. "This fosters a very supportive group atmosphere. The group feeling is compounded by the pride taken in the presentations" (1991: 227). According to her, the responsibility to coteaching groups also increases peer teachers' motivation and improve linguistic accuracy.

Inspired by Assinder, Spratt and Leung (2000) also conduct a similar project which involves three groups of 17 to 19 final year BA students. Their compulsory course 'Legal and Documentary English' lasts for 3 hours each week throughout the academic year, which consisted of two 14-week terms. Students are divided into coteaching groups. The classroom teacher teaches the first two weeks in each of the two terms. Each of the remaining weeks consists of two parts: students' coteaching in turn and the teacher's summary. In the second term, the classroom teacher's class involvement is increased in order for students to gain more input from the classroom teacher. Their findings are collected from both students' questionnaire consisting of one closed-ended and one open-ended section, and the teacher's observation. Compared with Assinder, their findings are much less positive. They state that their project helps students to develop their reading, writing and speaking skills, management, organizational and
presentational skills. It allows students to learn from the process of preparing and presenting their own materials. However, students prefer more input from the teacher than from peers, although they agree that they can also learn from their peers. Students also inform that this project helps them to gain confidence, increase learning motivation, and develop independence and creativity, although the number of responses is too small to represent all the participants. The major issue in their project is the heavy workload. It is problematic for a few students to select relevant materials. The classroom teacher's observation explores that, in general, students employ a wide variety of language functions and use some interesting teaching materials. The observation is also in line with students' feedback in terms of the workload. Spratt and Leung further suggest that the teacher should guide coteachers' preparation for coteaching and discuss with them regarding their possible teaching methods and aims.

Carpenter carried out her study with the BA in Applied Language course at the University of Brighton. The study had 60 students participated. They were divided into three groups of French and two groups of German learners. Most of the students have an A-Level or equivalent in their foreign language. The main foreign language section owns six hours' contact time during which coteachers conduct coteaching in pairs. They choose topics, select materials for the whole class, and carry out all pedagogical activities. Coteachers' presentations are made in the target language and followed by different activities. Two questionnaires are used to evaluate the project. Carpenter notes that coteaching within her project helps to foster a positive relationship between students and the classroom teacher. Second, students are motivated to participate. Their self-esteem is increased "through the multiplicity of roles they have to play: researcher, syllabus designer, organiser, teacher, expert, technician and evaluator" (1996: 32). Coteachers are "aware of aims and the objectives when planning the lessons; they monitored and made changes to the session and evaluated it afterwards" (1996: 34). The relationship between coteachers and their peers is described by her as one of peer cooperation and shared responsibility. Coteachers "assume responsibility not only for their own learning but also for that of their peers. They need to show sensitivity and empathy towards individual learners" (1996: 35). Less able coteachers are also respected and supported by their peers. In terms of the distribution of the workload, she concludes that coteachers are often able to capitalise on each other's strength. They take different roles according to their own ability. "Extroverts usually elected themselves to lead the activities while introverts involved themselves more with the preparation and organisation of teaching materials. For the presentations, the more
confident learners presented key ideas while the less confident presented keywords” (1996: 33). This shows that not only do coteachers understand their own level of knowledge, but also share good cooperative spirit. She also points out a few issues. A few students' regular absence from the classroom is “a source of frustration amongst their peers” (1996: 35). Coteachers' presentations are of different quality across coteaching groups. According to her, “the more advanced, motivated and self-directed the peer-tutors, the more successful and enjoyable the sessions” (1996: 36). Students indicate that feeling comfortable with their peers is “a prerequisite for successful peer teaching” (1996: 36). It is also pointed out that coteaching demands from the coteachers “considerable investment in time and effort, investment which may only be sustained for a limited period” (1996: 36). But overall, Carpenter suggests that her project allows students to take responsibility for learning. If it is conducted within a clear framework, it “seems to be an effective way of providing learners with some of the software that will help them make a step forward on the autonomous path” (1996: 37).

The model of these projects includes the two components of RPCoT, shown in Figure 2.2. Peer teachers have taught peer learners. All the students are encouraged to learn from each other reciprocally. Coteachers contribute to their teaching sessions and benefit from each other’s contributions. These three projects also correspond to Figure 2.1. They have explored what benefits such a research model may create and what limitations it may have. Overall, the results have indicated benefits for increasing students' language learning outcomes, learner motivation, student cooperation, student responsibility, student interdependence, students' learning and teaching skills, and student commitment to projects. However, these studies did not explore the professional development of students. This is a focus of this study as the student cohort is different. The current study attempts to explore STs' development both as language learners and professionals. The ZPD is used as the theoretical underpinning. The cooperative dimension of RPCoT is highlighted in the current study. The next chapter will articulate the methodology of this study.
Chapter 3. Methodology

The preceding chapter has outlined the overview of literature on peer teaching, coteaching, cooperative learning, the Zone of Proximate Development (ZPD), learner motivation, learner autonomy, transformative learning and empathy. The current chapter looks at the methodology chosen for this study. Section 3.1 focuses on Action Research (AR) in terms of its principles, manifestations. It also introduces the relationship between the current study and the AR approach. Limitations of AR and ethical issues in AR are also dealt with in this section. Section 3.2 explores the use of qualitative data to elaborate the current research study. The section includes the principles of qualitative research, the relationship between qualitative research and AR. It also covers data collection tools in qualitative research and the stages of qualitative analysis. Section 3.3 outlines how the current study is carried out. It introduces the AR cycles, research instruments and detailed procedure of data analysis. This chapter ends with a short summary in section 3.4.

3.1. Action Research

In this section, the teacher researcher attempts to gain a deeper and more profound understanding of AR by outlining principles of AR and its current manifestations. He also describes the relationship between the current study and AR. As a close to this section, he points out the limitations of AR as well as its ethical issues.

3.1.1. Principles of action research

The concept of AR has been embraced by many researchers from many different disciplines since its emergence as a research methodology. As a result, it has been defined in a variety of ways. All definitions, however, include certain principles to guide the conduct of AR. The following four principles emerge from a careful examination of definitions of AR: two dimensions as action and research, cyclical nature, contextualisation and values base. These principles are integral aspects of any AR process. 4

3.1.1.1. Two dimensions
'Action' and 'research' are two fundamental dimensions of AR which progresses towards the outcomes of both action and research, although the proportion of action and research may vary between different AR projects. McNiff and Whitehead indicate that the action dimension "is about improving practice". The research dimension "is about offering descriptions and explanations for what you are doing as and when you improve practice" (2011: 1). They further clarify that the combination of 'descriptions and explanations' refers to 'theory'. As Noffke and Somekh point out, AR "directly addresses the problem of the division between theory and practice" (2010: 289), namely, the division between research and action. Elliott points out that "theorising is a mental activity and a physical activity. In this mind-body dualism resides the problem of theory and practice" (2007: 205). However, this division does not divorce the two dimensions of AR. Conversely, it marks the fact that AR's two dimensions are interrelated and merge into one unity. The interaction of the two dimensions with each other, their impact on each other and integration into each other take place throughout AR projects and allow for outcomes of AR to emerge. As Koshy claims, "knowledge is created through action" (2010: 2). The process of generating knowledge or building new theories is cyclical and supported by the two dimensions at the same time. According to Riggall, AR "links action and research in a cycle that drives and reflects upon change" (2009: vi).

3.1.1.1.1. Action dimension

Arendt claims that "action corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world" (1998: 7). According to her, there are four elements in action. Firstly, 'human condition' refers to the fact that action is carried out by human beings. Secondly, human beings are related to each other when they live together. Elliott is in line with Arendt in terms of human interaction. For Elliott, action is "a matter of continuous negotiation with others (and) is developed in communication with others" (2007: 208). Thirdly, Arendt (1998) refers 'plurality' to the fact that human beings are not all the same. Their actions vary and the outcomes of actions may not be predictive. In terms of the differences between human beings' action, Elliott states that human beings reveal their "own distinctive view of the situation" (2007: 209). Elliott further states that "the consequences of 'action'... cannot be entirely foreseen in advance" (2007: 208). The fourth element of Arendt's definition regarding human beings inhabiting the world indicates that their action allows them to develop the settings which they are situated in. Arendt also believes that human
condition is politics-oriented and "all aspects of the human condition are somehow related to politics" (1998: 7). Arendt's political orientation of action is elaborated by Elliott who points out that she "vindicates her belief in human freedom". That is to say, Arendt argues that human beings not only inhabit the world, but also seek to live more democratic and free lives. In this sense, Elliott supports Arendt's claim and points out that human beings' action "involves initiating change in a social situation to bring about something new" (2007: 208). Hui and Grossman agree with both Arendt and Elliott in terms of human beings seeking freedom. They argue that "the individual's humane 'self' is located in its actions" (2008: 2).

The action dimension of AR is recognised by both Riggall and Mertler. And they both argue that this action dimension is cooperative. Riggall argues that "collaboration with and the participation of those being researched, is fundamental" (2009: vi). Mertler claims that AR is conducted "by particular educators, on their own work, with students and colleagues" (2009: 19). Carr and Kemmis point out that the stages that all participants in AR go through are "all its phases of planning, acting, observing and reflecting" (1986: 165). Regarding the action dimension, Reason and Bradbury argue that AR "starts from an orientation of change with others" (2008: 1). The involvement of both researchers and the researched in AR projects is essential. The degree of their involvement may vary in some instances. However, team efforts are on-going and conducted through actions. Reason and Bradbury claim that "dialogue and development can flourish... in cooperative relationships" (2008: 3). Koshy also acknowledges that AR is cooperative and should be conducted by all participants in the pursuit of a shared goal. He claims that AR is "undertaken by individuals, with a common purpose" (2010: 1).

3.1.1.1.2. Research dimension

Elliott (2010) argues that the unity of action and theory depends on how to fuse the concepts of action and theory. Elliott states that AR "transforms rather than simply preserves" (1991: 49) old theories. According to him, action researchers do not solely reinterpret existing theories. The action dimension is the departure point and forms the foundation of potential theories. Williams and Burden see the importance of suitability of theories to individuals. They claim that people "will make their own sense of the ideas and theories with which they are presented in ways that are personal to them" (1997: 2). According to McNiff and Whitehead (2011), the process of generating new
knowledge is the process of building new theories. Researchers’ action tends to shorten the distance between their current status and their proposed world which is comprised of their new theories. Therefore, in their opinion, AR aims to both generate new knowledge and transform the newly generated knowledge into new practice.

As Mertler (2009) argues, the process of AR does not guarantee its results. In other words, the results of AR cannot be fully expected in particular ways because AR is not conclusive. This characteristic of AR indicates that theories “can and should be generated through practice” (Brydon-Miller et al, 2010: 7). McNiff and Whitehead are in line with Mertler and Brydon-Miller et al in terms of theory generation. They argue that the to-be-generated theory of AR is “uncertain, tentative and open to modification” (2011: 32). The arguments in this paragraph partially reflect the reason why AR is often seen as not transferable. The issue regarding transferability is to be dealt in detail in 3.1.1.3.

3.1.1.2. Cyclical nature

AR is emergent and consists of action-reflection cycles. Carr and Kemmis state that “a self-reflective spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting is central to the action research approach” (1986: 162). The emergent nature of AR is also pointed out by Reason and Bradbury (2008) who claim that AR is a living and emergent process. They argue that cyclical nature of AR ensures the change and development of AR and allow its participants to enhance their understandings of practices. Like the others, Mertler explains why, by its very nature, action research has to be cyclical. According to him, “in order to develop adequate rigor, it is critical to proceed through a number of cycles” (2009: 25). It is through these cycles that research instruments are employed.

Koshy considers AR as a continuous learning process. He argues that the learning process of AR allows researchers to “learn and also share the newly generated knowledge with those who may benefit from it” (2010: 9). In his view, researchers construct their knowledge through action in order to solve problems in question. He claims that an AR project is a continuous process. This continuity engenders the cyclical nature of AR and, as Hui and Grossman argue, “formulates and interprets research questions rather than testing the hypotheses in a statistical way” (2008: 2). AR cycles are often represented by similar recurring steps in similar sequences. Its
early cycles act as foundation for its later cycles. The later ones embrace the early ones and develop participants' stories until deeper and more accurate understandings are generated. The basic cyclical structures of AR have been represented by, for instance, Elliott (1991), O'Leary (2004), McNiff and Whitehead (2011). In Figure 3.1, Elliott (1991: 71) shows that the general idea of research should be allowed to shift in a process of identifying and clarifying the general idea, reconnaissance, constructing the general plan, developing the next action steps, and implementing the next action step(s). In Figure 3.2, O'Leary (2004: 141) states that each cycle should include a process of 'observe', 'reflect', 'plan' and 'act'. His cyclical model shares a great amount of similarity with that of McNiff and Whitehead's. McNiff and Whitehead (2011: 9) agree that an action cycle contains 'observe', 'reflect', 'act', 'evaluate' and 'modify' which is indicated in Figure 3.3. Irrespective of the forms of presentation, all the above-mentioned cyclical figures illustrate that AR projects are cyclical and consists of a few cycles heading towards the improvement of practitioners, participants and the context within which they are all situated. O'Leary's statement below exemplifies the cyclical nature of AR. She makes two points. Firstly, she argues that that AR cycles ensure AR process to "converge towards better situation understanding and improved action implementation". Secondly, she claims that AR cycles "are based in evaluative practice that alters between action and critical reflection" (2004: 140). Her second point is in line with that of Noffke and Somekh who argue that AR "integrates the development of practice with the construction of research knowledge in a cyclical process" (2010: 289).
IDENTIFYING INITIAL IDEA

RECONNAISSANCE (fact finding & analysis)

GENERAL PLAN

ACTION STEPS 1

ACTION STEPS 2

ACTION STEPS 3

IMPLEMENT ACTION STEPS 1

MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION & EFFECTS

'RECONNAISSANCE' (explain any failure to implement, and effects)

REVISE GENERAL IDEA

AMENDED PLAN

ACTION STEPS 1

ACTION STEPS 2

ACTION STEPS 3

IMPLEMENT NEXT ACTION STEPS

MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION & EFFECTS

'RECONNAISSANCE' (explain any failure to implement, and effects)

REVISE GENERAL IDEA

AMENDED PLAN

ACTION STEPS 1

ACTION STEPS 2

ACTION STEPS 3

IMPLEMENT NEXT ACTION STEPS

MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION & EFFECTS

'RECONNAISSANCE' (explain any failure to implement, and effects)

REVISE GENERAL IDEA

AMENDED PLAN

ACTION STEPS 1

ACTION STEPS 2

ACTION STEPS 3

IMPLEMENT NEXT ACTION STEPS

Figure 3.1. Elliott's model of Action Research (1991: 71)
Figure 3.2. O’Leary’s cycles in Action Research (2004: 141)

Figure 3.3. McNiff and Whitehead’s Action Research cycle (2011: 9)
3.1.1.3. Contextualisation or transferability

There are two perspectives on AR in terms of its transferability to other contexts. The focus of the first perspective is that an AR project concentrates on practitioners' immediate concerns. It responds to a specific enquiry. By 'specific', AR is meant to create localised solutions. It responds to the need for change in a particular context. In this sense, an AR project is more often than not qualitative and investigates human beings' feelings or behaviour within a particular group. It explores the reasons for such feelings or behaviour. When practice is emphasised, AR focuses on its local context rather than any generalisation to other contexts. Levin and Greenwood state that AR is "context-bound and addresses real life problems" (2001: 21). Johnson (2005) is in line with Levin and Greenwood and states that action researchers seek to understand exactly what is going on with a particular AR project. Campbell and Groundwater-Smith point out that AR has the tendency to deal with localised practices. According to Reason and Bradbury, AR "seeks to illuminate the local" (2010b: vii-viii). Koshy (2010) also agrees that AR is situation-based research. Its focus is on a specific context. Elliott states that the context-bound nature of AR advocates practitioners' active initiatives, continuous and reflective efforts when they have "a felt need to initiate change, to innovate" (1991: 53). Mills argues that AR does not "seek to define ultimate truths" (2011: 114) and generalisation "is not the nature of the research" (2011: 113)

The focus of the second perspective is that the context-bound nature of AR does not rule out its transferability. In AR, contextualisation and transferability are not mutually exclusive. As O'Leary argues, the outcomes of AR are "likely to be applicable in alternative settings or across populations" (2004: 63). Her argument on transferability of AR is in line with the concept of third-person AR, which is suggested by Reason and Tobert (2001) in 3.1.2. Lomax claims that AR projects have an application elsewhere. She believes in action researchers' ability "to communicate their insights to others with a useful result" (1994: 118). Kember (2000) suggests that researchers face similar issues in related contexts are likely to share their research outcomes or lessons. Pine also points out the importance of sorting and collating AR projects. Like Kember, he also indicates that similar AR studies tend to "yield a generalizable body of practical knowledge" (2009: 91). Lomax indicates that the AR process has to be transparent in order for "knowledgeable outsiders to judge whether the research is relevant to their situation" (1994: 119). Robinson and Norris are in line with Lomax in terms of action researchers' responsibility for making their research projects generalisable. According
to them, action researchers are the key forces who make generalisation happen. They should “provide sufficient contextual information” in their AR projects in order for other researchers to “judge about whether or not any particular case can reasonably be generalised to their own specific field of practice” (2010: 312).

3.1.1.4. Values base

AR is value-laden research. The implementation of AR is a process of constituting and realising the values of practice. Brydon-Miller et al “reject the notion of an objective, value-free approach to knowledge generation” in AR (2010: 5). McNiff and Whitehead argue that AR is conducted by participants “who try to live in the direction of the values that inspire their lives” (2011: 28). Reason and Bradbury indicate that AR “is values-oriented”. They explain that these values should “concern the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the wider ecology in which we participate” (2008: 4). Their argument is elaborated in the five characteristics of AR, which are interdependent and emerge from reflections on practice. ‘Knowledge in action’ refers to the production of practical knowledge which is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives and, through which AR contributes to the increased well-being of human persons and communities. ‘Participation and democracy’ refers to the participative and democratic nature of AR. ‘Human flourishing’ refers to the development of individuals’ skills of inquiry or practice, and abilities to generate knowledge. In this sense, AR cannot be programmed in advance. Rather, it requires constant practical efforts. ‘Emergent developmental form’ refers to creating new forms of understanding. In this sense, AR is not a still status. Rather, it is illustrated by constant changes which refer to a form of becoming rather than being. This element is central to Reason and Bradbury’s five characteristics in Figure 3.4 (2008: 5).
Riggall is mainly concerned with AR values in terms of participants’ personal reflection, their emancipation and their social practice. He states that AR can be “a means of liberating the oppressed, an approach for improving any social practice/context and a tool for personal reflection” (2009: vii). Noffke and Somekh point out “three dimensions: the professional, the personal and the political”. According to them, the professional dimension of AR tends to “improve what is offered to clients in professional settings”. The personal level of AR tends to “develop greater self-knowledge and a deeper understanding of one’s own practice”. The political level of AR tends to emancipate participants or “combat oppression” (2010: 291).

Some scholars focus rather on individual value aspects of AR. The first group concentrate on action researchers. McNiff and Whitehead are concerned about whether or not action researchers’ involvement in AR can “influence their own or other people’s learning”. (2006: 12) Brydon-Miller et al point out “the basic values which underlie our common practice as action researchers” (2010: 6). According to them, during the process of AR, what action researchers can show is a respect for, a belief in and a commitment to other participants and their practice. The second group are more concerned about social justice. Pine argues that AR “is rooted in a concern for social justice, which was and is the foundation for action research” (2009: 36). The social nature of AR is also emphasised by Carr and Kemmis who argue that AR is “to improve the rationality and justice” of researchers, the researched and the research settings in
which they are situated (1986: 162). Koshy fundamentally agrees with Carr and Kemmis in terms of the social values of AR. Koshy (2010) sees the important role which AR plays in improving educational practice. He argues that the purpose of AR is to work towards practical outcomes. Emancipation is the key focus of the third group. According to Stenhouse, emancipation is not only about “the right of the person to exercise intellectual, moral and spiritual judgement”, but also about “the passionate belief (in) virtue of humanity” (1983: 163). His statement is two-fold. Firstly, he acknowledges that participants of AR have the right to be part of AR and work on their improvement. Secondly, they should believe that there is always room for improvement. Campbell and Groundwater-Smith also support the idea that AR should “have a capacity to be emancipatory”. For them, AR should lead participants “to a greater understanding of the many great challenges facing various communities today” (2010a: xxvii). Mills makes the terms of critical action research and emancipatory action research (EAR) interchangeable. For him, “liberation through knowledge gathering” is the goal of AR (2011: 6). According to him, EAR should be democratic, participatory, empowering and life-enhancing.

3.1.2. Manifestations of action research

As a research methodology, AR can be traced back to the 1930s when John Collier began to focus on democratic cooperation in the treatment of important social issues (Neilson, 2006). As AR has become more established in a rich and diverse range of contexts, different models and categorisation of AR have emerged all of which espouse the principles set out in section 3.1.1 with somewhat varied emphases. It should be noted that these different categorisations of AR do not suppress one another but are simply emphasised by the different configurations of the principles of AR.

The first manifestation is based on the scale of AR. Reason and Torbert claim that AR falls into first-, second-, and third-person AR. Their categorisation is based on contextualisation of AR. According to them, first-person AR “addresses the ability of a person to foster an inquiring approach to his or her own life”; second-person AR “engages a face-to-face group in cooperative inquiry”; third person AR tends “to engage with whole organizations, communities and countries” (2001: 2). By first-person AR, they mean the voice of the researcher as an individual and his/her “assessment of effects in the outside world while acting”. By second-person AR, they mean researchers’ cooperation with other participants. By third-person AR, they mean the
network which is woven by interactions of individual AR projects. Third-person AR tends to create a broader impact on communities and societies. It stresses the transferability of AR. These terms of first-, second- and third-person AR have been adopted by some researchers, such as, Chandler and Torbert (2003), Reason and Bradbury (2001; 2008) and Torbert and Taylor (2008). These three terms are also broad enough to embrace certain researchers’ understandings of AR. Kemmis and Wilkinson’s definition of AR could be interpreted as second-person AR. They argue that AR should be “a cooperative social process of learning” (1998: 22). Burns argues that AR has recently been either “a form of individual reflective practice or group-based processes” (2007: 14). According to him, individual reflective practice is conducted by the action researcher and benefits the action researcher. Burns’s categorisation is in line with first- and second-person AR of Reason and Torbert. Riggall argues that AR should be conducted as “a powerful tool for linking and bonding together the often separate camps of teachers/practitioners” (2009: xii). Her suggestion is consistent with third-person AR. Martin (2008) suggests the term large scale action research. According to her, large scale AR projects often refer to community projects or political projects. They also provide people with the opportunities to learn from one another. The enormous scale of these projects maximises its transferability and reflects the essence of third-person AR.

The second manifestation is based on the aims of AR. Baumfield divides AR into four types. Her categorisation is based on practical values of AR. Each type emphasises and caters for specific subjects. The first type of AR indicates that “enquiries (of AR) are the key to the development” of AR. When enquiries are considered as personal interests or research questions, AR requires the compulsory involvement of teacher researchers in AR. They “access strategic and reflective thinking” and reflect on “their activities in holistic as well as analytic ways”. The second type of AR focuses on the “intention and process” of AR. This type of AR is “sometimes described as therapeutic”. It aims to engage participants in AR, and allow them to improve “through the process of enquiry” and “impact on their practice”. The third type is “policy-driven”. Unlike the second type, it aims to generate knowledge and seek research outcomes. Its main intention is for people to “share good, or best, practice... and the exchange of ideas”. Compared with the other three types, the fourth one seems more pragmatic. It is designed to “concentrate on the audience”. In order to “create public knowledge”, audience is central to this type of AR and is its “prime concern” (2008: 7-9).
The third manifestation focuses on the initiators of AR. Noffke and Somekh concentrate their argument on who initiates action in an AR project. They argue that AR can be conducted by either “the participants themselves or researchers working in collaboration with them” (2010: 289). According to them, the participant-researchers can either carry out “the whole AR process” or the AR process with “an outside facilitator who has expertise in supporting” them. In the second type of AR, researchers who are not originally part of the research settings co-work with other participants. They together “negotiate the boundaries and parameters of the study”. However, the workload of other participants is proportionally insignificant as researchers do not “expect them to undertake substantial amounts of additional work” (2010: 290).

The fourth manifestation focuses on the values of AR. Mills outlines two types of AR: critical action research and practical action research. His emphasis of categorisation is on the social value of AR and the action dimension of AR. Critical action research expects all participants to benefit from AR projects. It focuses on their personal “liberation through knowledge gathering” (2011: 6). According to him, critical action research should embrace all the components of socially responsive, democratic, participatory, empowering and life-enhancing. In Mills’ opinion, practical action research is approach-oriented and mainly about the roles that teacher researchers play in AR projects. It focuses on how teacher researchers carry out their research projects. In practical action research, teacher researchers are trusted and considered to be “autonomous” enough to “determine the nature of the investigation” and “reflect on their practices” (2011: 7). Teacher researchers, as decision makers, decide the details of AR cycles, such as areas of focus, data collection techniques and data analysis method. Mills’s practical action research is consistent with Sagor’s definition of AR. The latter one claims that AR is “conducted by and for those taking the action”. He explains that the primary intention of AR is “to assist the actor in improving or refining his or her actions” (2011: 1).

The fifth manifestation focuses on how theory is tested in AR. Sagor argues that AR is conducted either to “to determine what is currently occurring” or “to test a hypothesis” (2011: 7). According to him, AR either deals with present issues or future issues. Regarding present issues, he points out that the lens of AR is “on the system or approach that is currently in place and trying to understand its workings” (2011: 9). In terms of dealing with present issues, Hui and Grossman are consistent with Sagor. They argue that AR is a present tense activity. They claim that AR “puts together a plan
of actions to resolve an existing, imminent problem at hand" (2008: 2). The occurring issues which action researchers are attempting to understand are the foci of descriptive research. The second type of AR, claimed by Sagor, is quasi-experimental research which tends to test a theory. Its "lens is trained on the efficacy of a particular innovation and its impact" (2011: 9).

According to different forms of the 'action' dimension carried out in AR, McNiff and Whitehead (2011) argue that the AR family falls into two groups: interpretative AR and self-study AR. Interpretative AR acknowledges that action researchers are insider researchers and remain part of their research enquiries. However, researchers' own personal development is not highlighted. They seek to understand what happens to other participants or research settings. Self-study AR emphasises the central role of action researchers who are referred to as knowledge makers and story-tellers. They raise their concerns and explain why they have them. They gather evidence to find out reasons for their concerns and act accordingly. They are "able to offer their own explanations for what they are doing" (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011: 11). After testing the validity of their claims, they suggest the significance of their research projects. Their own practices have impact on other participants and the self-study AR settings. The two scholars claim that the fundamental difference between the two groups is that interpretative AR is an externalist form of theory. It is about what other participants can do and what can be done for interpretative AR settings. Conversely, self-study AR is internalist research. Central to self-study AR are action researchers whose stories are represented by research cycles. They develop their practices along with other participants.

### 3.1.3. Current study and action research

As indicated in 3.1.1, AR is comprised of and supported by four principles. These principles are also the foundation of the current study. The setting of the current study is a Chinese as modern language course which takes place at the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin. It lasts for five to seven weeks each year. Students are post-primary school teachers, undertaking a one year Initial teacher education (ITE) programme. This group of students are defined as student teachers (STs). Due to the nature of this learning group and learning setting (which is to be explained in 3.4), contextualisation is the primary focus. However, transferability is not ruled out as this
study may have implications for other similar programmes or learners in a similar context. Figure 3.2 in 3.1.1.2 is representative of the cyclical nature of AR. As it shows, cycle 1 contains the stages of observation, reflection, plan and acting. The same steps repeat in the subsequent cycles. The current study includes three cycles which are believed to provide sufficient data and significant evidence for claiming the outcomes of the study. In the current study, each cycle corresponds to one Chinese as modern language course per academic year. The current AR study consists of both action and research dimensions. Action is conducted by both the teacher researcher and STs in cooperation, represented by the teacher researcher’s teaching and STs’ Reciprocal Peer CoTeaching (RPCoT). The research dimension or knowledge generation is represented by the data which are collected from student reflective journals and final reports. In each cycle, the teacher researcher gathers and analyses the data. He also reflects on the STs’ learning, their learning process and learning outcomes in order to find any indication for modification in the following cycle(s). Both the action and research dimension are supervised and supported by the course co-ordinator. The current study tends to realise values in the aspects of participants’ personal reflection, their emancipation and their social practice. This intention is in line with Riggall’s (2009) the values base, mentioned in 3.1.1.4.

The current study aims to investigate a classroom enquiry which is indicated by Sagor (2011) as present tense AR. STs are participants in the course and provide the research data by conducting AR. In this sense, it is cooperative and falls into Reason and Torbert’s (2001) second-person AR. The teacher researcher is an insider researcher. He is a necessary part of both the action and research dimensions throughout all three cycles. However, the main intention of the current research study is to discover a better course structure for STs. The teacher researcher’s own personal development is not highlighted. In this sense, this study can be categorised as interpretative AR which is suggested by McNiff and Whitehead (2011). The current study is initiated by both the teacher researcher and the course co-ordinator. The teacher researcher is the front practitioner in the classroom and works with STs directly. The co-ordinator supervises the whole study. This way of conducting AR is described by Noffke and Somekh (2010) as insider research, but with outside facilitator’s support. The current study also tends to create a better learning structure in order to help STs to gain better understandings of personal and professional practices. This intention is described by Mills (2011) as critical action research. Overall, the current AR study deals with a present enquiry. It is insider research but is supervised by the outside co-
ordinator. It is cooperative and seeks social values as its main focus is on the research practice and the impact of the practice on STs. There are new student cohorts every year within this course. However, this fact does not disobey the nature or validity of this AR study which runs according to the AR principles set out in 3.1.1. There are two reasons for this. First, the cyclical nature of this study ensures sufficient knowledge generation and necessary adjustments, as mentioned in 3.1.1.2. Second, when all the three groups are new to the AR study, the assumptions are that three groups have the same departure point and are collectively similar in cultural background, and personal and professional motivations for participating in the study. After a careful examination of the manifestations of AR, the teacher researcher feels that the current study cannot be represented by any of them individually.

Figure 3.5 shows that central to this research study are the Chinese course and STs in a cycle per year. Each cycle includes the four steps of design, implementation, reflection and redesign. The teacher researcher who acts as both the teacher and researcher works with both STs and the course co-ordinator. Based on the data collected from student journals and reports, the teacher researcher reflects on STs' learning process and the course progress in each cycle and suggests appropriate amendments for the subsequent cycle(s). The total number of three cycles represents the cyclical story of the research enquiry and leads to testing hypothesis when the outcomes of this AR study emerge.

Figure 3.5. Cycles of the current action research study

D = design of AR, I = implementation of AR, R = reflection on AR, RD = redesign of AR, C = cycle, TH = teacher researcher's testing of hypothesis
3.1.3.1. Action dimension

As set out in section 3.1.1.1, the action dimension was about improving practice. As set out in section 3.1.1.1.1, action contained four elements: human condition, cooperation, plurality, and inhabiting the world. These four elements were testified by the current AR study. Human condition referred to the fact that action was carried by human beings. The teacher researcher worked as the researcher in this sense. STs' action was mainly represented by the peer teaching sessions which they were involved in. Another participant was the course coordinator. Cooperation indicated that people were related to each other when they lived together. As shown in sections 4.1 and 5.1, a cooperative relationship existed both between peer learners and peer teachers, and among coteachers within coteaching groups. As stated in section 3.3.1, the teacher researcher acted as the researcher and, worked with both STs and the course coordinator. Their continuous negotiation with each other and communication with each other was constantly developed. Plurality indicated the diversified nature of human beings. This diversity occurred among STs and served as the basis for the RPCoT setting in the current context. As pointed out in section 5.1.2, peer learners learnt from peer teachers in the current RPCoT setting. As set out in section 5.1.1, coteachers shared knowledge with each other within coteaching groups. But also due to the diversity between coteaching groups, coteaching outcomes were often not thoroughly predictable. This supported that outcomes of actions could not be entirely foreseen. Human beings inhabited the world and developed the settings which they are situated in. This was referred to as the social side of the actions. Not only did human beings live in this world, but also tended to develop their lives and make them more democratic. This aspect of action was testified by two factors in the current research study. On the one hand, as set out in sections 5.1 to 5.4, this research context helped STs to develop their sense of cooperation, sense of motivation, reinforce their language learning, and gain professional development as school teachers. On the other hand, the teacher researcher together with the coordinator developed this research study and generated the findings which provided them with better insight into the ITE programme. In addition, they did not deal with their findings in a closed manner or confine them to contextualisation. Throughout the research study, they published a number of articles to share their thoughts with other academics. And the teacher researcher's PhD thesis would be another source to introduce their insights to other people.
3.1.3.2. Research dimension

As set out in section 3.1.1.1, the research dimension was about offering descriptions and explanations for what the researchers were doing as and when they improved practice. As set out in section 3.1.1.1.2, the research dimension was mainly people made their own sense of the ideas and theories with which they were presented in ways that were personal to them. The process of generating new knowledge was the process of building new theories. AR transformed rather than simply preserved old theories. Researchers' action tended to shorten the distance between their current understandings and their new understandings. In section 3.1.1.1.2, the research dimension aimed to lead to the generation of new theory. Section 3.2.4.4 further introduced the generation of theory in terms of qualitative analysis. Theories were described as statements about relationships between concepts and provided a framework for understanding, explaining and predicting phenomena. Theory generation moved beyond description to explain and conceptualise the data. The outcomes of theory generation enabled research projects to relate to broader social processes and to contribute to understanding and influencing broader social processes. However, the findings of this study suggested that research dimension did not go beyond the stage of data discussion. As sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4, suggested, the findings of this research study were linked with the impact of RPCoT on cooperative relationship among STs, STs' motivation, peer teachers' competences, learner autonomy as peer teachers, and STs' professional development. All these themes were further developed from chapter 4, in which data had been presented. Section 6.1 proved how all the themes in this context were interconnected. The findings which were derived from this particular research context described statements about relationships between concepts or provided a framework for understanding, explaining and predicting phenomena. These findings would be possibly related to broader social processes and to contribute to understanding and influencing broader social processes. As introduced in section 3.1.4.1.2, AR researchers were meant to share research experiences and outcomes with others as their findings could be valuable to others in similar circumstances or facing similar problems.

3.1.3.3. Cyclical nature

As set out in section 3.1.1.2, AR was emergent and consisted of a few cycles. Its cyclical nature demonstrated a self-reflective spiral of cycles of planning, acting,
observing and reflecting. AR cycles were often represented by similar recurring steps in similar sequences. Its early cycles acted as foundation for its later cycles. The later ones embraced the early ones and developed participants' stories until deeper and more accurate understandings were generated. Through different cycles, researchers constructed their knowledge through action in order to solve problems in question. The cyclical nature also formulated and interpreted research questions rather than testing the hypotheses in a statistical way. Participants who developed adequate rigor were allowed to enhance their understanding of practices. The cyclical nature of teacher researcher was explored in this study. This study began in 2009 and continued to take place until 2011. Namely, there were three cycles. Each research year was represented by a cycle. Each cycle included the four steps of design, implementation, reflection and redesign, as set out in 3.1.3. However, as data showed, a few issues occurred in cycle 1 when STs taught the new content in their peer teaching sessions. Peer learners expressed concerns about peer teachers' level of subject knowledge and pronunciation competence. As presented in 4.3.1.2, peer teachers lacked content knowledge of Chinese and struggled to explain things, make up and etymology of a Chinese character or the grammatical and syntactic structure of phrase. There was a call for a validity figure to appear in the classroom instead of peer teachers covering 80% of the classroom activities. As the same time, the workload of the preparation for teaching the new content made peer teachers feel overwhelmed. In response to STs' feedback, the teacher researcher and the coordinator reduced the proportion of RPCoT in cycle 2. The teacher researcher as the teacher taught the new content while RPCoT groups in turn covered RPCoT in the form of revision at the beginning of each lesson. RPCoT in cycle 2 accounted for about 20% of classroom activities. The teacher researcher' facilitation to RPCoT groups remained the same. The course structure in cycle 3 repeated the one in cycle 2. That is to say, the RPCoT structure in cycle 2 was mature enough to be retained for the last cycle. As set out in section 1.2, the research questions led the study. However, as introduced in section 3.3.3, the teacher researcher was open to embrace new codes and themes throughout the three cycles. As shown in chapter 4, the cyclical nature of this study allowed the teacher researcher to collect the data from three cycles and ensured sufficient and convincing data presentation. The cyclical nature provided knowledge and necessary adjustments. Data analysis was made when the research study was carried out. As mentioned in section 3.3.3, the data analysis included the stages of coding and presentation, and discussion. The stage of coding and presentation was repeated between cycles. With
the progression of the study from cycle 1 to cycle 3, data analysis became more and more rigorous until the teacher researcher finalised the themes for data presentation.

3.1.3.4. The teacher researcher’s professional development

This action research has also demonstrated the teacher researcher’s professional development as a Chinese teacher. Throughout the three research cycles, the teacher researcher constantly observed and reflected on STs’ involvement in RPCoT. The teacher researcher also continuously reflected on STs’ feedback on his involvement in classroom. His constant reflection enhanced his maturation in three aspects: teacher attitude and classroom teaching. Section 6.2.1.4 has been adapted to one of the teacher researcher’s published articles (Liu & Devitt, 2013a). The teacher researcher’s professional development throughout his research study is also represented by his academic activities. The three cycles have witnessed the iterative process of the teacher researcher’s professional development from a teacher-learner to a better teacher. The teacher worked with STs cooperatively. He let them take responsibility for their own learning and maximise their say on the classroom teaching. When working with STs, he placed himself in the position of a learner. At the same time, he benefited from the outcomes of student participation. STs' teaching and their qualitative feedback on his teaching allowed him to reflect on his professional development, the beginning of which was marked by cycle 1. In cycle 2, he maintained his advantageous features and absorbed the mechanisms, inspired by STs. He repeated the same procedure in cycle 3. He kept carving his development of professional identity from cycle 1 to cycle 3. This process indicates the fact that his development was generated on an on-going basis and connected within experience. The findings made him believe that a classroom can be used for the classroom teacher’s education. Students’ feedback strengthened the teacher’s understanding of his attitude, teaching structure, endeavour to develop students’ learning ability. The current teacher researcher’s professional development has created a framework for other classroom teachers to construct their understanding of “how to be”, “how to act” and “how to understand their work and their place in society” (Sachs, 2005: 15).

3.1.3.4.1. Reflection

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1 See appendix 10

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The teacher researcher's reflection on his professional growth took place throughout this research study. Although he was the classroom teacher, he, to a great extent, experienced a transformation from being an apprentice to a more matured teacher. When he began teaching Chinese, he was deeply influenced by his own lectures. As he stated, when he saw his (evening) students drop out, he felt embarrassed. But, on the other hand, he "began to think (maybe for the first time) what the reason for the failure was." (Quoted from Methodology chapter for PhD transfer interview in September 2010; Before cycle I of this project). Throughout the three cycles, the teacher researcher attempted to encourage STs to enjoy learning. He tended to share his classroom power with them and let them be active classroom participants in different cycles. He allowed them to help each other and work cooperatively in order to create an environment, in which they would activate their thoughts and make meaningful decision. Towards the end of cycle 3, his efforts were categorised as three 'Lets': let students participate actively (MA, 2011: 4), let students think laterally (EA, 2011: 2) and let students feel like being part of a team (EA, 2011: 1). The classroom teacher's reflection on action was also validated by his teaching philosophy:

_Teaching activities should embrace all oral, visual and kinaesthetic learners. Teaching Chinese is not only about language acquisition, but also about learners' the development of their learning ability, namely, learner autonomy. Therefore, my teaching activities focus on how to adapt to learners' needs and help them to learn actively. I strive to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning and find solutions to their learning tasks._ (Quoted from the classroom teacher's teaching philosophy, written in May 2012)

3.1.3.4.2. Teacher attitude

Attitudes are often considered as precursors to behaviour, and research has revealed that teachers with more positive attitudes towards their students are more likely to modify and adjust their instruction and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students with a range of abilities (Swain et al, 2012). In this study, positive attitude was an advantageous feature of the teacher researcher. The research cycles showed how he was reminded of this by STs and how he maintained and reinforced this feature. In cycle 1, some STs noticed the teacher researcher' positive attitude towards the Chinese course and pointed out its positive impact on their learning.
From observing Weiming, one group member felt his attitude in the classroom was very refreshing. His positive, friendly attitude was present every week and this certainly had an effect on the classes learning. It was an enjoyable experience attending Chinese classes every week. He made the class feel at ease and never apprehensive to ask a question. (Group 09.3, 2009)

Positive feedback in cycle 1 encouraged the teacher researcher to continue to do the same in cycle 2. As some STs put it, the teacher researcher "seems really nice and is patient with us and seems to enjoy teaching us which definitely contributes to a nice learning atmosphere" (AN, 2010: 1). His encouraging manner created a positive learning feeling for STs and is represented by this quote: "It is also very encouraging to be praised by (the teacher researcher) when I get something right" (VA, 2010: 4). He continued to receive positive feedback about his positive attitude from STs in cycle 3. As some student pointed out, "(the teacher's) enthusiasm, good nature and positive attitude was, as always, important in creating a good atmosphere" (SN, 2011: 4). Data also showed that his positive attitude had an impact on STs' affective factors. When some STs felt that she did not study enough, they said "the teacher is so nice ... and I feel guilty because I'm not spending as much time as I should be" (MLA, 2011: 3). A number of STs considered his positive attitude as a momentum for them. A representative quote went: "I wanted to do (peer teaching) well for him as much as myself after the meeting as I could see his enthusiasm for the subject as well as his desire to help us" (JN, 2011: 4).

3.1.3.4.3. Classroom teaching

The reading of student journals and reports in cycle 1 made the teacher researcher aware of both the positive and negative sides of RPCoT, conducted by STs. As set out in 4.2.2, the positive side included teaching approach, teaching techniques, lesson delivery and the use of target language. The most notable facet was that STs as peer teachers managed to make their teaching content relevant to their peers' lives. STs used different teaching techniques to support their implementation of RPCoT. In this cycle, two major negative points on STs as peer teachers were the teaching pace and teaching amount. Teaching pace was mainly thought of being too fast and the inappropriate amount of teaching content was sometimes overwhelming.
In cycle 2, the teacher researcher took into consideration everything he had experienced in cycle 1. Relevance of teaching content to STs' lives was his focus. And his effort was appreciated by them. "The content we used for the dialogues were always relevant to our personal lives" (Group 10.2, 2010). He tried to implement various and suitable activities in this cycle in order to make language learning more interesting and meaningful. His endeavour maintained STs' interest. The following quote is representative of STs' general response. "I found the matching exercise (for countries and their capitals) particularly good as sufficient time was afforded for me to work through the problems and in most cases arrive at a solution. It was also fun" (JN, 2011: 2). However, STs would have wanted to see a greater variety of activities/exercises (Group 10.3, 2010), less use of target language (VA, 2010: 2), more explicit of learning objectives (Group 10.5, 2010), less vocabulary (Group 10.1, 2010), a stronger emphasis on Chinese culture (Group 10.1, 2010) and, more repetition and recycling of language (Group 10.1, 2010; Group 10.4, 2010).

In response to STs' feedback in cycle 2, he made certain adjustment to his teaching. Regarding the learning objectives, one ST put it, "(the classroom teacher) had given us clear objectives at the beginning" (MIA, 2011: 1). Classroom repetition was increased in this cycle and played an important role in helping STs to learn. In this regard, a ST stated that "we use a lot of repetition in Chinese class which I find really helpful" (YE, 2011: 4). In cycle 3, target language continued to be widely used in the classroom, but accompanied by English occasionally. A general feedback revealed that most STs liked this way of using target language. The following quote explains the advantage of the major use of target language in the classroom. "[The classroom teacher] balanced the two languages in a way that really suited his "audience" (FA, 2011: 1). STs learnt Chinese language through a cultural environment. This arrangement was mainly actualised through classroom activities, including games, worksheets, video and etc. The outcomes of learning language with culture were treated by most STs as a success which was referred to by the following quote. "The activity with the peanuts and chopsticks was a great idea! It gave us a few minutes of fun to break up the lesson and let us digest what we had learned before moving on. The task itself was culturally relevant so not a waste of time." (GN, 2011: 4).

3.1.4. Limitations of action research
The teacher researcher identifies and addresses both theoretical and practical challenges in this AR context. Theoretical challenges focus on issues of validity and transferability. Practical challenges include the timeframe for the study and the theme of the AR data. In the current study, the teacher researcher minimises the effects of some of the limitations through the study by adopting the following solutions to his study.

3.1.4.1. Theoretical challenges

3.1.4.1.1. Validity

As mentioned in 3.1.1.1, one of the AR dimensions is ‘research’ which refers to new knowledge generation. It is the product of ‘action’ dimension and also the foundation on which ‘action’ is based on. However, as pointed out by Mertler (2009), action-related ‘research’ does not indicate its immediate outcomes. AR requires researchers’ careful and objective treatment of the research data. As Koshy describes, “interpretations (of AR) can be very personal in nature and achieving a consensus may not always be possible within action research” (2010: 152). Therefore, validity can be the primary issue relative to AR projects.

Levin and Greenwood argue, the validity of AR knowledge is measured according to whether problems can be solved and participants improve their practices and their “control over their own situation” (2001: 22). Koshy claims that validity of AR knowledge should be supported by both “sound and robust data collection and the consensus of accurate interpretations” (2010: 152). Mertler emphasises the importance of the cyclical nature of AR projects. According to him, “with each subsequent cycle, more is learned, and greater credibility is added to the findings” (2009: 25). Taking all the above arguments into consideration, the teacher researcher attempts to carry out the three cycles, collect and analyse rich data, and constantly reflect on his practices in order to examine the progress of the researched.

3.1.4.1.2. Transferability

Transferability of findings to other research contexts or a wider setting is also a limitation of AR. As mentioned in 3.1.1.3, the main and general intention of AR projects is not to prove or disprove any hypotheses. Rather, it is to generate new theory based
on cyclical discoveries. AR projects often focus on particular groups or contextualised settings. Participants' involvement and response to the projects serve as data sources to knowledge generation. The assumptions are that research findings are based on and affected by the extent to which participants take part in AR. Often, the findings are considered to reflect on a certain group of participants or certain research settings. They do not seem to have transferability to different contexts.

As Riggall points out, action researchers should consider "sharing research experiences and outcomes" which can "provide valuable lessons to others in similar circumstances or facing similar problems" (2009: xii). The teacher researcher maintains that the current project is not just refined to this particular research setting, but also tend to impact on other similar settings or a wider population. This aspect is also mentioned in 3.1.1.3.

3.1.4.2. Practical challenges

3.1.4.2.1. Timeframe

As mentioned in 3.1.1.2, AR is cyclical in nature. This nature requires that AR be conducted over a certain span of time. Sometimes the duration of the implementation of AR can take up to a few years. Action researchers, especially novice action researchers, need to be aware of this reality in order to avoid any disappointment during the process of AR. As pointed out in 3.1.1.1, AR contains the dimensions of both action and research. In each cycle, its action dimension consists of stages of design, implementation, reflection and redesign. The action through cycles tend to lead to the research dimension. Due to the complicated nature of the process of AR, time needs to be spent wisely on each stage in each cycle.

In this context, the AR project takes place once a year for five to seven weeks. This arrangement allows the teacher researcher to spend several weeks implementing AR and the rest of the year collecting and analysing data, reflecting on the project and redesigning the project. The constant action, conducted through three cycles, allows him to gradually generate new knowledge leading to the outcomes of this project.

3.1.4.2.2. Action research data
As mentioned in 3.2.1.1, AR is a process of generating new knowledge. Its data indicate how AR takes place and how the outcomes appear gradually and naturally. Therefore, AR data are collected from recurrent events. As AR is often contextualised and its participants vary between AR projects, the data which are produced by AR participants are often flexible and responsive to specific research contexts. Consequently, action researchers who collect and analyse AR data are likely to present them in different ways. Issues regarding research data will be explained in more detail in 3.2.

The AR data in the current study are collected from STs’ weekly reflective journals and final group reports. This is an annual activity due to the nature of the Chinese course. The AR conducts a systematic analysis of the data as qualitative data and adopts some basic steps, such as coding, data presentation and data analysis as set out in 3.2. As AR indicates itself, its data vary from project to project. The teacher researcher in this context discovers the cyclical story of the Chinese course, following the response of STs to the course, feedback from the course co-ordinator and his self-understanding of and reflection on the AR project. Although, as discussed in 3.2.1, qualitative data, including the data of AR, focus on natural settings, understandings, inductive analysis and designing methods, the AR approach allows the teacher researcher to minimise subjectivity.

3.1.5. Ethical issues in action research

As in any other type of research, AR requires that its researchers be aware of and deal with certain ethical issues. As Campbell and Groundwater-Smith state, they should be “concerned with justice, respect, inclusion, rights and responsibilities” (2010a: xxxiii). According to Pine, “the elements of human subjects protection such as permissions, confidentiality, privacy, and truth telling” need to be present throughout the research process; the research-related “risks as well as the possible benefits” need to be described to participants; “all participants need to be treated with respect and care; “all relevant people, committees, and authorities” need to be consulted; researchers need to be “explicit about the nature of the research process for the beginning, including all personal bias and interests”; “the contributions of participants to the research” (2009: 86) need to be acknowledged. According to them, before a research project begins, participants should be made fully aware of the nature of the research project, the form
of their involvement and how their data will be used. Consent form should be signed by
them without any external pressure. Their participation should take place on a
voluntary basis. Participants' data should be kept safe and confidential. The researcher
should avoid any risk, discomfort from happening to participants or minimising their
occurrences where certain negative variables are unavoidable. Participants may
withdraw from the research project without any negative impact on their study or
personal life. Essentially, the principles raised by Nolen and Putten are to protect the
researched and guarantee their dignity and well-being. They are consistent with those
provided by the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin who claims that the basic
tenets of ethical research include "a commitment to the well-being, protection and
safety of participants and a duty to respect the rights and wishes of participants" (2011).

In each cycle of the current project, the consent form is given to STs before their data
are used for the teacher researcher's research work. The data for this research project
are collected from STs' weekly reflective journals and final reports. Before the data are
used, STs are made fully aware of the nature of the current research work. STs' part-
icipation is voluntary. Their data are treated confidentially, and presented
anonymously and in a coded format. STs' original journals and report are kept in a
secure location in the School of Education. The only people who have access to the
data are the teacher researcher and the modern language course co-ordinator. When
analysing the data, the teacher researcher tries all possible means to ensure that he
has minimised any risks, discomfort that might occur to STs. STs can seek further
clarification and information on the use of their data or stop the teacher researcher from
using their data at any time if they change their mind. The findings of the research
project are carefully analysed and examined. They are also read and approved by the
co-ordinator and have been presented at different conferences in order for the teacher
researcher to receive objective feedback. Its objectivity has been controlled to a
maximum level. To the best of the teacher researcher's knowledge, no regulations
have been violated during the process of the project. The current project has been
passed by the Ethics Committee of the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin.

Apart from focusing on participants, O'Leary argues that ethical issues should embrace
the production of new knowledge. She explains that action researchers should
"recognize and balance subjectivities; give accurate research accounts; act within the
law; and develop required expertise" (2004: 50). Mills is in line with O'Leary in terms of
generating new knowledge. Mills argues that "ensuring the accuracy of your data is a
central concern of action research” (2011: 34). McNiff and Whitehead suggest the technique of ‘arranging for critique’. According to them, the “guidance and critique” of a supervisor or critical friends play important roles in “extending thinking and developing new insights” or making decision about “continuing existing assumptions” (2011: 165-166).

As stated in section 1.1, the researcher acts as both the classroom teacher on this Chinese course and the researcher of the current project. He naturally becomes a member of both the research setting and the research process. He and STs form the unity of the classroom activities. His experience is constructed by the research setting as the external reality and this experience enters a relationship with belief which is construed as the possibility of him making meaningful assertions about the research context (Loxley & Seery, 2008). Due to his direct involvement in the learning process, he fully acknowledges the challenges which he faces as an insider researcher in the current research project. He contends with his own pre-conceptions, and those aspects STs have formed about him as a result of their shared history (Mercer, 2007). He follows the principles of action research which were set out in section 3.1.1. He strives to maximise the objectivity and validity of the research outcomes. First, he never tries to influence any STs’ practices of writing journals or group reports. Second, he does not begin the data collection stage in each of the three cycles until the journals and reports are fully marked by the course coordinator. In order to achieve good marks, STs may strive to reflect on their learning process according to the marking criteria designed by the coordinator for the ITE programme. That is to say, the results of STs’ writing of journals and reports are independent from the teacher-researcher’s academic activity. All the ethical issues in AR which were set out in section 3.1.5 will be used to guide the current research.

3.2. Qualitative data

3.2.1. Principles of qualitative research

Bryman and Burgess (1999) consider qualitative research as a strategy of social research. Qualitative research deploys multiple methods and aims to interpret social phenomena, set out natural settings for the collection of data and generate theory. Berg argues that qualitative research answers various questions about “how humans
arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings" by examining "various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings" (2009: 8). Flick (2009) recognises the variety of approaches and methods of qualitative research. He claims that qualitative research is essentially to choose appropriate methods and theories and to recognise and analyse different perspectives. Qualitative researchers' reflections on their research are necessary component of and momentum for knowledge production. Marshall and Rossman (2011) argue that qualitative research is conducted in naturalistic settings. According to them, qualitative research is emergent, evolving and interpretive. Its focus is on context. It is employs multiple methods in order to respect the humanity of the participants in the study. Along the lines with Flick, and Marshall and Rossman, the assumptions are that the four foci of qualitative research are mainly natural settings, understandings, inductive analysis and designing methods. They show a broad coverage of qualitative research, but they are not mutually exclusive.

3.2.1.1. A focus on natural settings

Qualitative researchers are intended to discover human beings' lives in real situations and understand the meanings of natural environments. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) point out the role of qualitative researchers. According to them, qualitative researchers are concerned about how participants think and act in their everyday lives and how they attach the meanings of their behaviour to their lives. These two researchers emphasise researchers' investigation into both human beings and the events relative to them. The focus on natural settings requires that qualitative researchers retain original research settings and consider them as an important component of qualitative research, respect the values and interests of the researched and interpret research outcomes gradually and inductively.

3.2.1.2. A focus on understandings

O'Leary points out that qualitative researchers often seek deep understandings of local settings. She argues that "many researchers' goal is often rich understanding that may come from the few, rather than the many" (2004: 100). Deep understandings of qualitative research are not isolated from the objectivity of qualitative research. As Hogan et al argue, these understandings are "not based on one person's point of view, or biased towards one particular outcome" (2009: 4). They argue that researchers'
understandings are based on their findings from research projects. In this sense, the findings must be rigorous. They acknowledge that objectivity is a relative balance and argue that "objective reality can never be fully captured" (2009: 6). Qualitative researchers tend to gain knowledge of the meanings of the behaviour of the researched and research settings. Like Hogan et al, Taylor and Bogdan (1998) also emphasise the meaningfulness of research projects. They look at the researched and research settings holistically. They think that there is something to be learned in all settings and groups. Qualitative research does not aim to explore a variety. It is intended to explore outcomes of a specific case-study. Flick is in line with Taylor and Bogdan. He claims that qualitative research is intended to analyse concrete cases. According to him, the setting of these analyses "start from people's expressions and activities in their local contexts" (2009: 21). Marshall and Rossman are consistent with Flick. They claim that qualitative research "is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of people" (2011: 2). Hennink et al also consider that qualitative research should focus on human beings' experiences as well the contexts in which they are situated. They point out that qualitative research is "to understand or explain behaviour and beliefs, identify processes and understand the context of people's experiences" (2011: 17).

3.2.1.3. A focus on inductive analysis

As soon as qualitative research projects begin, qualitative researchers begin to seek to understand research components, including both settings and participants, analyse the significance of data and constantly generate research theory. This inductive process refers to the assumption that qualitative research focuses on how qualitative researchers seek to generate knowledge or theory from the data they collect during the research process. This process of qualitative research can constantly engender new ideas about qualitative research itself and new possible ways of coding data, categorising data and generating knowledge. Hogan et al acknowledge that qualitative research "can be to examine, support or refute exiting theories". They point out that qualitative research can "develop new understandings, modify or extend prior theoretical frameworks, or even formulate new theories" (2009: 6). In this sense, inductive analysis is represented by 'grounded theory' which emphasises research process. According to Bryman and Burgess (1999), grounded theory is "an iterative process in which researchers collect data, theorise about data and examine theoretical reflections. Grounded theory also focuses on how things develop naturally and how
theory is generated based on the data collection from natural settings. As Hennink et al (2011: 208) point out, grounded theory is process-oriented. According to them, grounded theory "offers an implicitly inductive approach to data analysis, whereby codes, concepts and theory are derived from the data" (2011: 209). Charmaz and Bryant point out that grounded theory is a process of generating theory. It is used for "theory construction, rather than description or application of existing theories" (2011: 292). The inductive nature of qualitative research not only refers to generation of theory, but also suggests social change. Cox et al point out that qualitative research "can and should work for society and help to bring about beneficial social change" (2008: 4).

3.2.1.4. Designing methods

Human beings' behaviour and their settings can vary in qualitative research. As qualitative research deals with complex issues in subjects' everyday lives, Flick points out that designing methods of qualitative research should be "open to the complexity of a study's subjects" (2009: 15). Flick explores two foundations for designing methods in qualitative research. According to him, qualitative research should be designed to respond to participants' individuality and adapt to different research methods. Qualitative research methods need to be responsive to thorough considerations of different indications of same events taking place at different times. The methods employed in qualitative research need to take into account various and changeable feelings and interests of all participants. These methods also need to respond to the relationship between participants and research settings. They need to be designed to tailor specific emphases of qualitative research at different stages. Hogan et al argue that qualitative research is a multifaceted approach. According to them, qualitative research can be carried out from different perspectives. They point out that qualitative research data are often represented by words and qualitative research is conducted "through an analysis and synthesis of people's words and action" (2009: 3). The multifaceted nature of qualitative research leads to the employment of multiple research methods in qualitative research.

3.2.2. Qualitative research and action research

Bryman and Burgess claim that the focus of AR "on practice in a particular setting puts it in the tradition of qualitative research" (1999: xxxviii). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) recognise that AR is one of qualitative research traditions. Berg points out that AR
"embraces principles of participation, reflections, empowerment, and emancipation of people and groups" (2009: 247) and helps them to improve their social situation or condition. According to Berg (2009) and Johnson (2008), it is a mistaken belief that AR has to be conducted from a quantitative perspective. They both point out that AR projects aim to develop understandings of problems and suggest possible solutions to them. Marshall and Rossman (2011) consider AR as part of qualitative research on society and culture which is one of the three major genres of qualitative research they point out. The principles of qualitative research share a great similarity with those of AR in terms of research participants, research settings, inductivity of research and variety of research methods.

Some researchers have mentioned the cyclical nature of qualitative research, which, however, differs from that of AR. Berg (2009) suggests a qualitative research model which combines both the research-before-theory and theory-before-research models. In Berg’s model, researchers begin with ideas and arrive at dissemination of theory. Researchers, with every two steps forward, take a step or two backward before proceeding any further. According to him, researchers spiral forward, never actually leave any stage behind completely. According to Berg, any repetition or spirals which occur in qualitative research do not represent the whole process of qualitative research from introducing ideas to dissemination of theory. See Figure 3.6 for Berg’s spiralling research approach (2009: 26).

According to Hennink et al, qualitative research is conducted as a process which "involves interlinkages between research design, data collection and data analysis" (2011: 24). Qualitative research consists of three stages which are individually cyclical. These three stages are chained together and respond to each other. These three
individually cyclical components form a whole qualitative research project. See Figure 3.7 for Hutter-Hennink's qualitative research cycle (2011: 4). AR also contains a few cycles, each of which, however, represents the combination of design, implementation, reflection and redesign. See 3.2.1.2 for more detailed explanation about the cyclical feature of AR.

![Figure 3.7. Hutter-Hennink’s qualitative research cycle (2011: 4)](image-url)

3.2.3. Data collection tools in qualitative research

Qualitative data are collected during the process of qualitative research. O'Leary argues that qualitative data are "represented through words, pictures, or icons analysed using thematic exploration" (2004: 99). According to Hennink et al, the research methods which are employed in qualitative research include "in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies" (2011: 9). According to Marshall and Rossman, the four primary methods for gathering data in qualitative research are “participating in the
setting, observing directly, interviewing in depth and analysing documents and material culture" (2011: 137). The fundamental similarity of AR to qualitative research indicates that data collection in qualitative research provides guidance for that in AR. In the current study, all the data collection tools are acknowledged and considered. However, only reflective journals and group reports are adopted for the study.

Journals play important roles in collecting qualitative data. According to Wagner, they mainly include logs, diaries and reflective journals. Logs are “a regularly kept record of facts or performance relating to certain occurrences” (1999: 263). The scholar suggests that diaries express authors’ thoughts and feelings. But, compared with logs, they are more personal and interpretive. Reflective journals are written continuously and document the development of participants’ inner word across the different stages of qualitative research. They are intended to be spontaneous accounts. For Nunan, “diary and journal entries provide insights into processes of learning which would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain in any other way” (1992: 123).

Kemmis and McTaggart (1982) argue that diaries can consist of feelings, reactions, interpretations, reflections, ideas and explanations. Bryman and Gurgess suggest that diaries are less structured documents which “contain a record of the experience of the writer” (1999: xxii). They summarise that diaries can be kept by both researchers as a means of recording data or the researched whose diaries serve as a qualitative research data source. Bailey (1990) points out three types of diaries which document participants’ language learning experiences, their reactions to academic courses and teachers’ language teaching experiences. According to him, diaries should be “documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analysed for recurring patterns or salient events”. For him, diaries should be kept on a regular basis. Candidness is essential factor in keeping diaries. The analysis of diaries should take place in a recurring form. This analysis is a gradual and on-going process. Nunan (1992) enumerates benefits of diaries which can accrue in teacher education programs. According to him, diaries can expose students’ learning problems relative to course content. Diaries encourage students to take charge of their learning and tend to develop their autonomy as learners. Diaries help students to exchange ideas with teachers. Researchers gather data from diaries in order to understand how learners undertake their learning processes. This view is echoed by Dornyei (2007) who claims that regularly kept diaries help to investigate students’ social, psychological, and physiological processes within everyday situations.
Reflective journals can be completed both individually and in groups. In order to distinguish these two subtypes of reflective journals, individual reflective journals retain the term 'reflective journals' in this study. Group reflective journals are called group reports. Holly points out that reflective journals consist of "intentional personal and professional reflection, analysis, planning and evaluation" (1989: 26). According to Nunan (1992), reflective journals are based on respondents' personal experience. Keeping reflective journals can help students to strengthen connections between course content and their own teaching, to create peer interaction. Bryman and Gurgess argue that reflective journals are "structured, descriptive contain objective notes" (1999: xxii). Holly claims that a reflective journal is a reconstruction of experience. According to her, when reflection is a key element of reflective journals, they "serve purposes beyond recording events and pouring out thoughts and feelings" (1989: 20). Cranton indicates that reflective journals "are a way for the educator to see inside of the mind of the learner" (2006: 147-148). For her, keeping reflective journals encourages reflection and can be a powerful strategy for initiating transformative learning. She also argues that "the articulation of assumptions, thoughts, and feelings about issues and the consideration of alternatives" (2006: 147) should be emphasised in keeping journals. Chan (2009) claims that reflective journals are used to record ideas, personal thoughts and experiences, as well as reflections and insights of the researched. According to her, the reflective components of journals help students to deepen their thoughts and challenge their old ideas with new incoming information. The Study and Learning Centre at RMIT University (2006) in Australia suggests that reflective journals are a series of writings. They are responsive to life experiences and events and possibly reflect on what has happened. According to them, reflective journals produce objective data which describe a situation, reflective data which describe respondent's reaction to qualitative research, interpretive data which explain what respondents have observed, decisional data which makes make a plan about what respondents will act in the future.

Group reports are considered as a type of qualitative research data collection tool. Northen argues that interaction develops "the dynamic interplay of forces in which contact between persons results in a modification of the behaviour and attitudes of the participants" (1969: 17). Boud claim that the emphasis of group work is "the setting of open-ended but focused tasks to students who work together to solve them, thus encouraging interdependent learning" (2001: 4). According to Grassman, group work is an international method and "focuses on and supports efforts toward developing
satisfying interpersonal situations" (2009: xxii). She claims that people who are different enrich one another and their difference provides rich opportunities for interaction and learning. She exemplifies how a group can work on feedback cooperatively. According to her, group feedback can "assist members in maintaining their boundaries, eliminating assumption, and expressing their reactions to one another's behaviours" (2009: 146). Like group feedback, group reports are carried out by group members cooperatively. The process of conducting group reports is also a process of communication. Group members share perspectives on a common task. The process of writing group reports allows participants to deepen their understanding of their own learning. Group members are intended to benefit from each other in terms of perspectives on learning process, learning outcomes and learning strategies.

3.2.4. Qualitative analysis

Miles argues that qualitative data are “rich, full, earthy, holistic, real” and produce “serendipitous findings and the adumbration of unforeseen theoretical leaps” (1979: 190). Flick claims that qualitative research is inductive rather than deductive. According to him, qualitative research “is increasingly forced to make use of inductive strategies instead of starting from theories and testing them” (2002: 2). Walker and Myrick claim that qualitative data analysis tends to “organize and reduce the data gathered into themes or essences, which, in turn, can be fed into descriptions, models, or theories” (2006: 549). Berg argues that the analysis of qualitative data is conducted “to discuss in detail the various social contours and processes human beings use to create and maintain their social realities” (2009: 9). Hennink et al use the term analytic cycle to refer to qualitative analysis. According to them, this stage of qualitative research “comprises the core tasks of qualitative data analysis: to develop codes, describe and compare, categorize and conceptualize, and develop theory” (2011: 201). According to them, there are three stages of data analysis in qualitative research. The first stage is coding which begins as soon as data collection begins. When coding reaches a certain point, a second stage of data collection takes place. This stage is represented by data presentation. A third stage is data discussion.

3.2.4.1. Coding
Roberts points out that coding "refers to how the data are sorted, categorized by codes which summarize or order the material" (2002: 11). For him, coding is a continuous process throughout qualitative research projects and a foundation for formulating concepts and theory. Hennink et al state that "a code is an issue, topic, idea, concept, process that is evident in the data" (2011: 230). According to them, there are two reasons for coding. First, it helps researchers "to identify the range of issues raised in the data, and understand the meanings attached to these issues by participants" (2011: 217). Second, coding helps researchers to locate data entries among rich qualitative data. According the them, "the process of coding involves carefully reading data" (2011: 227). This process allows researchers to gain a deep insight into the meanings of data and identify key points or issues in the qualitative data as a whole. The stage of coding paves the way for the next stage of presentation of data.

3.2.4.2. Presentation

Hennink et al recognises that presentation "involves identifying codes with similar characteristics and grouping these together into meaningful categories" (2011: 245). For him, categorising data involves grouping coded data and identifying their main themes which refer to different aspects of qualitative research process, understood by researchers.

3.2.4.3. Discussion

Morse argues that a concept in qualitative research refer to: an attribute or a part of another concept, or a concept within a theory or a theory in itself. According to her, concepts may be "treated with varying degrees of abstraction, from a part of the whole to the entire theoretical scheme" (2004: 1388). She points out that concepts are not independent from each other in qualitative research data, but are related to each other. In terms of criteria of developing concepts, she argues that a concept must be "linked to data, or contextualized" as well as "be abstract enough to be described and used independently from the context" (2004: 1390). Berg points out that concepts are needed to generate theories in qualitative research. He argues that concepts "are symbolic or abstract elements representing objects, properties, or features of objects, processes, or phenomenon" (2009: 22). According to him, defining relevant concepts in a given research process or project is a necessary stage of generating theories. Discussion is based on presentation and further developed from presentation. Hennink et al argue
that discussion involves “considering the relationships between these categories, to view the data as a whole and develop a conceptual understanding of the issues” (2011: 245). Strauss points out that characteristics of theory include discussion. According to him, “there can’t be theory without concepts” (2011: 3).

3.2.4.4. Generation of theory

Berg explains that theories are made up of propositions which “are statements about relationships between concepts” (2009: 23). Hennink et al point out that a theory in qualitative research is more than a set of findings. It “provides a framework for understanding, explaining and predicting phenomena” (2011: 259). According to them, theory generation “links the evidence (or codes) into an explanation (or theory) of what happened and why, therefore moving beyond description to explain and conceptualize the data” (2011: 262). They argue that theory generation leads to research findings to a more conceptual level. The outcomes of theory generation enable research projects “to relate to broader social processes (and) to contribute to understanding and influencing broader social processes” (2011: 260).

3.3. Current study

3.3.1. Action research cycles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009 (cycle 1)</th>
<th>2010 (cycle 2)</th>
<th>2011 (cycle 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of STs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of report groups</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Beginners (except one)</td>
<td>Beginners</td>
<td>Beginners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly hours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>A Chinese native speaker</td>
<td>A Chinese native speaker</td>
<td>A Chinese native speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPCoT weight</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPCoT content</td>
<td>Teaching new content</td>
<td>Peer revision</td>
<td>Peer revision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Description of course structure in 3 cycles
As Table 4 illustrates, this Chinese course took place for two hours a week for seven weeks at the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin in both 2009 and 2010. For economic reasons, the course was shortened to 1 hour and a half per week, 5 weeks in total in 2011. The students are all beginners (apart from one student in 2009 who had basic Chinese before attending this course). There were fifteen students in both 2009 and 2010, sixteen students in 2011. Cycle 1 was conducted in 2009. Cycle 2 was conducted in 2010. Cycle 3 was conducted in 2011. There were six RPCoT groups of 2 to 3 students and one peer assessment group of 3 students in cycle 1. There were five RPCoT groups of three in cycle 2. There were three RPCoT groups and one peer assessment group in cycle 3. RPCoT accounted for about 80% of classroom activities in 2009. RPCoT groups in turn covered new learning content and the native Chinese teacher provided a summary of the new content. When they prepared for their teaching, the teacher provided necessary facilitation. See Figure 3.8 for RPCoT structure in cycle 1. One of the major suggestions made by the students in 2009 was that they would prefer more input from the Chinese teacher directly due to peer teachers' linguistic competences, including their level of subject knowledge and pronunciation competence. Peer teachers also felt overwhelmed by their preparation workload. There was a reduction in the proportion of RPCoT in 2010 in response to student feedback. The teacher taught the new content while RPCoT groups in turn covered RPCoT in the form of revision at the beginning of each lesson. RPCoT in 2010 accounted for about 20% of classroom activities. The teacher also provided facilitation to RPCoT groups when they were preparing for RPCoT. The course structure in 2011 was the same as that in 2010. See Figure 3.9 for RPCoT structure in cycle 2 and cycle 3. The language achievement for the Chinese course in cycle 1 and cycle 2 are mainly as follows:

- "Recognize familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.
- Understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.
- Interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. (Students can) ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.
- Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.
- Write a short, simple post card, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form" (Council of Europe, 2001: 26).
Towards the end of the course in cycle 3, students are expected to be able to:

- Speaking: Make short conversations and, ask and answer simple questions.
- Listening: Comprehend some sentence-length utterances in situations where the context aids understanding.
- Reading: Recognise 12 to 15 Chinese characters; Read simple conversations with help of Pinyin.
- Writing: Write 10 to 12 Chinese characters; Write simple conversations with help of Pinyin.

**Figure 3.8.** RPCoT structure in cycle 1

**Figure 3.9.** RPCoT structure in cycle 2 and cycle 3

### 3.3.2. Research instruments in the current study

The current AR study is not prefigured or predicted. Its outcomes are discovered throughout the process of investigation. New understandings emerge constantly. When AR is the appropriate approach to carrying out the study, qualitative data are chosen to
be the data type of it. As stated in 3.2.2, AR is a branch of qualitative research. Qualitative research embraces AR. This view is supported by Riggall who states that AR "lends itself to qualitative research methods such as interviews, focus groups, observations, diaries, journals, video, photographs, etc" (2009: x). When data analysis takes place continuously through research cycles, the focus of data is gradually switched from the presentation of data and to the discussion of data. According to 3.2.1.4, each qualitative research study may require one or more than one qualitative research methods. Therefore, AR methods can also be variable as far as they provide reliable information about research practices and evidence for research outcomes. The nature of AR is referred to as the investigation into participants' practice and research settings. In this study, the teacher researcher wants to enter into STs' inner worlds and investigates in-depth their motivations, feelings and reaction to the Chinese course in question. The teacher researcher tells how STs' feedback serves as the evidence for him to improve the components of the study in question. Throughout the AR study, that individuals' experiences vary leads to the fact that their feelings about their involvement, reactions to it and reflections on it change from time to time. Reflective journals and final reports are employed in this study. The choice of these data collection tools is considered within the context of the research study. These analysis tools produce a vast amount of data and indicate STs' perceptions of their learning process and learning outcomes. They serve to seek the answer to the research questions which were set out in 1.2. Across the three cycles in this study, collected data are dealt with through three stages, i.e. coding, data presentation and data discussion. See Figure 3.10 for the selection of methodology for this study, based on O'Leary (2004: 100).
3.3.3. Detailed procedure of data analysis in the current study

This section focuses on a detailed description of the data analysis undertaken in the current study. According to Figure 3.10, data analysis moves from coding to data presentation and to data discussion. The inductive findings direct the stages of data analysis, and in turn suggest the refinement of research questions.

3.3.3.1. Coding and data presentation

In this study, the data collection and data analysis are a simultaneous action. With the progression of the study from cycle 1 to cycle 3, data analysis becomes more and more rigorous. In each of the three cycles, the teacher researcher receives STs' data in
Word format. He first reads the data and codes them in their original Word format. He then transfers the coded data onto an excel spreadsheet under certain themes. The excel spreadsheet is used in order to manipulate data in a flexible way. The codes and themes of preceding cycles are used for succeeding cycles. Figure 3.11 shows an overview of the first two stages undertaken throughout the three cycles. The overview leads to presenting the research data. As mentioned in 3.2.1, qualitative data are emergent, describe participants acting in events and provide the reader with conclusions which make sense. Making sense out of the data is a complex and interactive process that ensures valid and reliable findings. AR is cyclical and creates emergent findings. The teacher researcher, therefore, codes and categorises the collected data by comparing the codes and the themes among cycles. They are reviewed and edited from cycle to cycle to check for validity and reliability. Consequently, the codes and themes in succeeding cycles often involve certain changes, based on the review on the previous cycles. The teacher researcher aims to remain open to embrace any codes or themes which he is previously not aware of yet. The process of coding and categorising themes in each cycle responds to the research questions. This process does not finish until the coding and presentation of data for all the three cycles are finalised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle I: Raw data → Codes &amp; Themes</th>
<th>Responding to Research questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle II: Raw data → Codes &amp; Themes</td>
<td>Responding to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle III: Raw data → Codes &amp; Themes</td>
<td>Responding to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.11. Coding and presentation of data, responding to research questions

As stated in 1.1, this Chinese course was part of the ITE programme. Therefore, some questions in STs' journals and final group reports were not directly related to the current study. However, among the answers, relative to this study, data were carefully coded in cycle 1. The tentative themes were derived from these codes. Due to an

2 See Appendix 1 for the journal and final report format.
unexpected reason, the group report of cycle 1 was received by the teacher researcher in the following year after the journal data of cycle 2. Therefore, prior to the group reports of cycle 1, the teacher researcher coded and categorised the journal data of cycle 2. He gained similar themes. However, after reading STs’ final reports of cycle 1 and coding the data, he created many more themes. That is to say, the number of the themes was increased from 12 to 27. Many of the 27 themes overlapped with the two sets of themes, derived from the journal data of cycle 1 and cycle 2. Included in the overlapped themes were assessment, classroom teacher, motivation, peer teaching, PowerPoint and target language. The main reason for the increase of themes was that the codes, derived from the journal data of cycle 1 and cycle 2, were vague. Consequently, they led to a partial representation of data. Inspired by the new findings, the teacher researcher went back to the previously generated data and revised them. The carefully revised themes responded to the research questions more thoroughly, as they included themes, such as learner autonomy, learning strategies, STs’ professional development, STs’ suggestion on the Chinese course, STs’ reflection, STs’ transformation, and etc. The subsequent data coding resulted in similar data presentation until the presentation was finished after cycle 3. After the process of comparison and refinement, he obtained a list of themes which would reflect the recurring patterns across the three cycles.  

When the teacher researcher began to present the data in his thesis, he experienced a process of grouping and re-grouping themes. He originally attempted to group themes under the two large categories of STs as peer teachers and STs as peer learners. His supervisor agreed that all the themes were valuable for his research work. However, she helped him to realise that the original attempt caused some confusion and duplication in terms of theme titles. Therefore, he began to re-group themes. The regrouping of themes occurred several times throughout the data presentation and it did not finish until the finalised format was created. The finalised version showed four main themes, such as cooperative relationship among STs, RPCoT as a motivating factor, RPCoT for language learning, the consequences of RPCoT on STs’ professional development. Each of the main themes included a few sub-themes.  

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3 See Appendix 2 for the overview of themes, categorised from both journals and reports, from cycle 1 to cycle 3.  
4 See Appendix 3 for the finalised themes and sub-themes.
3.3.3.2. Data discussion

The presented themes were further discussed. This process aimed to answer the research questions by linking back to the reviewed literature. See Figure 3.12 for the discussion of data, answering research questions. The research questions investigated how STs could learn Chinese and how they could gain professional education in a RPCoT setting. If the answers to the research questions were referred to as the ceiling of a building, then the themes would be the pillars holding up the ceiling. The presentation of data which was carried out under different themes was a description of these pillars. The discussion further introduced these pillars. The previous description was transformed into a discussion of how these themes actually held up the ceiling, why they were all the necessary components for this task and how they were interconnected. In order to make a thorough understanding, the discussion was made both vertically and horizontally. In terms of the vertical discussion, each of the themes was analysed individually and in detail. The vertical discussion was the foundation for the process of data discussion. The horizontal discussion interconnected different themes and answered the research questions. The horizontal discussion was based on the vertical discussion and played a role in strengthening the interconnection between themes. The interconnection of themes was part of the panorama of the current research study. See Figure 3.13 for the discussion of themes through both vertical and horizontal discussions.

Figure 3.12. Discussion of data
Central to the process of data analysis was the teacher researcher’s attempt to demonstrate his solid understanding of his research work and lead readers to understanding what he has understood. In doing so, he began with raw data, collected from journals and group reports, and followed the three stages of data coding, data presentation and data discussion. The raw data were produced by STs who were the initial contributors to the data analysis. Their concrete actions explained what happened in this RPCoT setting. Data coding and data presentation demonstrated the process by which the teacher researcher arrived at the themes in question. Discussion was conducted to induce and further discuss the themes. These three stages were conducted by the teacher researcher who investigated into this RPCoT setting. His efforts made it possible for the future readers to gain insights into this research study. Therefore, this process contained stages from STs’ feedback to the teacher researcher’s data analysis, and then to the inferences about future research practices of similar kinds. This was a path from the concrete data to the abstract thesis. See Figure 3.14 for the overview of the path from the concrete data to the abstract thesis.
3.4. Summary

This chapter has examined the two concepts of AR and qualitative data. The principles of AR focused on its 'action dimension' and 'research dimension', cyclical nature, contextualisation with possible generalisation, and values base. The manifestations of AR were explained according to its scale, aims, initiators, values and theory generation. The relationship of AR with the current study revealed why AR was needed for this study. The limitations and ethical issues in AR were also indicated. The principles of qualitative data focused on natural settings, understandings, inductive analysis and designing methods. As pointed out, AR was treated as a type of qualitative research. Data collection tools in qualitative research included observations, interviews, questionnaires and journals. Qualitative analysis consisted of coding, presentation, discussion and generation of theory. It was explained what the process of data analysis in this study was and why reflective journals and group final reports were chosen as the research tools for this study. The process of data analysis involved both STs as initial data contributors and the teacher researcher and the study investigator. The teacher
researcher's ultimate objective was to allow future researchers to gain insights into his research study.
Chapter 4. Data presentation

This chapter presents the research data under different themes. The term Reciprocal Peer CoTeaching (RPCoT) is adopted from the introduction paragraph in chapter 2. It is central to the presentation of data in this chapter. Section 4.1 explains the motivation for presenting the data under different themes rather than cycle by cycle. Section 4.2 introduces cooperative learning among student teachers (STs), including cooperative learning both in reciprocal peer teaching and in coteaching. Section 4.3 covers the impact of RPCoT on learner motivation of both peer learners and peer teachers. Section 4.4 deals with the impact of RPCoT on the language learning of both peer learners and peer teachers. Section 4.5 demonstrates the impact of RPCoT on STs' professional development in terms of their borrowing ideas on teaching, self-understanding and understanding of others, and integrating the learner's perspective. Each of the themes, presented in detail in this chapter, provides a different lens for exploring the implementation of RPCoT in this Chinese course. 50 STs have produced 277 weekly journals and 20 report groups across the three cycles. The implications of these themes for the impact of RPCoT on STs' learning and professional development will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.1. Motivation for presenting data under different themes

The cyclic nature of Action Research (AR) presents an analytic dilemma for the researcher. Data can be presented in cycles according to the AR process. Alternatively, the data can be presented in aggregate looking at development of themes across all cycles of the research emphasising cross-cutting themes. In this thesis, the latter method of data presentation was selected as the cross-cutting themes were the main pillar for discussion and also linked cycle 1 with the other two cycles. Cycle 2 and cycle 3 consolidated the model. It was mainly in cycle 1 where some students were concerned about peer teachers' level of subject knowledge. They were not satisfied that peer teachers would perform well when they are required to teach the new content.

The ability to explain something, often the meaning, make up and etymology of a Chinese character or the grammatical and syntactic structure of phrase proved to be understandably beyond the realm of the peer teachers. (Group 09.1, 2009)

5 See Appendix 4 for the finalised themes and sub-themes.
6 Appendixes 5 to 9 present the research data under different themes, relevant to this study.
They were therefore unable to provide the scaffolding which is essential for new language learners in order to take them from a place of monosyllabic engagement to being able to produce phrases or sentences in oral and written form. (NZ09, 2009: W6)

In response to student feedback in cycle 1, the current research structure was adjusted after cycle 1. RPCoT groups taught the new learning content in cycle 1 and conducted revision in cycle 2 and cycle 3. Also as students in cycle 1 mentioned, they would need more input from the classroom teachers, the teacher’s involvement was increased. As stated in section 3.3.1, RPCoT accounted for about 80% of classroom activities in cycle 1 and 20% in cycle 2 and cycle 3 respectively.

As to be set out in section 4.4.1.2.3, a few other negative factors of peer teaching occurred across the three cycles despite of the adjustment of the proportion of RPCoT and peer teachers’ teaching content after cycle 1. However, the overall findings showed that the collected data in this study were consistent across the three cycles. There were no significant differences between each of the main themes across the three cycles in this study. Therefore, the data were presented under different themes as opposed to cycle by cycle.

4.2. Cooperative learning among student teachers

In this study, cooperative learning took place in two circumstances. The first circumstance was associated with the relationship between peer learners and peer teachers throughout the implementation of RPCoT. STs acted as both peer teachers and peer learners in turn and, learnt with each other and from each other. The second circumstance was related to the coteaching process. When preparing for coteaching sessions, coteachers cooperated with each other, contributed to the group’s work and benefited from their participation in coteaching sessions. These two types of cooperation were not isolated from each other. Rather, they were complementary to each other and together helped all STs to participate in RPCoT and, at the same time, benefit from their involvement in RPCoT.

4.2.1. Cooperative learning in reciprocal peer teaching

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As the majority of STs indicated, in terms of the reciprocal nature of RPCoT, cooperative learning was referred to as a cooperative relationship between peer learners and peer teachers. When STs cooperated with each other as a unified team and helped each other to learn, they created the wholeness of the RPCoT setting, consisting of different weekly sessions. The cooperative relationship glued the whole class together and fostered a team spirit.

_We found that the experience of peer teaching created a common bond in the class._ Students encouraged their peers while they taught the lesson. (Group 09.8, 2009)

I've really enjoyed the course, it's been good fun and the class have got on really well together and we've all been very encouraging and supportive of each other as we did the peer-teaching. I think peer-teaching can be a good source of structure to a class and a group and _add positively to group dynamics._ (Di10, 2010: W6)

It certainly highlighted to us the benefits of co-operative learning. We noticed that it _increased the sense of solidarity_ between learners and this was found to be motivating by everyone in the group. It may therefore form the basis for developing exercises and activities in our own classes since those of us who were involved in teaching found the experience to be beneficial for our own learning and assimilation of content. (Group 11.2, 2011)

Some peer learners were aware that they and peer teachers belonged to the same class. They wanted peer teachers to perform well and tried their best to help them to deliver successful peer teaching sessions. As a result, they gave support to peer teachers during peer teaching sessions. Peer learners' support was demonstrated by their proactive participation in peer teaching sessions.

_To a huge extent, there was a sense of camaraderie in the peer teaching scenario, as fellow student teachers one wished them to do well, supported them and the class as a whole, made an extra effort to listen/participate in their activities._ (Group 11.5, 2011)

The fact that we are all _in the same boat_ made us all feel more comfortable, and we _wanted all of our peers [teachers] to do well_ and thus participated and engaged well in each session. (Group 11.1, 2011)
I felt a need to take an active part in the class, offering answers and speaking as frequently as I could. This was due to the respect I have gained for my classmates when I was peer teaching; they seemed to take an active role in the lesson, and I was therefore keen to return the favour. (KT09, 2009: W6)

As set out in section 1.1, all STs in this study were student language teachers in post-primary schools. In terms of learning Chinese, they were all beginners. Peer teachers and peer learners had similar cultural and professional backgrounds in this context. As many peer learners pointed out, they and peer teachers were classmates. When they learnt language with and from peer teachers, their cooperative relationship with peer teachers diminished the traditional boundary which would exist between students and the classroom teacher. The equal status between peer learners and peer teachers allowed peer teaching to create a positive classroom atmosphere. Peer teaching sessions were described by many peer learners as interesting, enjoyable and encouraging. The positive atmosphere was mainly created by the peer teachers’ teaching activities and it helped peer learners to enhance their knowledge of Chinese.

An excellent and enjoyable lesson during which I felt interested and felt I achieved a lot. The effort put in and the delivery of the lesson was reflected in the mood in the classroom, the peer teachers leading the enthusiasm for the activities which was, in turn, mirrored by the students. I found myself motivated before, during and after the class. (PM09, 2009: W5)

I said that last week’s lesson taught me that a positive atmosphere in the classroom is paramount and I think this week’s lesson reinforced this idea. More than any of the other weeks, I felt that the peer-teaching was very well done this week and more importantly very enjoyable. As I mentioned above, using the brush and playing the game in teams were the 2 most enjoyable parts of the lesson. (BZ10, 2010: W6)

Initially there was peer teaching where the teachers revised what we had learnt in the previous week’s lesson. This was very enjoyable and helpful. I loved the Christmas card idea during the peer-teaching, it was both fun and a way to learn! (DI10, 2010: W4)
For most peer teachers, they wanted to help peer learners to learn. They considered peer learners as their friends and showed a great amount of respect for them. This friendly relationship between peer teachers and peer learners motivated peer teachers to make their teaching sessions well-prepared and come up with interesting ways to present them. The impact of group solidarity on peer teachers' teaching performances will be introduced in section 4.3.2.

4.2.2. Cooperative learning in coteaching

As set out in the first paragraph of section 2.2, coteaching included two dimensions: coteachers' contributions to coteaching and the benefits they gained from their preparation for coteaching. Coteachers' cooperative learning in coteaching was represented by how they worked together on their teaching plans and how they shared workload with each other in order to deliver successful coteaching sessions together. According to some coteachers' feedback, the positive process of cooperative learning among them within coteaching groups played important roles in helping them to conduct their coteaching sessions and achieve their teaching objectives (section 4.2.2.1). Despite the major successful outcomes of coteaching, a few coteachers were also involved in unsuccessful coteaching sessions (section 4.2.2.2). According to them, these unsuccessful sessions were directly linked with their ineffective cooperation among themselves. The negative outcomes of coteaching were mainly affected by coteachers' different teaching styles and the competitive atmosphere within coteaching groups.

4.2.2.1. Successful cooperation in coteaching

Most coteachers indicated that the process of preparing coteaching sessions developed their cooperative relationship within coteaching groups. The cooperative relationship among coteachers indicated how they helped each other in order to pursue the same teaching objectives. As they pointed out, the preparation process of coteaching enabled them to realise that they were all part of the coteaching groups and responsible to contribute to the group tasks.

*Working as part of a group certainly increased our motivation as we didn't want to let the others down. We felt pressure to deliver a quality lesson.* (Group 10.3, 2010)
[Coteaching] fostered a sense of camaraderie within the peer teaching group as we had to work together to prepare, practice and deliver the class. It also fostered a collective spirit within the class itself, as each group felt that they were contributing to everyone’s learning. (Group 11.7, 2011)

It created a cooperative approach to teaching and was good for the group dynamic. One felt a sense of responsibility towards one’s peers and the element of having to perform encouraged preparation and hard work... The fact that we were teaching in groups, we felt that we had a duty to the other three in our peer-teaching team to be well prepared. We had to know our topics very well in order to teach them, so it motivated us to work harder... One felt a sense of responsibility towards one’s peers and the element of having to perform encouraged preparation and hard work. (Group 11.1, 2011)

As coteachers stated, their preparation process turned out to be beneficial in terms of pooling different ideas and teaching resources within the coteaching groups. During this process, coteachers shared responsibility and further developed their cooperative relationship among each other. Many personalities brought into the classroom pooling resources and developed the group dynamic.

By planning a lesson together, deliberating over class objectives and accompanying learning strategies to deliver these objectives successfully, the peer teachers are reflecting on their practice, sharing teaching ideas and engaging with the learning process from the bottom up. The shoe is quite literally on the other foot. Role relationships developed as students were grouped together for the task of teaching the language. These were based on perceived and actual competencies of the individuals which comprised each group. A sense of community and shared responsibility developed on the basis of working together in small groups towards a designated goal. (Group 09.7, 2009)

In the preparation of peer teaching, we inevitably shared each other’s approaches and techniques that we use in our own
classes. Therefore, we all benefitted from exposure to new ideas. This exposure highlighted that in general there was no substantial differences in what we perceived to be effective and non-effective methods of teaching. (Group 11.7, 2011)

We had decided which section we would each cover and had briefly outlined our plan, but it was interesting to see the different approaches taken by my group. I also learned from listening to the other people in my group. (WB10, 2010: W3)

4.2.2.2. Unsuccessful cooperation in coteaching

As some peer learners pointed out, a few coteaching sessions did not indicate much group solidarity. Coteachers did not show enough mutual communication or negotiation regarding their teaching plan. Coteachers’ teaching felt an unnatural combination of a few teaching blocks. Their team work, consequently, made peer learners feel confused and made peer teaching sessions difficult to follow. Their ideas which were individually good did not merge into a unified teaching session.

I got an overwhelming sense that they had each produced their own ideas for the lesson, which were all good ideas, but had not thought through how to merge these into one cohesive lesson plan. The lesson rang very much in a staccato way, plodding from one to the other, not really sure what was happening next. From a learners’ perspective this was a bit confusing, and made the lesson a bit harder to follow. Additionally, it was disappointing to see the peer teachers turning to Weiming immediately for the correct pronunciation rather than trying it themselves. (KT09, 2009: W6)

With regards to group teaching, I understand that it is useful to collaborate with classmates and to understand how other people might approach a given topic in order to teach it; however, I do think it can be limiting in practice. I feel that all three (UA09, MY09 and HN09) of my classmates had very different styles of teaching, all of which were not fully displayed. I think each person might have been better able to teach using their own style had they not been measuring and positioning themselves alongside their fellow group members. I think it can be restrictive. (OF09, 2009: W3)
Two coteachers within a particular coteaching group pointed out that they did not cooperate with each other well during the process of their preparation for coteaching. The first coteacher stated that she wanted to have a clearly divided share of the preparation for their coteaching session and work on it on her own. She mentioned that she loved the clear division of workload because her time for the preparation for coteaching was limited. She also argued that different teaching styles among coteachers should be supported by clear boundaries in terms of the coteaching content. However, her idea was challenged by a different member of the same coteaching group. The second coteacher considered the first coteacher's idea as a competitive atmosphere and pointed out that the competitive nature harmed the mutual support for coteachers. The following two representative quotes represented their different point of view on the cooperation between them and explained why and how their coteaching session did not go well. KA10 was referred to the first coteacher and AY10 was referred to as the second coteacher.

I deliberately wanted our presentations to be divided clearly into individually specific areas as my time is very limited and I cannot meet extensively with the group. Our teaching styles were very different and I found one of my peers taking on too much new stuff. She included most of her presentation. I felt a bit disappointed that I could not include my exercise, but I let it go. Pity I had prepared it quite well. (LB10, 2010: W5)

A few of the students in the class have quite competitive natures and this can occasionally override the feeling of solidarity and support that classmates should offer each other. As a class, students should have been offering each other support rather than indulging their competitive tendencies. (BZ10, 2010: W5)

4.3. Reciprocal Peer Coteaching as a motivating factor

As set out in chapter 2, motivation was one of the areas on which the implementation of RPCoT impacted. Data in this section show RPCoT as motivator for STs' development as learners. It contains two dimensions. Included in the major motivating factors for peer learners were peer learners' intention to participate in peer teaching
sessions, peer teachers as role-models, peer teachers' teaching content, and peer teachers' ways of teaching. Included in the motivating factors for peer teachers were a sense of responsibility for peer learners' learning, pressure for doing peer teaching, group solidarity within peer teaching groups, and competitive factors across peer teaching groups.

4.3.1. Reciprocal Peer Coteaching as motivator for peer learners

As set out in section 4.2.1, peer learners were motivated to participate in peer teaching sessions when they wanted to support peer teachers. In addition to this motivation factor, a few more factors, such as peer teachers as role-models, peer teachers' teaching content, and peer teachers' ways of teaching, positively affected their learner motivation. Peer learners observed peer teachers' teaching and reflected on it. Positive outcomes of peer teaching sessions made some peer learners believe that peer teachers' linguistic competence was admirable. Peer teachers' admirable performances encouraged and inspired some peer learners to say that they should be able to achieve the same level of linguistic competence as that of peer teachers.

On the whole, it was useful as it showed that if members of our peers could gain mastery over a certain aspect of the language, then there is no reason why we as learners cannot do the same. On the whole, again we would say it was a positive experience, from a motivational and attitudinal perspective; if they can do it, then so can we!

Scales/drills, dialogues and especially games were utilised by the peer teachers to engage the students with the language, creating an involving lesson which captured our attention. (Group 09.6, 2009)

The fact that there is a different teacher and that they too were a complete beginner just like you means ... if they can learn the new vocabulary/grammar etc well enough to be able to teach it, then so can you! (D110, 2010: W4)

With regard to the peer learning experience it was motivational to see how our classmates, who started at the same time as us and at the same level, could be so knowledgeable of a certain topic after only one week of research. (Group 10.3, 2010)
As set out in section 4.2.1, STs shared similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds. When they were classmates and helped each other to learn, they understood each other’s needs easily. In this sense, peer teachers often made their lesson content and class activities suitable for peer learners. The suitable learning content often became a motivator for peer learners to learn.

The content was effectively structured and modelled by the teachers themselves and there was again a good mix of written and oral work. The exercises and the tasks were well prepared and also well timed. Especially the task of having us respond with a number to visual prompts, first of all collectively and then individually, was highly engaging and interactive and provided a suitably challenging, yet comfortably achievable goal so as to motivate us. (MB11, 2011: W4)

For the most part the activities chosen by the peer teachers were practical and well-focussed. As these exercises were designed by fellow learners, they seemed to suit our needs well in that they anticipated our difficulties and the likely gaps in our knowledge. Peer-led sessions also contained an element of novelty and fun, which certainly boosted morale and served as a motivating influence. (Group 11.2, 2011)

As set out in section 4.2.2.1, peer teachers as coteachers brought different ideas and activities into their coteaching sessions. Section 4.4.1.1 illustrated the variety in teaching resources and had a positive impact on language learning. According to most of the peer learners, the variety of teaching resources also acted as a motivator for them to learn.

The peer-teachers will probably present the lesson in a different way to how the teacher taught it the previous week, so there is variety in teaching strategies and so this could mean that if a student did not grasp a concept/understand a sentence structure etc the first time, they second time it is taught through a different approach may give them a better insight into what is being taught. (DI10, 2010: W4)

We believe that all the sessions were well-prepared and very varied in their content and in the approaches of all the teachers. It was
interesting to see all of the different personalities and techniques and learn in a different way from each person. (Group 11.1, 2011)

4.3.2. Reciprocal Peer Coteaching as motivator for peer teachers

According to most peer teachers, the four factors which helped to increase their motivation were a sense of responsibility for peer learners’ learning, pressure for doing peer teaching, group solidarity within coteaching groups, and competitive factors across peer teaching groups. As stated in 4.2.1, the cooperative relationship existed between peer teachers and peer learners as group solidarity. Some peer teachers indicated this created a strong motivation for peer teachers’ activity, inside and outside the classroom. The group solidarity in the Chinese class motivated them to take responsibility for their peer learners’ learning.

We found the peer teaching process to be very motivational and, generally-speaking; we enjoyed and gained a lot from doing it. As it was our peers and friends that we were teaching there was an added incentive to ensure the lesson was well prepared and well executed. (Group 09.4, 2009)

As trainee teachers and due to respect and admiration for many members of our class, we were determined to learn the material to the best of our ability and to come up with interesting ways to prompt words/phrases. (Group 10.4, 2010)

Having to teach the material gives you an extra responsibility and I felt like I had to know the material well in order to teach my peers, therefore I made sure to know it very well! Being in the peer teaching class I felt motivated to recap/re teach the material in a way that I feel the students will be able to follow better and therefore understand and learn the material quicker. I really enjoyed doing the peer teaching because it gave me extra motivation to learn the material from the first class but also gave me a sense of responsibility as I was teaching my peers. (MA11, 2011: W2)
Some peer teachers felt a certain amount of pressure when they were going to conduct their peer teaching sessions. This pressure was where peer teachers needed to fully understand their teaching content and be able to present it to their peers.

*The peer teaching did help to enhance our learning of Chinese. One reason we all said was that we felt there was a pressure there to understand the material and to be able to explain it clearly to the rest of the class, something which made us revise it thoroughly. We felt that our experience of peer teaching was most certainly a positive one and increased our motivation.* (Group 10.3, 2010)

Peer teachers’ pressure was caused by two reasons. The first reason was that they would have to physically stand at the front of the classroom and share their knowledge with their peers. They did not want to lose face in front of their peers.

*It (peer teaching) created an impetus to master the language so that we wouldn’t appear foolish in front of our peers.* (Group 10.1, 2010)

Due to the pressures involved in teaching a group of people something you know a limited amount about, peer teaching does motivate you to ensure that you do enough research and work in order to present a good lesson to the class. *The last thing you want to do is to disappoint your classmates or to look foolish in front of them.* Therefore, there was a great deal of motivation in this respect. We found that there were positives to be drawn from the preparation of our weekly topics, as these gave rise to independent learning and to (a degree of) increased motivation. (Group 09.8, 2009)

The second reason was based on the first reason, but on a different level. It was related to peer teachers’ intention to look professional in front of their peers. They knew that their teaching sessions would be observed by their peers as fellow professionals. This motivated them to become prepared for their teaching sessions and appear fully competent in front of their peers.

*We knew that our peers would be observing our techniques closely and evaluating our methods of teaching critically. This proved to be a motivating factor in itself. Hence in order to appear as authentic and knowledgeable as possible, we invested a great deal of*
time and effort into the research, preparation and presentation of our topic. (Group 09.4, 2009)

**Pressure to perform in front of our peers was a motivating factor.** This was conducive to our investing a great deal of time and effort into research, preparing adequately, and executing the lesson very well. Dedicating a lot of time to Chinese that particular week resulted in us learning a lot and so this motivated us. We were eager to share our knowledge with the others. **It was pleasing to realise that our peers not only learned Chinese from us, but also appreciated our teaching methods and approaches- so much so that they wanted to adopt them themselves. In this sense, peer teaching had a very positive effect on our motivation.** (Group 10.5, 2010)

As presented in section 4.4.1.2, the majority of peer teachers created high standard teaching outcomes. Most peer teaching groups observed each other and wanted to keep up the standard. As suggested in section 4.2.2.2, competitive environment within coteaching groups led to negative outcomes of coteaching sessions. However, as opposed to the negative impact of competitive nature within groups, the competitive ambience across different peer teaching groups had positive impact on peer teachers' motivation. This type of competition was considered by peer teachers as a positive impetus for them to present well-prepared peer teaching sessions.

**On the whole, I believe the peer teaching was beneficial. The girls made a really great effort to speak through the target language, and to make the lesson and enjoyable and lively affair... The girls did a really good job at peer teaching, and have set a high standard for the rest of the group to follow.** (KT09, 2009: W2)

The standard of the first session was very high which made her feel like she wanted to match the same standard when her turn came. TA11 found they were motivating and challenging as watching her peers been able to master something meant she could too. (Group 11.6, 2011)

**It was interesting to witness the high standard of teaching within the class even though we were teaching Chinese.** We were more motivated, but solely because we wanted to be “good students” for
our fellow classmates who were teaching us. Since they had made the effort to come up with a plan for the lesson and made worksheets etc. the student's worked hard in order to show they appreciated “the teacher’s” hardwork. (Group 11.4, 2011)

The RPCoT model has created a number of motivating factors for both peer learners and peer teachers. They together ensured that students proactively participate in the teaching or learning processes.

4.4. Reciprocal Peer Coteaching for language learning

As set out in section 1.2, this Chinese course had a dual objective. STs were required to achieve certain level of Chinese as well as to generate their professional development as language teachers. Most STs as both peer learners and peer teachers pointed out in their reflective journals and final group reports that RPCoT helped them to reinforce their knowledge of Chinese language. Peer learners benefited from both peer teachers' teaching and the efforts they put into learning from peer teachers. The contributions of this motivation to learn has been developed through section 4.2.1 and section 4.3. Section 4.4.1 will focus on the impact of peer teachers' teaching on peer learners' learning. Section 4.4.2 demonstrates that peer teachers' level of Chinese was increased during the process of their preparation for peer teaching content. Section 4.4.2 is an extension to the section 4.3.2 on the impact of motivation on peer teachers' knowledge level. Both sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 also presented the data on how the participation in RPCoT hindered the language learning of both peer learners and peer teachers. STs' professional development will be dealt with in section 4.5.

4.4.1. Peer learners' language learning

As set out in section 4.2.1, peer learners wanted to help peer teachers to succeed in conducting peer teaching. As set in section 4.3.1, peer learners were motivated to learn when they considered peer teachers role-model, and loved their teaching content and teaching resources. As a result, the factors in both section 4.2.1 and section 4.3.1 encouraged peer learners to proactively participate in the learning process and enhance their knowledge level. Most peer learners pointed out that their knowledge
level was reinforced during peer teaching sessions, in particular in cycle 2 and cycle 3 which were the revision cycles.

They taught a very cohesive and relevant class. I felt that I was going to leave the room being able to DO something, which is very empowering. I thought their techniques were interesting as well and overall I really enjoyed the class. My motivation had been very low going into the class but now it’s quite high and that is as a direct result of their peer teaching. (PB09, 2009: W3)

I really enjoyed the peer teaching aspect of the class as it allowed me to reinforce and consolidate what was learned in the previous two lessons. I also felt that the teachers’ targets were achieved as all of the content on his slides was covered in class. We were also provided with a fascinating insight into the Chinese calendar and the symbols of a number of the months. (IO10, 2010: W3)

These creative materials consolidated the previously learned material and gave us a chance to use our language skills in a different way. We also learned how to draw Chinese characters on rice paper using ink and the traditional calligraphy brush. We found this very effective as it really captured our attention and increased our motivation. These items were a tangible way of connecting with Chinese culture and we all feel that this improved our motivation to learn the language. (Group 10.5, 2010)

This section is an extension to section 4.2.1 and section 4.3.1, and details peer teachers’ competences in conducting peer teaching which underpinned the consolidation of peer learners’ language level. As the majority of peer learners mentioned, peer teachers showed their capability of conducting their peer teaching sessions. Their capability was represented by their teaching content, teaching resources, teaching approach and the classroom atmosphere which they created. The teaching content and classroom atmosphere have been presented in section 4.3.1. Peer teachers’ such capability ensured the possible development of the RPCoT approach in this study.
4.4.1.1. Teaching resources

According to peer learners’ general feedback, peer teachers conducted their peer teaching sessions by involving a number of notable teaching resources, such as worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, games, and authentic materials. Worksheets were largely used by peer teachers during their peer teaching sessions across the three research cycles. They were mainly designed to help peer learners to strengthen their language learning and jog their memory of what aspects of the subject language they had previously learnt.

The worksheet where we had to match characters to pinyin and then translate into English was challenging and a good way to learn. By the end of the lesson there was a real feel-good factor as we all left feeling that we had actually learnt how to say various phrases. (FI09, 2009: W3)

The teaching group helped put last week’s content into practice in a very effective way. The seating arrangement was well thought-out (we all sat in groups of four) and helped facilitate the practice. The worksheet was nicely designed, clear and logical in its sequence. (BZ11, 2011: W3)

The worksheet was very clear and aided learning. It served also to build confidence as the answers were hinted to on the sheets (cloze test, matching etc.). (NP11, 2011: W3)

PowerPoint presentations were adopted by many peer teachers. Their visual characteristics were noticed by many peer learners. They helped STs to learn in the classroom and impacted on their own ways of teaching in schools.

My peers’ PowerPoint presentation was visually very stimulating... The use of visual stimuli in today’s presentation was very effective. I am increasingly aware of the need to incorporate visual stimuli wherever possible, and particularly for children with learning difficulties. Since last week, I have been trying to use PowerPoint in my classes, whenever possible in order to maximize the impact of visual stimuli. (NZ09, 2009: W5)

I found the peer teaching very beneficial today. The group used lots of repetition and examples. The lesson was very visual and the
PowerPoint presentation was very helpful to remember the members of the family. (NE11, 2011: W4)

A variety of games were organised by peer teachers. They were generally considered by peer learners as enjoyable and played important roles in motivating peer learners to learn. The impact of games on STs’ learning was also presented in 4.2.1 in terms of the positive learning environment in the classroom. Due to their competitive nature, games also gave peer learners certain amount of pressure to perform well.

BN10 and NA10 did an excellent job of conducting the class. NA10 played a game of “The price is right”. This was a most enjoyable activity as it allowed us to revise both clothing and numbers in a relaxed and enjoyable manner. (IO10, 2010: W6)

Games which put pressure on me to retain the information. Fun games like this in class can input healthy competition as a way to put more pressure on me to learn what’s in front of me. The games really made the whole class more enjoyable. The lesson moved really quickly. I never lost interest. It’s a credit to how well planned out the lesson was. (UZ09, 2009: W3)

For the topic ‘Eating in the restaurant’, a menu was used by peer teachers as authentic material in both cycle 1 and cycle 2. In cycle 1, peer learners were asked to spend a certain amount of money on buying food according to the menu. In cycle 2, peer learners were encouraged to recognise Chinese characters on the menu. Despite different learning goals, both menus were welcomed by peer learners. They both resembled a real life situation and pushed peer learners to decode characters by reading the authentic material.

We were having a menu with prices and taught how to say what you wanted and the names of the different types of food. This was made better by giving us a budget of 40 yuan to spend. The main point here was that it resembled a real problem/real life situation and for that reason simply I was more motivated to participate. (UZ09, 2009: W4)

The exercises that the peer teaching group used to revise the vocabulary for food and drink were very effective as they used the Chinese symbols on a menu instead of the actual words to revise the food. This is a very effective strategy as it pushes the learner out of their comfort zone and demands that they draw on deciphering skills to try to decode the symbol. This also provides the learner
with the added incentive of making themselves more familiar with the symbols. (IO10, 2010: W5)

4.4.1.2. Teaching methods

Peer teachers understood how they should teach their peers logically. Some of them presented their peer teaching sessions by taking into account the Chinese course as a whole. They remembered to consider associating their teaching sessions with what they had learnt before. They were aware what aspects of the target language they should introduce first and what they should leave for later. Some peer teachers divided their session into a few clear parts. Some peer teachers gave peer learners worksheets and went through each exercise with peer learners step by step. They engaged peer learners in the oral recap first and then invited them to do the worksheets and then deal with more complicated exercised on Chinese characters.

I think the teachers really kept the students in mind as they only introduced ten new words. I also really like how they linked the lesson to the last lesson. We had to use our previous knowledge of numbers when having to order the food as they had put the price of the food beside the picture and told us how much money we had to spend. (LZ09, 2009: W4)

The Peer Teaching provided a very useful summary of the last class. The first part of the presentation involved three distinct columns on the blackboard: 1) subject pronouns 2) verbs 3) vocabulary. The second part involved revising the pronunciation of the numbers. Because we are not used to the system of ‘tones’ this was very useful revision. The final part involved a game of bingo. Again the purpose was to practice numbers. I find the revision that this part of the class provides very useful. As those giving the class are proficient in a European language they tend to use the structure of grammar of a European language hence dividing the words into: subject pronouns verbs etc. I had missed picking up on: bu yong xie: ‘you are welcome’ in the last class. The peer teaching was invaluable. (TD10, 2010: W3)

We did the pronouns orally first and then did the exercise on the worksheet. What followed afterwards was phrases which we did
orally followed by a matching exercise. The last exercise was being able to draw certain characters. They chose 2 of us at random and one had to show the other how to draw one of the 3 characters. We then had to translate these characters on the worksheet. (KT11, 2011: W2)

4.4.1.3. Negative factors in relation to peer teachers' teaching

Despite peer teachers' capability to conduct peer teaching, a few factors affected the outcomes of peer teaching. The factors which were pointed out by peer learners consisted of peer teachers' teaching pace, teaching content, linguistic competences and teaching styles. The factors which were reported by peer teachers included their stress and availability.

In this context, a number of peer learners stated that some peer teachers' teaching went too fast for them to follow. The problem with the teaching pace occurred in different cycles, but mainly in cycle 1. According to peer learners' feedback, the negative impact of the fast pace of peer teaching was two-fold. It directly hindered peer learners' learning performance. Some peer learners mentioned that they felt difficult to digest the teaching content when peer teachers were introducing the peer teaching content. Some peer learners also indicated that the fast pace had a negative impact on their feelings about the subject language. The affective impact was closely linked with peer learners' language acquisition. When they did not achieve their learning goals due to the fast pace, they were led to a state of frustration.

An issue that perhaps hindered my learning was the fact that whilst we practiced the new vocabulary a lot there was no time to take a moment to reflect and digest the vocabulary by yourself. (PM09, 2009: W5)

The pace of the class is too fast for me. I would prefer to learn fewer words and expressions, and go over them again and again in order to reinforce them before the end of the class. If I were going to continue to learn Chinese I would prefer that the pace be slowed down considerably. The motivation which I felt coming in to the class was eroded mainly due to two things: (1) the pace of the class (2) pronunciation of the teachers. I don't think there is enough reinforcement during class for me to retain it. (NZ09, 2009: W4)
I felt this week that the class moved too fast and we covered too many new things and didn't get to practise each of the new things enough. (JR11, 2011: W2)

The second factor was peer teachers' teaching content. According to a few peer learners' feedback, peer teachers occasionally introduced too much material. According to some peer learners' feedback throughout the three cycles, too much information made them feel overwhelmed and frustrated.

One of the most common mistakes that the peer teachers made was to over ambitiously try and introduce too much content into a single lesson. This overload of vocabulary and phrases was overwhelming and off-putting for the learner. As a result, we are now more conscious not to make these same errors in our own classrooms. (Group 09.4, 2009)

A criticism of the peer teaching, which was raised by all members of the group was that it sometimes occurred that too much new material was incorporated and that this proved to be confusing and overwhelming. (Group 10.3, 2010)

I found that having too much information in the one lesson hindered my learning as well as being very tired. (NE11, 2011: W2)

The third factor was peer teachers' linguistic competence. There were two dimensions of this factor: level of subject knowledge and pronunciation. Peer teachers exposed how much target language they had learnt before they came do peer teaching. As set out in 4.4.1.1, peer learners indicated that they gained knowledge of Chinese from peer teachers. However, more than half of peer learners only in cycle 1 were concerned about peer teachers' level of Chinese. They thought that peer teachers did not have enough Chinese to explain certain things in the classroom. Peer teachers' level of subject knowledge became a drawback to the effectiveness of peer learners' learning until they were asked to conduct peer teaching in the form of peer revision in cycle 2. This dimension has been set out in section 4.2. According to peer learners' feedback, peer teachers' pronunciation was problematic throughout the three cycles. Some peer learners felt dubious as to whether peer teachers pronounced their teaching content correctly in the target language. As they thought, peer teacher' pronunciation of
language was a hindrance to learning correct pronunciation. Therefore, some peer learners did not feel confident to repeat after peer teachers.

*I hesitate to repeat what my peers are saying* when they are teaching and this affects my confidence and motivation. I’m really not confident that I am consistently reproducing the correct tones. (NZ09, 2009: W4)

Pronunciation varied hugely from peer-teacher to peer-teacher and this hindered the learning of the tones, which are crucial to the Chinese language. (Group 11.5, 2011)

The fourth factor was the variety of peer teachers’ teaching styles. As mentioned in 4.4.1.2.1, peer teachers had different teaching styles and employed various activities during their peer teaching sessions. The various and dynamic teaching styles and activities, relative to peer teaching, helped peer learners to learn. However, this variety of peer teachers’ teaching styles occasionally caused confusion for a small number of peer learners. As they pointed out, some teaching styles did not suit them.

*I do think that the peer tutors are doing a great job with the teaching. I think maybe the problem is that we all have different learning targets and a different goal for this Chinese learning experience. We are also obviously different types of language learners, and so I am clearly not going to find every peer tutoring session beneficial to my learning needs.* (WB10, 2010: W5)

The fifth negative factor was how peer teachers felt stressed about their teaching sessions. A few peer teachers pointed out that they were worried if they had sufficient knowledge of Chinese to teach their peers. They were also worried if they would pronounce things correctly during their teaching sessions.

*Being completely honest, I’m worried this week. I don’t feel as if I’m ready to peer teach last week’s Chinese class tomorrow. This is for a number of reasons. Firstly, I didn’t feel that I learned a lot last week in class. It was very fast for me and I got frustrated when we moved on to something new before I felt that I had grasped the previous concept. Secondly, I’m not at all confident with the pronunciation of what was introduced last week.* (UB11, 2011: W2)
I am feeling quite apprehensive about the lesson tomorrow as I will be taking part in the peer teaching activity. I feel that I don’t know the pronunciation of the sentences or words well enough to be able to demonstrate them to a class. I think that pronunciation is a very important aspect of learning a language and for this reason I get very frustrated with myself when I find it difficult to pronounce the words with a correct Chinese accent. (NE11, 2011: W2)

The sixth factor was linked with peer teachers’ availability. A few peer teachers pointed out that they did not have enough time to prepare well for peer teaching.

I constantly feel pressurized to prepare presentations for this class and study vocab etc when I really don’t have the time. This leads to a cycle of stress, frustration, and in the end disinterest in the class as I don’t have time to do the appropriate level of work, therefore I don’t do it, then I fall behind, and ultimately I lose interest and put it on, “The back Burner” so to speak. (KF09, 2009: W5)

I deliberately wanted our presentations to be divided clearly into individually specific areas as my time is very limited and I cannot meet extensively with the group. We agreed on our topics and each would work on them until the second time. (LB10, 2010: W5)

I still feel fairly positive about the last lesson we had in Chinese but I am slightly stressed about the Peer Teaching task as I feel like I haven’t had as much time as I’d like to prepare. I am trying to study for my own peer teaching group this week. (ZF11, 2011: W3)

This section presented STs’ comments in relation to the impact of the RPCoT model on their language learning as peer learners. Peer teachers proved that they were capable of conducting peer teaching. However, six negative factors affected peer teachers’ teaching.

4.4.2. Peer teachers’ language learning

This section presents that the RPCoT model helps to increase peer teachers’ language level. The implementation of RPCoT created a context in which peer teachers felt a
sense of responsibility for learning and carried out autonomous language learning. A negative element was the difficulty which a few peer teachers had in paying attention to the classroom teacher’s teaching after peer teaching sessions in cycle 2 and cycle 3.

According to the majority of peer teachers’ feedback, their participation in conducting peer teaching enhanced their knowledge level of Chinese language throughout the three cycles. The preparation for peer teaching content witnessed their increase of Chinese. They put a lot of efforts into studying individual words, phrases, pronunciation outside of the classroom. The reasons for them to put so much effort were introduced in section 4.3.2. As they recalled, peer teachers had retained most of the topic which they had taught during their peer teaching sessions.

_The topic I feel I know the best is the one I had to teach. I learnt this material because I was being “tested/assessed” in a way._ (MA11, 2011: W3)

_I feel that peer teaching is a fantastic method for learning a L2, for the peer teachers at least. By far, the vocabulary and verbs I was part of teaching is the section of Mandarin that I am the most comfortable with, and which I can reproduce without looking at my notes._ (KT09, 2009: W5)

_I remembered the stuff that I had taught best and didn’t have to revise it. I had put in so much effort into the peer teaching and could therefore easily remember it._ (LB10, 2010: W7)

As presented in 4.3.2, a sense of responsibility acted as a motivator for peer teachers to conduct high quality peer teaching sessions. In addition to that, such responsibility also encouraged peer teachers to conduct independent learning and developed their researching skills. According to most peer teachers’ feedback, taking responsibility for others’ learning directly led them to exercising their researching skills. In order to conduct peer teaching sessions, peer teachers needed to prepare thoroughly. They often had to search for resources, translate words and sentences, and work on their pronunciation.

_We were very aware of the need to ensure that we pronounced the words correctly so members of our peer teaching group spent a couple of hours rehearsing correct pronunciation of key phrases using the sound files from the www.nciku.com website. This helped instil_
confidence in us as we went through our presentation. (Group 09.7, 2009)

I found a lot of conflicting information on websites and eventually had to make decisions as to what information I was to use. I went through the pronunciation of the horoscopes with the teacher but found that I had soon forgotten so I looked to an internet pronunciation site to practice my pronunciation. I thought that the research I did gave me a better insight into the culture and the practice that I did helped me to remember the characters. (CO10, 2010: W6)

As a result of doing the group teaching I now know how to look up both English and Chinese words and translate them using online dictionaries. I have learned useful words and phrases for travelling around, going shopping and eating in a restaurant. (LZ09, 2009: W2)

Peer teachers’ independent learning was associated with their use of online dictionaries and internet. During their preparation for coteaching, they also thought about the best ways to present material. As some peer teachers stated, this process helped them to develop their autonomy as language learners.

We have also become aware of the importance of autonomy and taking ownership of our work. The week that we had to teach the class, we had to research the content and plan the lesson independently of our teacher, Weiming. We believe that we learned more in this week than any other week. This is due to the responsibility that was given to us and the resulting autonomy. (Group 09.4, 2009)

Peer teaching created an environment where students take more responsibility for their own learning and become self-regulated learners. (Group 09.2, 2009)

Thinking about ways to elicit material, and considering ways in which students’ relationship with this material could be moved further away from recall and closer to understanding, greatly improved our own awareness of the topic. Learner autonomy increased as the course progressed. (Group 10.4, 2010)
One negative impact aspect was associated with peer teachers' language learning after finishing their own peer teaching sessions. A few peer teachers pointed out that peer teaching sessions actually distracted them from participating in the following section of the Chinese class. That is to say, peer teaching had a negative impact on their concentration on the main session of the Chinese class. According to them, after doing peer teaching, they felt difficult to follow the classroom teacher's instruction on learning new knowledge. Conversely, their minds were switched off for a while. The chain of their learning thread was thus broken.

*I participated in the peer teaching last week so in a way I was so relieved when that was over, I switched off a little once it was done.* (UB11, 2011: W3)

*I found that my concentration for this lesson was focused mainly on the first part of the lesson when we were peer teaching. For the rest of the lesson I was not as focused or concentrated.* (BZ11, 2011: W2)

### 4.5. Reciprocal Peer Coteaching for professional development through reflection

As set out in section 4.2, the current RPCoT model allowed STs to work with each other in a cooperative learning environment. As set out in section 4.4, the benefits which STs gained from this cooperative relationship led to an increase in their subject knowledge. In addition to this, such a relationship created a context in which STs played roles as both peer learners and peer teachers. As a result, they all had opportunities to observe all activities relevant to the RPCoT model and reflect on their own learning as well as the learning of others. Such reflective practices ultimately led to their professional growth. Reflective practice "involves a constant, critical look at teaching and learning and at the work of you, the teacher" (Harrison, 2013: 8) and "examine[s] both non-critical and critical incidents in our working lives" (Dymoke, 2013: 3). According to STs, the main points of their reflection influenced their borrowing ideas, understanding of self and others, and integrating the learner's perspective.

#### 4.5.1. Borrowing ideas
As presented in section 4.4.1.2, STs as peer teachers showed their competences in conducting peer teaching. They brought into the classroom various teaching resources and teaching methods. Peer learners and even peer teachers within the same teaching group considered them useful and decided to adapt many of them into their school classrooms.

**We agreed that we learned some useful techniques from the peer-teaching element of this course.** Some of the games and activities engaged in during these lessons proved to be enjoyable and educational. They also provided us with some useful teaching ideas that we can now apply to our own teaching experience. (Group 09.8, 2009)

**This experience gave us a taste for how co-operative teaching/learning could be applied in practice, and highlighted its benefits.** By sharing our experiences, we made connections in our learning which will hopefully aid our practice as teachers. (Group 11.7, 2011)

I found PT extremely beneficial. It was an excellent revision class. I felt much more confident after their class as they really helped me to remember what we did the week before. The lesson was interesting and varied. I **would definitely use some of their (peer teachers’) techniques for my own classes.** They elicited a lot of vocabulary by acting and I found this really useful. Their handouts were also really interesting and easy to follow. (ZF11, 2011: W2)

The majority of STs also acknowledged the value of the RPCoT model. They saw the benefits of inviting students to teach their peers. As they mentioned, they would incorporate such an approach into their own classes.

**After seeing how peer teaching works I would definitely be more inclined to introduce it in my own lessons.** (LZ09, 2009: W2)

**I will definitely incorporate peer-teaching into my classes now.** I have especially enjoyed the peer-teaching and see major value in it and in incorporating it into classes in schools. (DI10, 2010: W6)
With this knowledge of the power of peer teaching in mind, the members of the group would use this tool in a classroom whereas before the module it would have been avoided almost entirely as an activity which gave too much room for bad behaviour. (Group 11.5, 2011)

4.5.2. Understanding of self and others

As some STs pointed out, their reflection consisted of self-reflection and reflection on others. These two types of reflection were not isolated from each other. Rather, they were linked with each other and together contributed to STs’ reflective professional development.

4.5.2.1. Understanding of others

In terms of reflection on others, some STs observed and valued their peers’ teaching styles and activities. They wanted to learn how their peers would act as teachers and what activities they would employ.

I was really impressed by the pricing game for ordering in a restaurant. By combining the new vocabulary with a monetary unit and having a budget of 40 yuan, each student had to order what they wanted within their monetary constraints. I would gladly include this in my class. A fun class and a balanced lesson plan, incorporating revision of the topics previously covered, the lesson was well geared for the learner, balancing a number of learning styles and including group work. (KT09, 2009: W4)

Reflection on peer teaching enhanced ST’s understanding of a number of aspects of their professional practice. When STs were keen to observe their peers’ teaching resources, they understood that teachers’ different personalities had different effect on teaching.

Teaching something to someone else is evidently a very effective way of consolidating your knowledge of material. It was interesting to see how each peer teaching group tackled the material. Some teachers demonstrated a very clear emphasis on the written form while others took a more communicative approach. This diversity
among the peer teachers gave a great insight into the different teaching styles and methods that we may not think to use but which may be beneficial in our own classrooms for certain learners. Different personalities brought a different slant to their teaching, so even if the methods were similar, their personalities had an effect on the teaching. (Group 10.4, 2010)

When observing their peers' teaching, STs' awareness of learners' characteristics was increased. Their comprehension was enhanced that learners' learning styles can be different and they may require different learning resources.

[Peer teaching] has made [a group member] more aware of the differences between language learners, and their learner styles...

All of us now recognise how important setting a good pace is - if we go too fast in class, a lot of students will get frustrated and feel lost. This could affect their opinion of the subject, which in turn could be disastrous for their learning. We also believe now that clear presentation is paramount - to explain things clearly, and to write it up on the board so that it is comprehensible to others. (Group 11.1, 2011)

STs also became more aware of the important role of pupils' cooperative relationship in the classroom. As they pointed out, not only did this relationship help to build learners' confidence, but also helped to develop group solidarity.

We have gained a greater insight into the inter-pupil relationship, learning that co-operative learning is important for building self-confidence, a greater sense of camaraderie and promoting learning with your peers, and this has been reflected in our teaching practice exercises. (Group 09.6, 2009)

4.5.2.2. Comparison of others with self

STs pointed out the process of their self-reflection was often linked with their reflection on others. As they described, observing their peers' teaching led them to thinking of themselves and provided opportunities for them to self-reflect. These two types of reflection often occurred in the form of comparison.
TA11 was wonderful at the top of the classroom. She's always so “grounded” and “rooted” and “focused”. You can't help but pay attention. She has a wonderful teaching manner. **Watching our peers in action is really beneficial as it makes us really self-reflect on our presence in the classroom, through comparison!**

Great authority, great presence. And *it caused me to reflect* on my own presence within the class. (NP11, 2011: W3)

Every week, I have reflected in the teaching styles and activities used by fellow students. It was a good opportunity to open one’s mind to the effectiveness of some language learning activities. As trainee teachers we need this kind of exposure to improve our teaching techniques. **Thinking about the teaching styles of my classmates and reflecting upon my own teaching experiences in an informal way was far more helpful for me.** (Group 09.3, 2009)

Peer teaching was also an opportunity for us to observe how our peers taught a particular topic and how it *compared* to how we ourselves would have delivered it. **It made us critically reflect on our own performance as a teacher by recognising strengths and weaknesses in each of our peers teaching.** (Group 10.4, 2010)

### 4.5.3. Integrating the learner’s perspective

STs' feedback showed that RPCoT allowed them to gain better understanding of their teaching and made them integrate the learner’s perspective. This broadening of perspectives maps to Hatton and Smith’s dialogic reflection (1995) which demonstrates learners’ stepping-back from events and actions and explores their roles in the events and actions. As STs explained, they had hesitated to do certain things before the attended this Chinese course. But now they decided to act differently.

*When teaching languages, I have found in my classes that quite often, one thing leads to another, that is to say that while I might often begin explaining one limited set of vocabulary or one grammar concept, I can unintentionally end up broadening the volume of material that the students are ultimately exposed to, as a result of both student questioning and my own tendency to focus on detail. As a learner, I now know that too much material can be intimidating*
and off-putting. This lesson ultimately showed me that as a teacher, I need in my own practice to strike the delicate balance of giving an authentic and comprehensive volume and depth of material, while avoiding burdening and overwhelming students with too much information and detail at once. (TO11, 2011: W4)

I will definitely try to put up the objectives on the board. I usually explain to the class what the general theme of the class is, but sometimes I’m afraid of putting them up explicit objectives as we never seem to get all 3 of them done so I’m worried of ‘failing’ in front of the class. But as I found today, it really does help to have an idea of what is coming up. (DB11, 2011: W2)

One member of our group felt that peer teaching had taught her the importance of explaining something as simply as possible. A second member of our group believed that peer teaching taught her to engage her pupils more frequently and establish peer-teaching groups in her language classes. (Group 10.2, 2010)

As set out in 1.1, this Chinese course was designed for STs to better understand their school pupils’ learning process. In addition to the understanding of their pupils’ learning styles, as set out in section 4.5.2, STs pointed out that being beginner-learners in this context helped them to empathise with their school pupils and become more aware of the pupils’ feelings about learning languages and reactions to the classroom learning.

Being put into the situation of being a beginner language learner again for the first time in a long time did help me to empathise with my students and the fear and discomfort that accompany being a beginner language learner. (Group 09.5, 2009)

The pace of the lesson was too fast for me. Slides were changed too quickly, not enough repetition. I also felt that there was too much new vocabulary in such a short space of time. It is overwhelming. I couldn’t get it taken down before the slides were changed, and this was frustrating. I can understand how my students feel when I am rushing to get through something rather than being sensitive to their pacing needs. (NZ09, 2009: W4)
All three group members feel **more capable of empathising with the student** who may have particular outside factors interfering with their learning that very day, week or month; with the student who, despite having tried, is unable to recall material studied but is trying their best; with the student who is perhaps more focused on other school subjects... As a result, we now endeavour to incorporate a wide variety of methods and techniques in our teaching in order to appeal to the extensive mix of students in our classes. (Group 10.5, 2010)

This section presented the impact of RPCoT on STs’ professional development in terms of their borrowing ideas, reflection and integrating the learner’s perspective. The cooperative learning environment allowed STs to observe each other’s learning and teaching in particular. STs’ observation was further deepened and enriched by their self-reflection and reflection on others. STs’ reflective practices led them to integrating their learner’s perspective. These three aspects together demonstrated the appropriateness of implementation of the current RPCoT model to the professional development of teachers in this study.

### 4.6. Summary

This chapter has presented the collected data under different themes. Cooperative learning took place in two circumstances. It was represented both by the cooperative relationship between peer learners and peer teachers, and the cooperative relationship among coteachers within coteaching groups. Both of the two types of cooperative relationship helped STs to cooperate with each other and give mutual support. However, unsuccessful cooperation may lead to a failure of conducting coteaching. RPCoT increased the motivation of both peer learners and peer teachers. Peer learners were motivated by peer learners as role-models, peer teachers’ teaching content, and peer teachers’ ways of teaching. Peer teachers were motivated by the responsibility for peer learners’ learning, the pressure for doing peer teaching, the team spirit within peer teaching groups, and the competitive factors across peer teaching groups. RPCoT played both positive and negative role in STs’ language learning. On the positive side, STs as both peer learners and peer teachers increased their knowledge level of Chinese by participating in RPCoT. Some peer teachers felt that RPCoT developed their learner autonomy. On the negative side, some peer learners
reported that peer teachers' teaching pace, teaching content, linguistic competence and teaching styles hindered their learning. Some peer teachers pointed out that the stress, caused by peer teaching, and their time limitation restricted them from conducting peer teaching well. For very few peer teachers, it was difficult for them to concentrate on learning the new content after they had finished their peer teaching sessions. RPCoT also created opportunities for STs to develop reflective practices in terms of their borrowing ideas, better understanding of self and others, and integrating the learner's perspective. Based on the data presentation in this chapter, an in-depth discussion on the data will be carried out under different themes in the following chapter.
Chapter 5. Data discussion

This chapter discusses the data of the current study. The purpose of the discussion is to explore the themes which are introduced in chapter 4 in the light of the theoretical framework and literature set out in chapter 2. Section 5.1 focuses on group accountability both within coteaching groups and within the class cohort. Section 5.2 concerns what components of motivation influenced both peer learners' learning and peer teachers' teaching. Section 5.3 deals with the development of student teachers' (STs) learner autonomy. Section 5.4 is associated with the impact of Reciprocal Peer CoTeaching (RPCoT) on student teachers' (STs) reflective practice. Section 5.5 focuses on STs' professional change. Section 5.6 explores the operationalization of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The last section 5.7 compares the current RPCoT model with existing RPCoT models.

5.1. Group accountability

A sense of group accountability is relevant to the successful implementation of cooperative learning (section 2.3), peer teaching (section 2.4) and coteaching (section 2.5). The current RPCoT model which embraced cooperative learning, peer teaching and coteaching demonstrated its originality and uniqueness in terms of developing group accountability at two levels in the same learning environment. Group accountability within coteaching groups ensured the quality of their preparation and teaching while group accountability within the class cohort made it possible for the whole class to progress when STs had opportunities to act as peer teachers and peer learners and benefit from such roles.

As presented in section 4.4.1, coteaching groups demonstrated their ability to conduct group teaching. The quality of their teaching was represented by teaching resources, teaching methods and the classroom atmosphere which they created. Coteachers' teaching performances were based on the fact that they shared knowledge, ideas, and supported each other within coteaching groups. This validated the arguments of Gallo-Fox (2010) and Gilles (2007) that coteachers are required to co-construct their practice, share their ideas, thoughts and perceptions about teaching. Successful coteaching which was characterised by a sense of group accountability (section 4.2.2.1) formed a sharp contrast to unsuccessful cooperation between coteachers in section 4.2.2.2. The unsuccessful coteaching session illustrated that individual coteachers feel responsible
for their own teaching but not for the success of the group in their teaching endeavour. The negative outcomes were indicated by Gallo-Fox (2010) in terms of a disagreement about coteaching practices, Juck et al (2010) in terms of lack of respect for each other, co-planning and a shared responsibility for enacting the curriculum, and also Johnson et al (1993) in terms of the necessity of achieving the goals which are set up by the group. However, although the findings in terms of unsuccessful coteaching validated Gurgur and Uzuner’s (2010) claim that disharmony occurs between coteachers who have different personalities and come from different cultural environments, their claim could not apply to most of the coteaching groups who succeeded in teaching and demonstrated a sense of group accountability.

Group accountability within the class cohort was fostered by the mutually beneficial nature of the current RPCoT model. It depended on the accountability of coteaching groups (i.e. peer teaching groups) which was developed above. It was realised through the efforts which peer learners made to participate in peer teaching sessions. Not only peer teachers but also peer learners felt responsible for contributing to a successful learning environment. For example, some peer teachers mentioned that “due to respect and admiration for many members of our class, [they] were determined to learn the material to the best of our ability and to come up with interesting ways to prompt words/phrases” (Group 10.4, 2010) while peer learners mentioned that they “wanted all of [their] peers [teachers] to do well and thus participated and engaged well in each session” (Group 11.1, 2011). Although the accountability as the class and the accountability as coteaching groups had different components, the commonalities between them were that individual learners’ contributions were essential. This corresponded to Gilles’s (2007) argument that cooperative learners were held accountable for their individual contributions to the group and everyone in the group must contribute. This also supported Johnson and Johnson’s (2013) claim that an underlying purpose of cooperative learning is to make each group member a stronger individual in his or her own right and that learners can attain their goals if and only if their groupmates attain their goals.

5.2. Learner motivation

RPCoT created a setting in which both peer teachers and peer learners were motivated to participate in the learning process. However, the factors which motivated them were
different. Section 4.3.1 and section 4.2.1 focused on the motivation factors for peer learners while section 4.3.2 and section 4.2.2 covered the motivation factors for peer teachers. Section 4.3.1 explored the development of motivation factors for peer learners, i.e. peer teachers as role-models, peer teachers’ teaching resources, the enjoyable atmosphere, were created by peer teachers and positively received by peer learners. As set out in section 4.2.1, peer learners were motivated to help peer teachers to succeed in teaching when they felt that they were on the same boat with peer teachers and peer teachers had supported them to conduct peer teaching. As set out in section 4.3.2, from the perspectives of peer teachers, the responsibility for peer learners’ learning, the pressure for doing peer teaching, the group solidarity within peer teaching groups, and the competitive factors across peer teaching groups motivated them to participate in the current learning context. As set out in section 4.2.2, coteachers were motivated to participate in conducting coteaching when they felt a sense of camaraderie among themselves and, wanted to share ideas and work with their fellow coteachers to a designated goal.

All these motivating factors were fundamentally derived from the cooperative component of the current RPCoT setting. As set out in section 4.2, STs’ cooperation existed between peer teachers and peer learners within the class cohort, and among coteachers within coteaching groups. As set out in section 4.2.1, section 4.3.2 and section 4.2.2, STs strived to help their peers to learn as peer learners or to teach as peer teachers. This demonstrated their willingness to interact with each other in a cooperative setting (Littlewood, 2002; Villa et al, 2008) and responded to the claim of Scharle and Szabo who suggest that “promoting cooperation... encourages the learners to rely on each other and [to] do things to please the group” (2000: 8). As a result, STs’ efforts strengthened the group solidarity both within the class cohort and within coteaching groups. This was validated by the claims of Sharan (1990) and Dornyei (1994) that cooperative learning promotes group cohesion and, positive interpersonal and inter-group relations among students and by the claim of Johnson et al (1993) that cooperative learning motivates learners to have committed relationships.

Peer teachers and peer learners were motivated to a different extent. There were two types of motivation for peer teachers. In terms of the first type, they wanted to help peer learners to learn and wanted to contribute to coteaching sessions. The data showed that peer teachers truly wanted their peers (including both their fellow peer coteachers and the peer learners they taught) to learn well and strived to support them.
Their sense of responsibility occurred from within. These intrinsic motivating factors corresponded to the claims of Deci (1978) and Deci and Ryan (1985) that intrinsically motivated learners learn what interests them. They also supported the claims of Dornyei (1994) and Ushioda (1996) in terms of intrinsically motivated learners gaining internal rewards. The second type of motivation often pressurised peer teachers to conduct peer teaching. The factors, such as the pressure to teach and the competitive atmosphere across peer teaching groups, mainly indicated how peer teachers tended to look professional in front of their peers. These factors may be considered extrinsic as responded to the claims of Schmidt et al (1996) and Dornyei (1994) that extrinsically motivated learners tend to gain external rewards. Similar to the motivation for peer teachers, motivation for peer learners also contained two types. Peer learners were motivated to help peer teachers to succeed in teaching. Their support for peer teachers occurred from within and, as a result, became a momentum for them to study hard naturally. In line with the intrinsic motivation factors for peer teachers, these motivation factors may also be considered intrinsic. Peer learners were also motivated to learn when they were attracted by the motivation factors which were created by peer teachers. Although these factors motivated peer learners to put efforts into their learning, they were associated with the contribution of others and decided by the actions of others. Like the second type of motivation for peer teachers, there factors may also belong to extrinsic motivation.

As mentioned above, both peer teachers and peer learners reported experiencing two types of motivation, i.e. intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in different weeks. According to section 2.6.1.3, peer teachers' pressure for conducting peer teaching may be regarded as the introjected regulation and peer learners' acceptance of peer teachers' teaching may be considered the integrated form of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). STs' continuous participation throughout the course enabled them to experience different forms of extrinsic motivation in different weeks and the continuous development of intrinsic motivation from week to week.

5.3. Learner autonomy

The current RPCoT model fostered students' responsible actions in an interdependent learning environment. As set out in section 2.6.2, autonomous learners need opportunities to take responsibility (Broady & Kenning, 1996). These opportunities were
created in the current RPCoT setting. As stated in section 4.2, peer teachers’ feedback comments were associated with the words ‘responsibility’ and ‘resources’. The two words pictured the process of peer teachers’ participation in coteaching. ‘Responsibility’ indicated that they recognised their roles as both coteachers and peer teachers. As coteachers, they tried to take the initiatives to contribute to the group work of coteaching. As peer teachers, they tried to get prepared in order to help peer learners to enhance their knowledge of Chinese. The word ‘resources’ described the process, during which they took responsibility for coteaching. These two words are closely linked with learner autonomy. As peer learners, STs wanted their peer teachers to perform well and took proactive participation in learning. As examined in section 2.6.2.1, taking responsibility for learning is a key component of learner autonomy because autonomous learners determine the learning process and deal with learning outcomes (Holec 1981; Scharle & Szabo 2000; Little 2003). As shown in 4.2, when peer teachers wanted to master their teaching sessions but still had questions about the coteaching content, they did not approach the teacher researcher immediately. Rather, they tried to search for answers by using dictionaries and internet. They understood that they needed to share the workload between them and prepare thoroughly in order to perform successfully in front of peer learners. Peer teachers found learning resources independently from the teacher researcher. Their self-regulation demonstrated that they were able to take responsibility for learning (Marshall, 1996). After participating in coteaching, these self-regulated learners or peer teachers in this context made decisions as to what information they were going to use. In other words, the process of their preparation was considered a way of learning. As some peer teachers pointed out, not only did both taking responsibility and being self-regulated learners help them to teach, but also help them to learn Chinese. As set out in section 4.3 and section 4.4, peer teachers proactively participated in the current RPCoT model. This suggested that taking responsibility was referred to as their control over the learning process (Scharle & Szabo, 2000; Benson, 2001), the active involvement in learning (Dam, 1995) or the never-ending effort to understand different aspects of learning (Little, 2003).

As introduced in section 2.3, cooperative learning was one of the key components of RPCoT. As discussed in section 4.2, cooperative learning created a cooperative relationship both between peer learners and peer teachers, and among coteachers within coteaching groups. The fact that some peer teachers’ learner autonomy was developed in a cooperative setting indicated that their cooperation with peer learners
and other coteachers was essential. For example, some peer teachers stated coteaching "fostered a sense of camaraderie within the peer teaching group [and] also fostered a collective spirit within the class itself, as each group felt that they were contributing to everyone's learning" (Group 11.7, 2011). Peer learners' support was also an essential component for peer teachers' successful delivery of peer teaching sessions. "When I was peer teaching; they seemed to take an active role in the lesson, and I was therefore keen to return the favour" (KT09, 2009: W6). This correlated to section 2.6.2.2 that learner autonomy is promoted in an interdependent learning context (Boud, 1998; Smith & Ushioda, 2009). Learners and others work together in order to solve conflicts in constructive ways (Kohonen, 1992; Little, 1996) and develop learning strategies and skills (Broady & Kenning, 1996). The teacher researcher's role was introduced in section 3.3.1. He did the summary on the content of peer teaching towards to end of the class in cycle 1, and taught the new content in cycle 2 and cycle 3. Regardless of the type of his involvement in the classroom learning, the teacher researcher provided peer teachers necessary facilitation and support during their preparation for peer teaching. The teacher researcher's involvement supported Scharle & Szabo's (2000) claim that the teacher needs to act as a facilitator or counsellor in an increasing number (and type) of classroom situations, Kincheloe's (2008) argument that the teacher takes responsibility for students' healthy and safe learning by demonstrating his authority of the truth provider and acting as the facilitator of student inquiry and problem posing, and Dickinson's (1994) suggestion that the teacher helps learners to set clear learning objectives and select appropriate materials, get ready for the selected materials. The classroom teacher's necessary role was also validated by the findings in the studies of Ciekanski (2007) study, Inozu (2011) and Chan (2011).

This study has optimised supports for learner autonomy and provided a motivational context for learning. As set out in section 2.6.3, a few components of motivating learners are associated with the development of learner autonomy. Among them, promoting the development of group cohesion and enhancing intermember relations (Forsyth, 1990; Dornyei, 1994) were most relevant to this RPCoT project. That is to say, the cooperative relationship between STs and the motivation factors for them proved to be the essential aspects which developed their autonomous learning process.
5.4. Reflection

As presented in section 4.5.1, the RPCoT setting allowed STs to observe classroom activities and reflect on what they had observed. This process corresponded to Lortie's apprenticeship of observation when "there are ways in which being a student is like serving an apprenticeship in teaching; students have protracted face-to-face and consequential interactions with established teachers" (1975: 61). STs' apprenticeship of observation served as the initial stage of STs' reflection. The reciprocal nature of the current RPCoT model provided the foundation upon which STs were able to observe each other's performances and benefit from each other's contributions to peer teaching.

When peer teaching allowed STs to gain great insights into others' different teaching styles and methods, they linked their reflection with Mezirow's (2000) objective reframing which focuses on the critical reflection on assumptions of others. STs' reflection on their peers ultimately led them to comparing their peers' teaching with their own and creates a situation in which self-reflection took place. STs had opportunities to reflect on the teaching of others and analyse both the similarities and differences between their observations and their own teaching. When STs thought about their own practice and the practice of others, they recognised their own strengths and weaknesses and those of others. This kind of reflection correlated to Mezirow's (2000) subjective reframing which indicates practitioners' critical self-reflection of their own assumptions and Cranton's self-reflection which "involves being aware and critical of our subjective perceptions of knowledge and of the constraints of social knowledge" (2006: 13).

Both subjective and objective reflection were also relevant to STs' coteaching. They represented the path through which STs experienced their professional development. These two types of reflection were often an unity and together benefits them during the reflective process. As set out in section 4.5, STs' reflective practices led to their professional change as teachers which will be discussed in section 5.5. This corresponded to the claim of Fetherston and Kelly that reflection is a key to the achievement of transformation which "involves profound shifts in our understanding of knowledge, the world, and ourselves" (2007: 267).

5.5. Professional change
As set out in section 1.1, STs in this context aimed to develop their ability and willingness to act as reflective practitioners, adopting critical insights into practice. They attended this ITE programme with the objectives to improve their language teaching in schools. These objectives were associated with the concept of disorienting dilemmas. As set out in section 2.8, these dilemmas are where students fail to fit their expectations and consequently lack meaning for them and experienced an anomaly that cannot be given coherence either by learning within existing schemes or by learning new schemes (Mezirow, 1991); who got confronted with knowledge that directly contradicts previous accepted knowledge, particularly knowledge acquired from an authority figure (Cranton, 2006); and who encountered an experience or event that is discrepant with his or her habitual expectations (Cranton & Wright, 2008). However, STs' objectives in this context may have seemed lighter than the term 'disorienting dilemmas' (Mezirow, 2000; Cranton & Wright, 2008; McAllister, 2011). This section discusses STs' professional change by focusing on their technical knowledge and communicative knowledge, as well as their empathic growth shares. Figure 5.1 shows STs' professional change in this study. It was adapted by the teacher researcher from Figure 2.10.

![Diagram](image_url)

**Figure 5.1.** Student teachers' professional change in this study, adapted by the teacher researcher from Figure 2.10.

### 5.5.1. Transformative development
Cranton (2006) suggests three types of knowledge which educators may foster in learners in transformative learning settings: technical knowledge, communicative knowledge and emancipatory knowledge. As presented in section 4.5, the impact of RPCoT on STs' professional development covered three aspects: borrowing ideas, understanding of self and others, and integrating the learner's perspective. These aspects mainly responded to technical knowledge and communicative knowledge. STs did not notably demonstrate their generation of emancipatory knowledge which includes critical questioning, the presentation of diverse points of view, the examination of existing social norms, and the exploration of alternative and radical perspectives.

As set out in section 4.4.1, STs demonstrated competencies in delivering peer teaching sessions. As mentioned in section 4.5.1, STs felt that their peers' teaching was various and enjoyable and decided to borrow certain ideas and teaching methods into their own classroom in schools. Not only did STs' decision of borrowing ideas indicate their openness to the opportunities to improve their teaching skills, but also illustrated the significance of the RPCoT model in creating a context in which STs were allowed to adopt others' ideas and thoughts. This stage corresponded to Cranton's (2006) technical knowledge which gives a learner the skills and knowledge that free them from constraints, change their concept of themselves as people, and perhaps redefine their notion of work.

The current RPCoT model embraced Cranton's (2006) communicative knowledge in terms of interactive methods, cooperative learning, dialogue, and group activities. As illustrated in section 5.4, reflection played a key role in helping STs to gain better understandings of self and others. This validated the findings in Sockman and Sharma's (2008) study that reflecting through a course, the instructor examines her beliefs and gains a deeper understanding of her instruction, and becomes better equipped to prepare other reflective practitioners. Both subjective and objective reflection in the current project occurred where STs cooperated with each other. Within the class cohort, STs' cooperation was demonstrated by their mutual support and benefits (section 4.2.1). Within coteaching groups, STs' cooperation was represented both by their group solidarity and by their negotiation with each other towards to designated teaching objectives (section 4.2.2). As set out in both section 4.1 and section 4.5, STs both cooperated with each other through reflection and reflected on teaching and learning through cooperation. In other words, STs' reflection and cooperation were concurrent actions and together ensured their progression in the
classroom. As set out in section 4.5.3, the outcomes of reflection and cooperation led to STs’ integrating the learner’s perspective. This process demonstrated that STs managed to go beyond the Chinese classroom learning and related learning activities to their school teaching. In line with Cranton’s (2006) proposal, the current model indeed helped students work through an understanding of themselves, others, and the social world they live in. Thus, STs became more open and justified (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004) and responsible change agents (Frederick et al, 2010).

During the process of gaining technical knowledge and communicative knowledge, STs’ personalities first merged into the collectiveness of the group. They contributed to each other’s learning and ultimately benefited from each other’s contributions. As section 4.5.3 demonstrated, STs’ two types of reflection made them understand their peers’ strengths and weakness and enabled them become more aware of their own conditions. Individual STs’ professional development responded to the claim of Boyd who argues that the supportive structures which learning group members offer each other “facilitate an individual’s work in realizing personal transformation” (1989: 467) and the claim of Mezirow (2000) that not only do learners become acquainted with their peers’ tacit assumptions and expectations, but also become aware of their own ones. This also responded to the claim of Cranton and Carusetta (2004) that individuals learners become to know how they are different from and simultaneously the same as others. STs’ development of technical knowledge and communicative knowledge also validated the findings in Hale et al’s (2008) study which include teacher participants’ awareness of self and others, consciousness of educational issues and their implications, and transformative action and advocacy. STs’ transformative development also responded to the findings in Biesta and Miedema’s (2002) study that the pedagogical task of teacher education should focus on the whole person of the student and the whole sense of identity of the student and the findings in Coombes and Danaher’s (2006) study that students experience transformative changes when they succeed challenges.

5.5.2. Empathic growth

As set out in section 2.7, when transformative learning reflects learners’ change in their life, empathy enables people to understand other’s feelings and help them. As set out in 2.8, affective empathy is referred to as the understanding of others’ state of mind
(Hogan, 1969; Stompe, 2010) or feelings (Cheon et al, 2010; Howe, 2013). A key finding in section 4.4 and section 4.2 was STs' developed understandings of school pupils' learning. As set out in section 4.5.2, STs tended to adopt useful teaching resources and the peer teaching approach into their school classrooms. Their intention to do so explored their development of cognitive empathy which illustrates their ability or skills to respond to others' feelings and the actions he/she takes accordingly (Stompe, 2010; Baron-Cohen, 2011). STs' learning process in this study was closely linked with their participation in peer teaching. During different peer teaching sessions, they felt the benefits of peer teachers' teaching and the peer teaching approach for their school pupils. This was validated by the findings in Dewaele and Wei's (2012) that cognitive empathy enables participants to see the world from their interlocutor's point of view.

As presented in 4.5.3, STs reported that the current Chinese course helped them to understand better how their pupils would learn a new language. In essence, the role of Chinese language as an exotic language in this context was to help STs to rethink about their teaching in schools from their pupils' perspectives. As some STs stated, the Chinese course in question served the purpose of enabling them to "realise just how alien it is to learn a foreign language. It has been many years since any of us have had to learn a language totally from scratch so it is hard to relate to our students without thinking hard on our experience as language learners" (Group 11.4, 2011). This corresponded to the concept of perceived similarity which highlights the similar cultural backgrounds and experiences connecting the empathiser and others together and enables the former one to become more empathic with the latter ones (Batson, 2005; Hall & Woods, 2006; Hoffman, 2000; Cheon, 2010). This also corresponded to the findings in Palmer and Menard-Warwick's (2012) study that preservice teachers recognised their own situations as similar in some way to the experience immigrant children might have as they enter schools in the United States. These teachers connected the second language acquisition theories they were learning in class, with their own experiences learning Spanish and adjusting to a new culture.

The results of this study supported that the choice of Chinese language as the exotic language in this context was appropriate. The perceived similarity in this context was referred to as learning a new language. It brought STs to the situation in which they had to become beginner-students and experience a similar learning path as their pupils would. "The Chinese class really helped to pinpoint these very important aspects of
learning a language from a student's perspective" (Group 11.4, 2011). During the process of learning Chinese, STs' affective and cognitive empathy was promoted. They felt that their learning process enabled them to enter into their school pupils' feelings. As some STs pointed out, "it was interesting to sit in our student's shoes and feel how they feel" (Group 11.6, 2011). The STs' feedback correlated to Howe's argument that "in general, a clear knowledge and understanding of your own and the other person's disposition and situation, nature and circumstance are likely to lead to better and more accurate empathy" (2013: 17). The feedback also validated the findings in de Oliveira's (2011) study that feeling like language learners can help teachers become more aware of what students may experience.

5.6. The operationalisation of the Zone of Proximal Development

As examined in section 2.2, Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD is the distance between learners' actual developmental level and their level of potential development which they may achieve in cooperation with more capable people. The process-oriented dimension of the ZPD demonstrates the process of learners' increase of subject knowledge through more capable people's mediation. Its cooperation-oriented dimension underpins the social aspect of the ZPD. In other words, the development of the ZPD takes place in the setting where less capable people need to cooperate with more capable people to mediate their learning. The ZPD supported the implementation of RPCoT in this study. As set out in section 4.4, both peer teachers and peer learners experienced personal maturation during their participation in RPCoT. Their increase of knowledge was supported by a number of factors which were created in the RPCoT context. As discussed in section 5.1, group accountability was created by both peer learners and peer teachers who strived to contribute to the learning process. The efforts which STs made led to the maturation of the whole class which was formed by the combination of peer learners' maturation and peer teachers' maturation. As set out in section 2.2.2.2, research has largely focused on less capable learners' maturation. However, peer teachers or coteachers' maturation and the collective maturation of the whole class in a RPCoT setting have not been exclusively investigated.

5.6.1. Peer teachers' maturation
As illustrated in Figure 2.3, there were four stages of STs’ maturation in this context. Peer teachers’ maturation was referred to as the second stage. In this study, STs were all beginners of Chinese and they were at a similar level of Chinese right after each Chinese lesson. However, as set out in section 4.4.2, peer teachers or coteachers had managed to enhance their own knowledge of Chinese within coteaching groups in cooperation with each other before they began to conduct peer teaching. This validated the claims of Sharan (1990) and Johnson et al (1993) in terms of the improvement of student academic achievement in cooperative learning contexts. As discussed in section 5.1, group accountability was established within coteaching groups. Positive interdependence played a key role in helping STs to work together as a team towards mutual goals (Johnson & Johnson, 2013). STs’ interdependent learning activities in this context also responded to Jaques’s claim that learners work cooperatively through different tasks and “learn from each other as each contributes their learning to the whole [coteaching groups]” (2000: 79). As set in section 4.2, both positive group negotiations which were dominant and negative negotiations which were uncommon occurred in this context. Positive negotiations were integrative and allowed coteachers to maximise their joint benefits (Johnson & Johnson, 2013). However, in line with Johnson and Johnson’s (2013) distributive negotiations, the unsuccessful coteaching group members did not attempt to maximise their peers’ outcomes, as set out in section 4.2.2.2. The importance of peer teachers’ group negotiation was supported by Johnson and Johnson’s argument that cooperative learners “can attain their goals if and only if their groupmates attain their goals” (2013: 458).

Peer teachers’ increase of the subject knowledge was generated through a number of tools which may fall into Wertsch’s (2007) explicit mediation and implicit mediation. The explicit mediation tools which highlights the role of other people or materiality as the stimulus means included STs’ classroom notes (for example, WB10, 2010: W3), websites and online dictionaries (section 4.4.2), other peer teachers’ ideas and resources (section 4.2.2.1) as well the classroom teacher’s facilitating role. For example, “we did, of course, defer to Weiming, to confirm that our pronunciation was correct” (Group 09.7, 2009). The implicit mediation tools which involves signs especially natural language included STs’ sense of group responsibility and collective spirit. However, the overall outcomes generated by all these tools, mentioned above, corresponded Thompson’s (2013) Peer collaboration form of mediation which involves critical thinking, problem-solving, or making decisions, and Moll’s (2014) Social mediation which emphasises interactions with other human beings, especially
interactions whereby social groups incorporate a person into cultural practices. All these tools together helped STs to mature in terms of their capability to conduct peer teaching.

5.6.2. Peer learners' maturation

As set out in section 4.4.1, the current RPCoT context provided peer learners opportunities to enhance their knowledge level. Peer learners' learning process corresponded to the third stage of Figure 2.3 whereby peer learners improve their subject knowledge under the guidance of peer teachers. This supported the claims of Vygotsky (1987), Tudge (1990), Dixon-Krauss (1996) and Lake (2012) that the more capable people play essential roles in helping individuals to progress.

A number of factors motivated and helped peer learners to learn. These factors were the tools by which peer learners' learning was mediated. Like peer teachers, peer learners' learning may also associated with Wertsch's (2007) explicit mediation and implicit mediation, although the actual tools varied between peer learners and peer teachers. For peer learners, peer teachers' teaching resources (section 4.4.1.1) and teaching methods (section 4.4.1.2) may be regarded as explicit mediation tools when peer teachers as role-models, the enjoyable atmosphere (section 4.3.1) and group solidarity (section 4.2.1) belonged to implicit mediation tools. Among all the mediation tools for peer learners, peer teachers as role models corresponded to Thompson's (2013) Modelling of a behaviour or task by an expert that the learner initially imitates and ultimately internalizes and appropriates. Peer teachers' teaching resources and teaching methods were related to Moll's (2014) Instrumental or tool mediation which includes the use of artifacts created culturally and inherited socially, to engage in human practices. Regardless of their forms, all the mediation tools mentioned above were effective because they were created in a cooperative learning context where peer learners and peer teachers both committed to the learning process, as set out in section 5.2.

There was a major difference between peer teachers' maturation and peer learners' maturation. As discussed in section 5.6.1, peer teachers or coteachers took the initiatives to generate their maturation. They worked in groups and helped each other to mature. They were knowledge producers. This process included their equal and
mutual cooperation, negotiation and support as well as their commitment to their teaching sessions. Unlike peer teachers, peer learners acted as knowledge receivers. In terms of receiving knowledge, peer learners generated their personal maturation under the guidance of peer teachers. During peer learners’ learning process, more capable people transmitted knowledge to less capable people through several mediation tools.

5.6.3. Collective maturation of the Chinese class

When both peer teachers and peer learners managed to progress, they empowered the dynamics of cooperative learning and stimulated the collective knowledge of the whole class to a new level. As illustrated in Figure 2.3, both peer teachers and peer learners had the same level of Chinese right after a Chinese lesson. When peer teachers generated a ZPD, they were a step ahead of peer learners in terms of their language competence. However, when peer learners generated a ZPD, they reached a language level close to peer teachers as the finding in section 4.4.2 suggested that peer teachers were more expert on their teaching topics. The progression of both peer teachers and peer learners represented the collective maturation of the Chinese class as a whole. Thus, the current RPCoT model allowed bootstrapping of learning where everyone moved from A to B without outside intervention.

The current RPCoT model also created a context in which STs generated their maturation beyond language learning. As discussed in section 5.4, STs experienced both subjective reflection and objective reflection. As set out in section 2.8, learners’ transformation was generated through reflection. In this context, STs’ professional change was represented by their gains of technical knowledge and communicative knowledge as well as their empathic growth. The mediation tools STs’ professional change consisted of the tools for their language learning as their professional change was derived from the process of their language learning. In addition to the forms of mediation in section 5.6.1 and 5.6.2, STs’ mediation tools in relation to their professional change also included Thompson’ (2013) Peer collaboration which involves critical thinking, problem-solving or making decisions, and Moll’s (2014) Social mediation which is referred to as interactions with other human beings.

This section explored the operationalisation of the ZPD in a RPCoT context, which was derived from Vygotskian psychological new-formation. The ZPD consisted of peer
teachers' maturation, peer learners' maturation and the collective maturation of the Chinese class. These three types of maturation were mediated by psychological tools which were created by the involvement of both peer teachers and peer learners.

5.7. Comparison with other Reciprocal Peer Coteaching models

Both commonalities and differences occurred between the current RPCoT model and the models of Assinder (1991), Spratt and Leung (2000) and Carpenter (1996). Students were at the same knowledge level in each of the learning context of both the current study and those three studies. They all participated in the learning process and conducted peer teaching in groups. Students taught each other and benefited from each other's teaching in a reciprocally cooperative learning environment. The classroom teacher played a facilitating role. As stated in section 2.9, the overall findings of those three studies included students' knowledge level, learner motivation, student cooperation, student responsibility, student interdependence, students' learning and teaching skills, and student commitment to projects. The current project validated the findings of those three studies, with a special emphasis on group accountability.

However, the current study also found out the significance of the RPCoT model in developing learner autonomy which was not demonstrated in any of those three studies. Those three studies focused on students' personal development as language learners. However, the current study included both language learning as students and professional development as teachers due to a different research aim. The current study focused on an ITE programme through a language course while those three studies were carried out in language classrooms. Another feature of the current study was that the ZPD was used as the theoretical underpinning while the theoretical framework was not specified in the other three studies.

5.8. Summary

This chapter has discussed how the ZPD supported the implementation of RPCoT. The discussion supported the Vygotskian socio-cultural theory of learning in particular the construct of the ZPD. The RPCoT approach allowed STs to act as both peer coteachers and peer learners, cooperate with each other and help each other to learn. Overall, the findings have supported Figure 2.3 in terms of language learning. Peer
teachers managed to generate a ZPD before they became capable to teach their peers. And peer learners generated their maturation under the guidance of peer teachers. Both peer teachers' maturation and peer learners' maturation led to the maturation of the whole class. The creation of the ZPD in this context supported that the ZPD consisted of three key components: the roles of others, the more capable peoples' mediation, and maturation. Apart from STs' cognitive learning, this chapter has also discussed other impact areas of the RPCoT approach in this research setting. STs as peer teachers and peer learners were motivated by different factors to different degrees. Learner autonomy was associated with learner motivation. STs took responsibility for learning in an interdependent learning environment. Their professional change was demonstrated by the development of their technical knowledge, communicative knowledge, and empathic growth through reflection. As a result, STs increased their subject knowledge as language learners and generated their professional change as school teachers in a RPCoT learning context.
Chapter 6. Conclusion

This research study was implemented in the field of initial language teacher education. It explored student teachers' (STs) personal development as learners and professional development as school teachers during an implementation of Reciprocal Peer CoTeaching (RPCoT). RPCoT was conducted as a classroom methodology for maximising STs' involvement in their learning process. The construct of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) provided the theoretical underpinning of this implementation of RPCoT. STs' learning experience and reflective activities played major roles in helping them to deepen their understanding of what they were doing and the ways in which their pupils learnt languages. This closing chapter sets out the contributions of the study in section 6.1, the implications of the study in section 6.2 and the limitations in future research in 6.3.

6.1. Contributions of the thesis

This section outlines the main contributions of the study. It demonstrates the successful implementation of the RPCoT model and the exploration of its impact. Theoretical underpinning of the model was explored in relation to the literature and the findings. These contributions have been disseminated in a number of publications and conference presentations, as listed in Appendix 10.

- RPCoT generated a ZPD at three levels: peer teachers' maturation, peer learners' maturation and the maturation of the whole class.
- The RPCoT structure enhanced the sense of group accountability in multiple ways of generating a lattice of links which served to support the learning of coteaching groups and the whole class.
- The RPCoT approach allowed STs to alternate their roles between peer teachers and peer learners. This alternation ensured that they were motivated to contribute to the learning context which they were in and motivated to learn from the setting which they were part of. The alternation of their roles also enabled STs to experience a range of motivating factors.
- The implementation of RPCoT offered a mechanism for developing learning autonomy by increasing learner motivation and providing the opportunity to take ownership.
• RPCoT optimised STs' experience of empathy with own learners as they were provided a 360 view of the learning process in a condensed and emotive environment.
• RPCoT generated a context in which transformation became possible. It provided STs opportunities to reopen the apprenticeship of observation and reflect on themselves and others. It allowed STs to experience multiple perspectives on the teaching and learning environment in an emotive context.
• RPCoT explored the intersection of the cooperative learning, coteaching and peer teaching frameworks to provide a strong theoretical underpinning of the RPCoT model

6.2. Implications

The current RPCoT model was implemented within this specific Chinese course. However, a few implications of this approach for practice can be found beyond this particular course.

First, exotic languages might be helpful for language STs' education course. This Chinese course aimed to both help STs to learn a certain amount of Chinese and generate their professional development. This objective indicated two aspects. The first aspect indicated that Chinese language was the subject language. After attending this course, STs gained increased their knowledge of Chinese language and culture. The second aspect pointed out that Chinese language was treated as an exotic language in this Chinese course. It was used to help STs to gain understanding of their school pupils' learning process. Attending this course has allowed STs to achieve this objective.

Second, language teacher education may be conducted across languages. This STs' education course was conducted through the medium of Chinese. STs had background of modern languages. The successful combination of the Chinese and other modern languages indicates that it may be possible to work across languages in a similar format. For example, educating Chinese teachers may involve Russian or Turkish or other languages which they normally would not come across.

Third, STs' professional knowledge could be availed of during their educating process. In this study, both peer teachers and peer learners were new students in terms of
learning Chinese. However, in terms of learning languages in general, they were not beginners. They were all experienced language teachers in different ways. They had different understandings of planning, teaching, assessment. The diversity among STs served as the basis for them to share ideas with each other and learn from each other. The current research study showed that STs both as peer learners and peer teachers learnt from RPCoT sessions. Their gains were not just the reinforcement of Chinese language, but also the peer teachers' teaching resources and teaching philosophy. During all the RPCoT sessions, STs as peer teachers showed a great amount of talent in delivering peer teaching content. This demonstrates that STs' previous knowledge and talent may be availed during their educating process. STs' contributions might be an eye-opener for their fellow peers as well as a test which would allow themselves to understand their current levels.

Fourth, this project provided refinements to an ITE programme in a university setting. It enabled students to participate in the course by developing as learners and professional practitioners in a cooperative learning environment. This study provided a framework which may apply to studies of the kind in other fields.

6.3. Future Work

This research study produced valuable findings in relation to different themes, relative to RPCoT. At the same time, this study also has a number of limitations which could be addressed through future research projects.

STs in question came from both Ireland and a few other European counties. Their native languages and the foreign language(s) that they were going to teach were mainly within the European context. It was evident that Chinese language proved to be an exotic language for all of them. The results showed that the use of Chinese language as an exotic language enabled them to learn a new language and gain valuable insights into their professional development. However, this course was exclusively confined to Chinese language as the target language of this Initial teacher education (ITE) programme. A question may arise whether other exotic languages, such as Japanese, Korean, Arabic, etc., would produce the same research results in terms of STs' personal development and professional development.
This Chinese course lasted for 5 to 7 weeks throughout the three research cycles. The research results, based on this research duration, showed that STs as peer teachers experienced their development of learner autonomy and STs as a whole generated their professional development in terms of technical knowledge. However, it may need to be explored if a longer duration of the Chinese course would have a different impact on STs' development of learner autonomy and transformative learning. Namely, a question may need to be answered if the RPCoT approach of a longer duration would further generate both STs' personal development and professional development.

The sustained impact on STs' professional development was not assessed in this study. The data presentation and data analysis were exclusively based on the feedback which was collected from ST's weekly reflective journals and final group reports. Their feedback was related to their learning activities and reflective practice during the duration of the Chinese course. However, there was not any indication how these STs worked upon their return to post-primary schools. That is to say, the practical impact of the implementation of RPCoT on their professional development was not detailed in this study. A future research work of this kind may also include questionnaires and interviews in order to assess the sustained impact on STs' change and their professional practice.

The current research project was a small scale intervention. The understandings of STs' learning and teaching practices were refined to this specific learning context. Although the effectiveness of this RPCoT model was successfully demonstrated across the three research cycles, a future research work involving a bigger sample size may further explore the impact of this model and generalise its findings to a bigger community.
Appendix 1. Format of student teachers' weekly reflective journal

1. Learning targets for this lesson:
   - What was your own goal or learning target for this lesson?
   - What did you consider to be the learning targets of these lessons from the point of view of the teacher?
   - Were they clear to you?
   - What can you do as a result of the lesson?
   - Do you feel you achieved your own goal for the lesson?
   - Do you feel you achieved the learning targets for the lesson as outlined by the teacher?

2. Your learning of Chinese
   - What activities were you involved in in the classroom?
   - Can you identify any learning strategies you used in class or in private study?
   - Was there anything that particularly helped or hindered your learning this week?
   - Is there anything you did in class or that you noticed that you would use yourself in your own class or which would affect your teaching?
   - Did anything about this week's lesson affect your understanding of how you and others learn languages? If so, what and how?

3. Questions on Learning by Teaching:
   1) If you were involved in teaching the class:
      - Did you manage to learn this topic before the class?
      - Did you meet with any difficulty and what did you do about it?
      - Did your teaching in the class enhance your own learning?
      - Why or how?
   2) If any of your peers were involved in teaching the class:
      - Was the content of my peers' teaching beneficial to me?
      - Are there any examples?

4. Comments made directly after the lesson
Appendix 2. Format of student teachers’ final group report

1. Language learned:
   1) Were there definable language learning objectives for the course? What were they?
   2) To what extent did different members of your group achieve them?
   3) Did you feel that for the amount of time you spent in class you learned enough Chinese?
   4) What would have been required to help you learn more and better?
   5) Comment on the different types of materials used on the course from a learner’s perspective.

2. The language learning process:
   1) Can you isolate any learning strategies used by the members of the group?
      (a) In class
      (b) Out of class.
   2) What have you learned about language learning in general?
   3) Did the learning problems of the group correspond with anything you have noticed with your pupils in your own classes?
   4) Comment on your learning of the writing system of Chinese, from the perspective of reading and of writing.
   5) Peer teaching, your views as a teacher: Did your experience of teaching your peers enhance your learning of Chinese? If so, how?
   6) Peer teaching, your views as a learner: Did you find the sessions taught by your peers were beneficial to your learning? If so, how?
   7) Peer teaching and motivation: How did the experience of teaching your peers and learning from your peers affect your motivation to learn Chinese?
   8) Any other comments on the language learning of the group.

3. Language teaching
   1) Comment on the effectiveness of general approaches to teaching used during the course from the point of view of language teaching.
   2) Comment on the effectiveness of specific methods or techniques used during the course, again from the point of view of language teaching.

4. Consequences for classroom practice of members of the group
1) Has the course had any consequences for the classroom practice of members of the group [Please indicate whether these refer to all the members or just one or two]

2) Did the experience of peer teaching and learning have any consequences on your classroom practice or on your intentions/beliefs regarding your practice?

5. Value of the Chinese learning experience for components of the PDE.
   1) What has the course contributed to your knowledge of:
   2) Have the learning experiences of the group in the Chinese class thrown any light on other aspects of components of the PDE programme (e.g., Philosophy, Special Education, etc)

6. The journals and this final report: What (if any) was the value of the journals and this report for helping to make you reflect on:
   1) your own learning
   2) your own teaching

7. Any further comments.
## Appendix 3. Initial themes

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### Appendix 4. Finalised themes and sub-themes

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<td>Understanding of self and others</td>
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<td>Integrating the learner's perspective</td>
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Appendix 5. Peer learners’ positive feedback

At the start of the lesson I was very tired but the lesson was great fun and afterwards I felt really good. (BF09, 2009: W2)

I thought some of the games they made up like the word matching could be easily altered to be used in my own classes. (BF09, 2009: W5)

I really enjoyed the peered teaching and I hope to incorporate it into my teaching especially with my transition year group. It is a great way to make the students feel more involved and to introduce cultural aspects related to the language in question. I think the LA09 and KY09 did a fantastic job and they managed to do it all through the target language which is very commendable. From now on I will encourage my students to ask each other questions. This is an aspect of learning that I do not exploit enough. I tend to pose the questions myself in class. (FI09, 2009: W2)

The peer group gave us excellent worksheets and interesting activities. Making one of those activities a competition amongst us was particularly effective and enjoyable. They had spent a lot of time planning the lesson and this was evident. The peer teachers gave us activities to do throughout the lesson either individually or in groups and they really assisted our learning. They also gave us handouts containing/summarising what was covered in the class and they have been very useful when trying to do some revision. Their lesson reinforced the numbers and forced us to recognise them in Chinese character form, in addition to recognising them when aurally. The worksheet where we had to match characters to pinyin and then translate into English was challenging and a good way to learn. By the end of the lesson there was a real feel-good factor as we all left feeling that we had actually learnt how to say various phrases. I have planned to give my fourth years a task that involves peered teaching but solely with regards to culture. I feel that peer teaching the language itself could only be effective when it involves revision of a topic already covered by the teacher in previous classes. As a teacher who constantly prepares worksheets and in class activities; it is a source of comfort to know first hand as a student that when handouts and worksheets are well prepared and take learning outcomes into account, they are very useful for students and they facilitate effective learning. It has given me a renewed enthusiasm for the use of worksheets in my class. Although I do already do competitions in class to review vocabulary etc., during the Chinese class I experienced first hand just how effective encouraging competitiveness can be with regards to learning. (FI09, 2009: W3)

To look for aspects of the lesson, methods of teaching that I could, in turn apply to my own teaching. From the peer group the learning targets were made very clear i.e. they were outlined on a slide at the beginning of the lesson. I have experienced first hand just how much the use of visuals encourage and facilitate learning. I thought about how I could apply some of the aspects of how we learned to my own teaching. I have been reminded just how important it is to instil confidence in the students when it comes to speaking the language. Being the learner again and being called on to say words or phrases out loud is nerve wracking. Therefore, in class I will put a stronger emphasis on pronunciation. I will ask students to repeat new vocabulary and phrases after me several times (not just once or twice) and then instruct them to use that new language through activities with the person sitting next to them. If they feel they are saying the language correctly I feel that they will find the class more enjoyable and it will encourage them to participate during class. I can now empathise more with students’ reluctance to speak in a foreign language among their peers as they are afraid of
pronouncing it incorrectly. Since the Chinese classes have begun I personally have realised how much I rely on visuals for effective learning and retention. Visual association helps me a great deal to learn. Although I have used visuals in my classes I will incorporate the use of them even more. I am really enjoying this learning experience. As the weeks have gone by I am gaining more and more from the experience. Over the first two weeks I concentrated solely on acquiring some of the Chinese language. However, over the last few weeks in particular I have reflected more on how I can learn as a student and how this can make my own teaching more effective. I reflect on what is effective and what is not in our Chinese classes. (FI09, 2009: W4)

I thought the material in the lesson today was interesting and relevant to life. Food is a great topic to study as it is universal! As a result I felt motivated and determined in the class. The presenting group was very good at holding our attention by constant repetition, explanation and exercises. I found that only now is some of the language starting to make sense to me and sink in. The presenting group was very good at holding our attention by constant repetition, explanation and exercises. I suppose this exhibits that learning is really a gradual process, nothing can change suddenly and without some work on both the learner's side and the educator's side. I feel that I'm only starting to become more comfortable in our Chinese classes now. This proves that it really does take time to adapt to something and that in my own teaching I should remember that the students are also taking time to settle in to things just like me. The techniques of language learning that I experience in the Chinese course help me realize that I cannot take every step back in my school classes as disasters, it is all part of the process. (KF09, 2009: W4)

Every week in this session I learn a lot of techniques that I can apply to my own teaching. I really liked the activities that the girls had planned for today. They were slightly different from tasks we had done before. There was a game with an oversized die with weather pictures on it, an individual worksheet and a word search. They were fun and engaging. They provided both individual work and group work. I found that this repeated use of the new information in different ways was very useful and I will try to apply some of these ideas to my own teaching. (KF09, 2009: W6)

On the whole, I believe the peer teaching was beneficial. The girls made a really great effort to speak through the target language, and to make the lesson and enjoyable and lively affair. They used role play throughout, and while I think this was a practical way to teach the language, it is dependent on the teacher being able to have a willing and capable partner with whom to work. The girls did a really good job at peer teaching, and have set a high standard for the rest of the group to follow. (KT09, 2009: W2)

The peer teachers' effort was very obvious and on the whole, I would say that their class was beneficial. It included revision of topics already covered, while it also introduced a satisfactory amount of new language (i.e., not too much, but not too little that the class was dull.) The game was not perfect, but a fun way of learning if implemented correctly. Again, I would cite here the repeated use of repetition and the strong use of target language teaching. The peer teachers did an excellent job on their side; a fun, engaged lesson, with some serious teaching going on. (KT09, 2009: W3)

I was really impressed by the pricing game for ordering in a restaurant. By combining the new vocabulary with a monetary unit and having a budget of 40 yuan, each student had to order what they wanted within their monetary constraints. I would gladly include this in my class. A fun class and a balanced lesson plan, incorporating revision of the topics previously covered, the lesson was well geared for the learner, balancing a number of learning styles and including group work. (KT09, 2009: W4)
I felt a need to take an active part in the class, offering answers and speaking as frequently as I could. This was due to the respect I have gained for my classmates when I was peer teaching; they seemed to take an active role in the lesson, and I was therefore keen to return the favour. The content was very useful, as it is an example of real language in use. The ability to comment on the weather is a staple of conversations between people who don’t have anything to talk about, and the vocabulary is universally applicable, and not in situ vocabulary (i.e., ordering food from a restaurant.) I also thought that their group exercise, the dice game, was simple but highly effective, and deserved credit. Upon deeper thought, I believe that the lesson produced by the girls was ultimately reasonably successful, if a tad slow to get going. Certainly I can see myself making up sets of dice to roll, detailing different weather scenarios on one, and days of the week on the other, thereby creating a game where the students have to forecast the weather. (KT09, 2009: W6)

The game which the peer teachers used was fun and it linked back to the learning very well. It could be adapted for many different topics and I would use it myself in class. (LZ09, 2009: W3)

I think the teachers really kept the students in mind as they only introduced ten new words. I also really like how they linked the lesson to the last lesson. We had to use our previous knowledge of numbers when having to order the food as they had put the price of the food beside the picture and told us how much money we had to spend. Practising how to order food (using photocopies of a menu they gave us) was a really good idea as it is practical and it is an everyday occurrence. We could clearly see how this would be useful to us in the real world and so it gave us a motive to learn. (LZ09, 2009: W4)

(Comments on peer taught lesson): 1) Great class! 2) Impressive teaching methodologies used by teaching group; 3) Good use of props/activities/games; 4) The class went very quickly! 5) I’m getting more into the classes as they go by! (MB09, 2009: W3)

With the other students’ new knowledge it gave me a better understanding of Chinese Culture and from a student perspective it was a great way to get to know our classmates and interact more. This is something that I feel should be done more in schools especially with first years as it can often be hard for some students to interact and get to know each other. The role plays were very effective and we all paid attention. I use role plays but mainly for older students. I will try and introduce a similar activity for younger students as it can be great fun. The methods which the students used were excellent and fun. (NB09, 2009: W2)

The group activities included a game of joining the correct written numbers with the answer. This was a very good idea as we completed it in small groups and were able to help each other. The final game that was played at the end of the presentation was really good fun (even though I was a little lost as I did not understand the construction of the numbers). The game involved small groups racing against each other to put the answer on the board (the teacher called a number and the students had to put it on the board). The games were good fun and gave me great ideas. The group who presented were really enthusiastic and really encouraged students to learn. (NB09, 2009: W3)

The atmosphere was really great and encouraging. (NB09, 2009: W4)

Some of the activities were again quite clever in the way that they got me to learn certain aspects of the language. We were a menu with prices having and taught how to say what you wanted and the names of the different types of food. This was made
better by giving us a budget of 40 yuan to spend. The main point here was that it resembled a real problem/real life situation and for that reason simply I was more motivated to participate. (UZ09, 2009: W4)

The peer teachers' dramatization of their lesson was very effective in bringing the language to life in a real life situation. The role play in the restaurant and shop were both entertaining and instructive. I have already used dialogues in class and intend to use role play where possible as I think it helps to emphasise that the languages we are teaching are actually used outside of the classroom in everyday situations. (NZ09, 2009: W2)

(My peers') worksheet to match pictures with pinyin and characters was very helpful as was the menu worksheet on which we had to fill in the pinyin. The visuals were imperative to stimulate my recall of vocab. They also used flashcards which I found beneficial too. (NZ09, 2009: W4)

My peers' powerpoint presentation was visually very stimulating. Even though they moved from one slide to the next a bit quicker than I would have liked, they used repetition to greater effect than any other group that I had seen. The worksheets to match pictures with pinyin and characters were very helpful. The use of visual stimuli in today's presentation was very effective. I am increasingly aware of the need to incorporate visual stimuli wherever possible, and particularly for children with learning difficulties. Since last week, I have been trying to use powerpoint in my classes, whenever possible in order to maximize the impact of visual stimuli. Today's experience has taught me a number of things - never to give up even if a student demonstrates a mental block towards learning; continue to break language down where possible into bite-size chunks that students may be able to grasp, i.e. break it down and then build it back up again - even the process of doing that may result in a student grasping a concept that was hitherto impossible for him or her to comprehend. (NZ09, 2009: W5)

My peers' powerpoint presentation was visually very stimulating; their worksheet was helpful for reinforcing the vocabulary; the game cube was also effective for reinforcing vocabulary. (NZ09, 2009: W6)

I also wanted to see how the peer teaching worked and to take pointers from my classmates as to how they were approaching it. I thought the peer teaching went well. UA09 lead the teaching as she clearly felt more comfortable with the language than the other two. HN09 and MY09 were both very well prepared and they made a lot of effort to make the class enjoyable for all of us, while getting through all the material they had prepared. Nice touch bringing in the cake! (OF09, 2009: W3)

I thought the group involved in this week's teaching task did an excellent job considering the limited amount of Chinese they have studied. Their use of props and visuals were very effective to convey the meaning of the new vocabulary and to keep their fellow peers engaged in the task. The restaurant vocabulary was cleverly introduced with the use of props: tables, chairs, knives, forks etc. Asking a student to participate in the task was an effective approach to keep the rest of the class engaged. The student/student interaction is very beneficial for language learning and I would definitely use this technique to keep the learners engaged in the lesson. (OK09, 2009: W2)

The game used in the peer teaching activity helped me to understand the months and days in Chinese. The teacher/student interaction used to ask when our birthdays were helped me to remember the date of my birthday in Chinese. The teacher-student
interaction was an effective methodology to use when teaching us the months of the year and days of the month. We were asked the date of our birthdays and had to reply aloud. We were also given a handout to fill in to reinforce the learning. This helped to enhance our knowledge of the Chinese calendar and gave us more confidence when learning the language. I would also use a similar game with my students to that used in this week's lesson. It was quite a competitive game which would work very well with my First Year class. (OK09, 2009: W3)

(My peers) presented the material in a very, clear simple fashion which made it easier to understand the new topic. They began by introducing the topic of hobbies with a powerpoint presentation. They defined some very clear learner outcomes on their first slide to let us know exactly what we were going to learn in this class. I find this approach very effective for learners of all subjects as straight away students know what the purpose of the class is. The use of visuals to describe the nouns was excellent as it aids understanding of them without having to translate into English. It is also an effective approach to employ for special needs learners. The nouns were introduced gradually with constant repetition together as a group and individually. This not only encourages correct pronunciation but helps the learner to retain the information. This approach was then used to introduce verbs which were then matched up with each other in an activity. Overall I found the teaching excellent as I learned some new teaching methods from this class and my level of Chinese also improved. One thing that does come to mind are the new teaching methods I learned in this lesson and have subsequently incorporated into my own lessons. The importance of repetition and drilling exercises were highlighted in this class. They are invaluable for language learning. I have noticed that the information for me personally is retained better after practicing these exercises. This was a very enjoyable lesson and one in which I can actually recall the new subject matter. I was very enthused about learning Chinese after this class. (OK09, 2009: W5)

In terms of learning new teaching methodologies and retention of information they were beneficial to me. I can definitely use some of the activities the peer group used in class with my own students. The snap game and matching exercises were excellent for injecting a fun element into the lesson and for retention purposes. After participating in these activities I can now remember some of the weather phrases. I would put this down to being fully engaged in the lesson and playing an active role instead of a passive role. I feel I myself learn better when I am involved in an activity as opposed to being a receiver of information. (OK09, 2009: W6)

I believe the class as a whole successfully completed the class prepared by the peer tutors. The fact that I feel confident that I can use the language learned in class outside of a classroom setting is a testament to how well taught the class was. I found that this class ran very smoothly and cohesively. I did find that the group work was very motivating and the energy was great, which meant that you didn’t feel inhibited. I found that this helped. It was also a lot of fun. They taught a very cohesive and relevant class. I felt that I was going to leave the room being able to DO something, which is very empowering. I thought their techniques were interesting as well and overall I really enjoyed the class. My motivation had been very low going into the class but now it’s quite high and that is as a direct result of their peer teaching. They made the numbers feel really accessible, where before I had been struggling to remember them. They did this through simple listen and repeat. By modelling how to count beyond ten and then beyond twenty, which I found very engaging, they allowed us as learners to make a logical leap on our own. Their group activity was very well presented, entertaining and stimulating. I really liked the group activity and I would definitely use a version of this in my own classes. The lasting impression I have of the last class is that of UA09’s teaching. She was a real presence in the room and really got people interested and
engaged. I still feel that this group did the best lesson so far and I have used some of their techniques in my classes since. Especially the idea of competition. (PB09, 2009: W3)

I felt that they raised the level of the activities to make them challenging enough for us as adult learners of a language. The fact that the activities were challenging made them all the more engaging. The activity that required us to match the picture to the word and the word to the character really motivated me as I had to engage with the language and figure things out on my own. (PB09, 2009: W4)

The class was enjoyable and engaging. The animation of the power-point was definitely memorable. (PB09, 2009: W5)

They executed their lesson very well and kept it interesting with songs and puzzles incorporating days and months. Enjoyed the presentation done by my peers. They made the lesson fun. (OB09, 2009: W3)

The colourful, interactive presentations that the girls used in teaching us their peers was very good. It was fun and very memorable. Setting up a restaurant situation as well as continually repeating new words all helped the learning process. (OL09, 2009: W2)

The handout regarding the birthday phrases and numbers were very helpful. (OL09, 2009: W3)

Using this barter/shopping game that I designed could easily be adapted for use in one of my Italian classes. In fact, I think I'll try it next week when we cover the topic of 'food'. (OL09, 2009: W5)

I would definitely use both the dice game and the 'snap' card competition game. As well as being very enjoyable these games were both very functional and totally targeted at effective teaching. We spent a few minutes doing this and it was fun! The group got so involved in it that we started to correct each other's pronunciation and ask the teachers for clarifications. It was a simple and very effective language learning exercise. On top of this, the other aspect of today's class that stands out the most for me is the game of 'snap' we played in pairs. It was a very fun game and also a very effective game. The class atmosphere was not overly competitive, and nobody took it too seriously. But we did learn effectively by playing a game that was new to many of us. (OL09, 2009: W6)

(The contents of my peers' teaching) were, in general, very interesting and fairly stimulating. (PM09, 2009: W2)

An excellent and enjoyable lesson during which I felt interested and felt I achieved a lot. The effort put in and the delivery of the lesson was reflected in the mood in the classroom, the peer teachers leading the enthusiasm for the activities which was, in turn, mirrored by the students. I found myself motivated before, during and after the class. (PM09, 2009: W5)

The excellent delivery of the peer group's lesson was a real help to our learning. It was engaging, interesting and clear and the level of enthusiasm was clear to see. (PM09, 2009: W5)

Entertaining and engaging the delivery of a lesson was, it was never quite enough to mask the fact the peer teachers were as new to the content as the students were. I
certainly feel there is real value in incorporating some peer teaching into my own lessons, though more so with older students who already have a greater subject knowledge, hence are able to perhaps develop a topic more, and with confidence. The range of activities was inspiring and engaging. It has been such a valuable experience in teaching us the value of reflection and how much such reflection can help us improve our own teaching. (PM09, 2009; W6)

Really excellent notes from the three tutors. Clear and colourful. Not too much information on them. Games which put pressure on me to retain the information. Fun games like this in class can input healthy competition as a way to put more pressure on me to learn what’s in front of me. The games really made the whole class more enjoyable. The lesson moved really quickly. I never lost interest. It’s a credit to how well planned out the lesson was. (UZ09, 2009: W3)

Some of the activities were again quite clever in the way that they got me to learn certain aspects of the language. We were a menu with prices having and taught how to say what you wanted and the names of the different types of food. This was made better by giving us a budget of 40 yuan to spend. The main point here was that it resembled a real problem/real life situation and for that reason simply I was more motivated to participate. There is a short introduction from the teachers and then we go straight into practicing ourselves. I think this is a good format and I try to emulate it in my classes. Pupils have short attention spans and if I’m chatting away and doing all the work at the top of the class it means they are not. So I am trying to stick to a format of 5 minutes intro and they immediately start working. The motivation to do this has come from observing this and other lessons. (UZ09, 2009: W4)

I have now partially adopted this approach in my TY classes. There are clear advantages to this strategy, particularly in classes where SS are not expected to pass an examination & do homework. (ZO09, 2009: W4)

I liked the ideas though behind the authentic menu and currency. I did like their usage of authentic material and this is definitely something I would try and incorporate in one of my own lessons. (BO10, 2010: W5)

I enjoyed the game The Price is Right and I think this could be a useful tool in preparing a lesson based around vocabulary on the comparative and superlative. The element of teamwork made the exercise fun and I think we as students were encouraged to really think about the cost of things in this task. This could also be adapted to price items, which are particularly relevant to the target language country and this is definitely a fun method I would consider using myself. The fact that we had to communicate with one another was an essential part of this task and in language learning this is a very positive strategy I think. There was particular emphasis placed on working in teams and there was very little direct teaching from a teacher, we were encouraged to work amongst ourselves in an interactive style of lesson. Our active involvement in the lesson ensured we all participated and I think this is of importance as it allowed us all to communicate where possible through the target language. This usage of the language is definitely of importance when it comes to improving our own personal language skills. This class was really enjoyable this week and this has definitely helped me in my confidence as a language learner. That we had to communicate in groups and then as a class to share the vocabulary was a new method and I reacted very positively to this. It was nice not to use the power point to learn this new vocabulary and I think it was much more memorable having to work together to figure out how to complete our family descriptions. We had to communicate to share the information and I think this will make it easier to retain the new words when it comes to revising this vocabulary as a language learner. (BO10, 2010: W6)
The resources used in the revision component of the class were excellent and can't express my enjoyment of drawing with the Chinese brush enough. I said that last week's lesson taught me that a positive atmosphere in the classroom is paramount and I think this week's lesson reinforced this idea. More than any of the other weeks, I felt that the peer-teaching was very well done this week and more importantly very enjoyable. As I mentioned above, using the brush and playing the game in teams were the 2 most enjoyable parts of the lesson. (BZ10, 2010: W6)

I thought it was quite beneficial as the early part of their lesson involved me and another student having to recognise the male and female pictograms. I thought that this exercise closely mimicked the real situation where it is potentially embarrassing to enter the wrong toilet and so it helped me to remember the symbols. This imitation of real life in language class is hard to recreate as a teacher so it was good to see even some small example of it. They used real objects and situations in the class as much as possible and I thought this was a clever approach. (CO10, 2010: W2)

Knowing that the class will be reviewed at the beginning of the next class is comforting, although it may have contributed to me not having studied very hard this week. (CO10, 2010: W4)

I enjoyed their teaching. They covered what we had done in class the week before in a structured manner. They taught us two new words — teacher and pupil in Chinese — important words for us as teachers ourselves! It also really helped me to see if I had really learnt the material from the previous week. The peer teachers also gave us rewards for what we knew, which was fun! (DI10, 2010: W2)

Listening and taking notes from my peer teachers was both interesting and enjoyable — it gives a bit of variety (although we’ve only had 3 classes so far, and Weiming is very enthusiastic so we don’t necessarily need this variety at all in our class!...but for my own students I think they would appreciate some variety from having the same teacher teach during the whole class. I’ve actually asked some classes to peer teach and was really impressed with how it worked; the students really paid attention to their peers). The peer-teacher which covered verbs gathered vocabulary used in the previous two classes and constructed sentences which we had not done directly, but which pieced together different elements of sentences we had done, to make a new sentence using the same vocabulary. We had learnt how to say ‘We’/ ‘listen’. So the teacher taught us a new word ‘music’ and we made the sentence ‘we listen to music’. (DI10, 2010: W3)

Initially there was peer teaching where the teachers revised what we had learnt in the previous week’s lesson. This was very enjoyable and helpful. I loved the Christmas card idea during the peer-teaching, it was both fun and a way to learn! While revising dates during peer-teaching, one of the teachers mentioned how she had learnt the new vocabulary it made me think that perhaps a discussion on this could help students to find new methods of learning. And so, in my own classes last week (following my Chinese class), I incorporated a discussion on how to learn the new vocabulary items introduced in the day’s lesson. This was in fact days of the week. I was very impressed with the variety and number of ideas suggested, and it seemed a popular topic for the students- it made them think! Peer-teaching encourages the students to pay attention to the class (Not that we don’t for Weiming!), but the fact that there is a different teacher and that they too were a complete beginner just like you means several motivating factors: 1) If they can learn the new vocabulary/grammar etc well enough to be able to teach it, then so can you! 2) They will more than likely present the main important elements of what was taught, so you focus on what they teach as you know it is very relevant. 3) The peer-teachers will probably present the lesson in a different way to how the teacher taught it the previous week, so there is variety in teaching
strategies and so this could mean that if a student did not grasp a concept/understand a sentence structure etc the first time, they second time it is taught through a different approach may give them a better insight into what is being taught. (DI10, 2010: W4)

The idea of using a menu was good, I would use this with my classes. A sample conversation between dining guests and the waiter was good, but I would perhaps leave gaps for the students to fill in, that way making them think about what they want to say, and how. Printing Chinese currency was interesting as each group got a set and was able to look at what the peer-teacher was talking about and answer her questions. All three peer-teachers mentioned ways of methods that used to remember vocabulary. This could be a good idea for classes. I found the teachers comments about how they (peers) remembered different vocabulary items interesting and useful, even if I wouldn’t use the very same methods, it gave me ideas. Colours! That was a bit fun. It made me think that it could help my students once I get to teaching colours to practice that using a drawing and then the students follow instructions in the target language to colour the picture. (DI10, 2010: W5)

I will definitely use this information gap exercise with my students when starting new topics. The hands-on exercise for Chinese writing was both enjoyable and cultural and the fact that the peer-teacher was so interested in the topic and had clearly practised gave it an added edge. The ‘Price is Right’ activity was enjoyable and engaging when we were practising clothes vocabulary and price vocabulary – I would employ this activity in my classes. One of the teachers used the game ‘The Price is Right’ to practise vocabulary and create a competitive, but friendly, atmosphere. This made you think for yourself as a student and also work as a group. I’ve really enjoyed the course, it’s been good fun and the class have got on really well together and we’ve all been very encouraging and supportive of each other as we did the peer-teaching. I think peer-teaching can be a good source of structure to a class and a group and add positively to group dynamics. I will definitely incorporate peer-teaching into my classes now. I have especially enjoyed the peer-teaching and see major value in it and in incorporating it into classes in schools. (DI10, 2010: W6)

At the beginning of the class, we had a revision session with our peer teachers, this was very helpful as they divided up everything we had learnt so far into personal pronouns, verbs and vocabulary. In this way, we were able to form lots of different phrases. I found the peer teaching this week very helpful. Looking at the material we have covered a week later and with from a different angle helps cement it in place. I find that, as the peer teachers are in the same position as all of the rest of us, they find the same things difficult and therefore make and extra effort to clarify these particular topics. (DM10, 2010: W3)

I have had a look at the slide shows that were used by the peer teachers and they are very useful especially ‘The Price is Right’ game which I think would be very good to use with my own students as it requires independent thinking outside the box. (DM10, 2010: W6)

When we played Bingo I found that having students pick the numbers themselves means the game incorporates listening and speaking instead of just listening so I will definitely use this method when playing Bingo in future. (DB10, 2010: W3)

Making the birthday/Christmas cards, it was not only fun but it really gave me a reason to focus my attention on doing something with the words and characters in a very directed way that it I was learning without much thinking (and the music in the background helped too!) (DB10, 2010: W4)
In the peer teaching the menu was a good idea for learning how to order in a restaurant—pity there wasn’t enough time for it. (DB10, 2010: W5)

There was a good revision of last week’s topic (shopping) including a group activity which involved speaking so it worked well for me. Group activities and games work great for reviewing a topic. The quiz had us working together in groups and speaking. The vocabulary from the previous week was revised nice and slowly. The character drawing added a fun cultural element and I now know and can draw my star sign. (DB10, 2010: W6)

I really enjoyed the peer teaching aspect of the class as it allowed me to reinforce and consolidate what was learned in the previous two lessons. I also felt that the teachers’ targets were achieved as all of the content on his slides was covered in class. We were also provided with a fascinating insight into the Chinese calendar and the symbols of a number of the months. I believe that peer teaching could prove to be highly beneficial if it involved revising a topic that would have been previously covered in class. If the students felt that they were in charge if their own learning it would increase their motivation and add to their overall confidence. I really enjoyed the manner in which the peer group outlined the lesson’s learning targets before the lesson began. We were automatically aware of what was expected of us and I was immediately curious as to how they were going to achieve the learning targets. (IO10, 2010: W3)

The activity whereby we had to decipher the date, month and year by studying the symbols for each one was very effective as it really challenged us to make ourselves more familiar with the symbols for each month and year. The activity which required us to make a Christmas card in Chinese was most enjoyable as it gave me the opportunity to revise the greetings in Chinese and also provided us with a very effective cultural insight into how a Chinese Christmas card is constructed. (IO10, 2010: W4)

The exercises that the peer teaching group used to revise the vocabulary for food and drink were very effective as they used the Chinese symbols on a menu instead of the actual words to revise the food. This is a very effective strategy as it pushes the learner out of their comfort zone and demands that they draw on deciphering skills to try to decode the symbol. This also provides the learner with the added incentive of making themselves more familiar with the symbols. I really enjoyed the peer teaching aspect of the class as it allowed me to reinforce and consolidate what was learned in the previous two lessons. The class was very enjoyable and very effective. They had spent a lot of time planning the lesson and this was evident. (IO10, 2010: W5)

I really enjoyed the peer teaching aspect of the class as it allowed me to reinforce and consolidate what was learned in the previous two lessons. I also felt that the teachers’ targets were achieved as all of the content on his slides was covered in class. BN10 and NA10 did an excellent job of conducting the class. NA10 played a game of “The price is right”. This was a most enjoyable activity as it allowed us to revise both clothing and numbers in a relaxed and enjoyable manner. BN10 showed us how to paint the Chinese symbol for “forever” as well as showing us how to paint the symbol for the year we were born in. This added to our cultural awareness of the Chinese language as well as providing us with a fun opportunity to try painting the symbols for ourselves. (IO10, 2010: W6)

I thought the painting was very recreational and wound us all down. There is too much stress in our lives as P.D.E students. Feel relaxed and well. Enjoyed the painting and the game. (LB10, 2010: W6)

I like the fact that there is a focus on peer teaching. (MZ10, 2010: W1)
(The contents of my peers’ teaching were) very much (beneficial to me). Constant repetition and use of the new words embedded laoshi (teacher) and xuesheng (student) in my memory. (MZ10, 2010: W2)

Since I found it initially difficult to count in Chinese, the repetition of numbers and the bingo game were very helpful. Especially TA10’s presentation of sentences, divided into personal noun, verb and object was very beneficial, because it gave the content we covered structure. Looking back to Tuesday’s class, again what remained best in my memory was the introductory peer teaching session. Repeating the numbers made a big difference and prepared me better for the lesson ahead. (MZ10, 2010: W3)

The peer-teaching group gave out a menu written exclusively in Chinese characters. I found that a challenging, but great exercise. When doing foods with my language classes, I will introduce original German/Italian menus as an authentic text. Ordering of a Chinese menu is a complex issue. The amount and various combinations of characters are a big challenge for any learner. It was very helpful that the different characters were repeated and later on tested when we had to identify the characters to find a certain meal on the Chinese menu. Looking back at Tuesday’s lesson, what I remember best are parts from the peer-teaching session: the use of formal/informal characters for currency in China; a selected amount of characters that were found on the Chinese menu. This shows me how important ongoing repetition and reinforcement is in my daily teaching. (MZ10, 2010: W5)

Peer teaching gives great insight into how others can teach material in different ways. It was a good summary of the last lesson and good variety. They used different ways of teaching the material – powerpoint, lecture, blackboard and student involvement. I added to last week’s notes based on some of the students teachings, so although not new material, it helped consolidate some concepts. (NN10, 2010: W2)

Peer teaching is crucial for helping consolidate the previous lesson so I look forward to the peer teaching in the next lesson as I found today’s lesson quite tough. (NN10, 2010: W3)

Clear explanation of a day, year, date using several examples. Excellent explanations of how sentences are formed and when answering you keep the same structure. The activity of creating a Xmas or birthday card to revise the dates and some vocab was great idea. After the class I have a better grasp on the numbers thanks to the peer teaching. (NN10, 2010: W4)

I liked the idea of the text books given to Ss to find the family members themselves. Where a group did not have all the required words they needed to describe their family, they needed to ask other groups for the missing words. This created a great sense of team work within the groups themselves and between the different groups. I will definitely use this in class as a means of introducing new vocabulary but also to encourage Ss to work in groups and question/answer each other in TL. (NN10, 2010: W6)

The peer teaching helped me learn. It introduced variety in classroom interaction and the Ss are well-placed to hone in on areas where they are weak themselves which will often correlate with other students’ difficulties. It also reminded me that I will some week be doing that (which is a little scary) and has motivated me to stay on top of things. The peer teacher gave us Kit-Kats which we ate for Xiu-xi (break). This helped create a good classroom dynamic while reinforcing vocabulary. I like it because it provides for variety in interaction styles. It was interesting to see which angles they took on the first lesson. It served to reinforce well what we learnt in the previous lesson.
It is also interesting from a language teacher's point of view to see what teaching methods your classmates employ. (OB10, 2010: W2)

The peer teaching helped me learn. It was effective in reinforcing what I learnt last week. The peer teaching was very effective. I felt the need to recap on what we had done last week because I didn’t have much time to study since the last class. The most effective part of the peer teaching was when we had to practice the language ourselves. I find if I don’t do this I don’t internalize what I’m being taught. The bingo worked very well in this way. You had to try and get up to speed on all the numbers so that you wouldn’t be caught out. (OB10, 2010: W3)

I find group work really helpful in terms of applying the knowledge that I’m learning. I think it’s necessary for students to apply what they are learning themselves. This week the exercise where we needed to work out the price of things worked really well in that respect. (OB10, 2010: W4)

The Peer Teaching provided a very useful summary of the last class. The first part of the presentation involved three distinct columns on the blackboard: 1) subject pronouns 2) verbs 3) vocabulary. The second part involved revising the pronunciation of the numbers. Because we are not used to the system of ‘tones’ this was very useful revision. The final part involved a game of bingo. Again the purpose was to practice numbers. I find the revision that this part of the class provides very useful. As those giving the class are proficient in a European language they tend to use the structure of grammar of a European language hence dividing the words into: subject pronouns verbs etc. I had missed picking up on: bu yong xie: ‘you are welcome’ in the last class. The peer teaching was invaluable. (TD10, 2010: W3)

As always the peer teaching was very beneficial. I had not realised that when a dish is mentioned the method of cooking goes before the word (e.g. fried) and then way it is shaped goes after (e.g. sliced). The formal/informal expressions in relation to money was useful as was the historic explanation (in English) of the related characters. The distribution of monopoly notes was really good in that it brought a practical aspect to the learning. Hearing the names of various food items again was important together with their pronunciation. I learnt that ‘he’ means ‘and’ only when the two items being linked are similar (e.g. knife and fork). The students who led the Peer Teaching brought Chinese monopoly notes so we could see the symbols on each note – this raised the important matter of knowing which note to hand over when shopping in China. Having the notes really made the topic relevant. It is important to remember the kinesthetic learner. (TD10, 2010: W5)

The Peer Teaching was time well-spent as always. It was extremely interesting to learn how to paint the letters as well as how to hold the paintbrush correctly. We initially learnt a particular word and then how to paint/draw our birth sign. Playing ‘The Price is Right’ was enjoyable. We had to guess the prices of various clothes and this gave us practice in using prices. Anything practical like this serves to repeat the basics of money and numbers over and over and is very useful. From today’s class I have learnt to present culture and a relevant activity together with grammar/vocabulary. (TD10, 2010: W6)

(Peer teaching) was really helpful to revise the previous lesson’s content before moving on. The 3 girls involved revised all the contents of last week’s lesson which was helpful. They involved most students in learning. They gave out kit kats and said ‘Nǐ xiūxi’ and it jogged my memory ‘have a break’. I thought that was a very good and clever idea. We also learned the character for ‘root’ from the character of a tree, which we knew from before. (UB10, 2010: W2)
I do feel I achieved my own personal goal, because I was engaged and focused, but also because the group involved in peer teaching tackled a challenging, dense topic and revised it well with the class. (UB10, 2010: W4)

We reflected on familiar Chinese characters to figure out various foods on a menu and how they were cooked/prepared. I instantly recognised the characters for rice, meat and shredded as I could make a connection with them. I thought this was a good activity as it is something I would be likely to use in a restaurant in China. Another useful exercise was figuring out the monetary value of each Chinese bill, as we were pre-taught the (ancient/formal) characters for kuài/yuán & mào/jiào. The peer teaching is a great exercise, particularly for the group involved in the given week. (UB10, 2010: W5)

I thought it was very interesting to see how other people in the group had remembered certain parts of the previous lesson. The peer tutors had picked up a few words that I had missed in the last lesson, so it was good to get a review. EY10 explained the Chinese symbols very clearly and separated them into headings 1. Pictograph 2. Ideograph and 3. Compound. I found this very helpful. The group also used the words for ‘teacher’ and ‘student’ a lot. I hadn’t picked up these words from the first class, so I was glad they had included them in the peer tutoring. (WB10, 2010: W2)

It was a game in the style of the gameshow “The Price is Right!” A picture came up on the screen, for example Britney Spears in a dress, and in our groups we had to guess what price her dress was. The group who guessed closest to the price of the dress was the winner. This continued with about three other items that we had to guess the price of. I liked working in a group and I also liked the competitive element to the game. When a group said their estimated price, we could all comment by shouting, in Chinese, “too expensive” or “too cheap”. In general in this class, I liked the atmosphere of working in a group and also having Weiming there to help us. I think I learned a lot this week and also really enjoyed myself. I had never thought that I enjoyed group work, so I surprised myself today! We rarely did any group work in school or college so I am not used to it. I am now starting to see that I enjoy more hands-on, practical lessons. This is not what I expected of myself, as I had always assumed I worked best just reading and learning material off by heart. (WB10, 2010: W6)

The teaching group helped put last week’s content into practice in a very effective way. The seating arrangement was well thought-out (we all sat in groups of four) and helped facilitate the practice. The worksheet was nicely designed, clear and logical in its sequence. (BZ11, 2011: W3)

I will definitely try to put up the objectives on the board. I usually explain to the class what the general theme of the class is, but sometimes I’m afraid of putting them up explicit objectives as we never seem to get all 3 of them done so I’m worried of ‘failing’ in front of the class. But as I found today, it really does help to have an idea of what is coming up. I achieved my goals as we had an excellent peer tutoring at the beginning of the class. They did a great job and I felt comfortable continuing on to learn something new after their recap. Having the revision at the beginning of class was excellent. As I explained I was worried coming into class that I had forgotten everything we had learnt already so I wanted to test myself on how much I remembered. I was really surprised with how much I remembered and this made me feel ready to go on to new items and grammar. PT helped a lot. It was done in a really clear way and it all looked as if they had put a lot of thought into it. They really worked well as a team. I liked how they expanded on what we learnt slightly. I liked this as we hadn’t done this the week before but it challenged us slightly. The handout was great as it gave diversity and the presentation by 4 of them made it interesting as you didn’t know who was
going to teach next. I have been doing revision at the beginning of all my classes and at times I wondered was it a waste of time, or if I had gone overboard with it as it always seemed to eat a lot more of my time that I thought it would. But, having experienced it myself, I felt a lot more at ease and prepared to learn something new when I saw for myself that I had actually learned something the previous week. (DB11, 2011: W2)

The peer teachers were excellent again. Their class was very clear and concise and there was a lot of repetition. I really liked the way they had the questions on the board. This helped me reinforce my learning as I had remembered it but then when I had to use it, I would sometimes forget. But it was nice as I made a little competition with myself that I was only allowed look at it once and after that I couldn't, but it was a nice resource to have there, just in case you got lost. I liked the matching up exercise and especially the map with the countries on it which I think I will steal for revision for my Irish class as we have just done countries. (DB11, 2011: W3)

The powerpoint went great and I especially enjoyed the association of the vocabulary with characters you recognise. The expanding of our vocabulary was also good as I felt slightly more stretched than just revision of things we had already covered. (DB11, 2011: W4)

Although what we did I had already revised on my own during the week, I still found it incredibly beneficial to do it right before the beginning of our next Chinese class. Firstly, I was able to listen to how others were pronouncing things and it made me think whether I had worked well on my tones/accents or not. Secondly, I was able to reinforce once more the words and expressions we had previously learnt. Thirdly, it made me feel good to realize that I remembered everything and was therefore ready for a second Chinese class! I think in general it was beneficial to revise everything from yet another point of view. I found particularly beneficial the 'listen and repeat' activities we did throughout the revision as I was able to listen to how others were pronouncing the words and I was able to correct myself if needed. (FB11, 2011: W2)

I was late I missed most of the revision organized by my peers. I only managed to do the last 5 minutes of it where we had to write the names of countries on a map, which I enjoyed doing. From the hand out they gave me I noticed it was much more written-oriented than the previous one and I would have liked to had been there on time to fully benefit from it and be able to maybe even compare it to last week's revision (a different approach is always an interesting way to reflect on teaching methods). I have also used the revision sheet from last week to further practice what we learnt in our second Chinese class (as I was late for class I didn't get to do it in the classroom). The sheet proved to be incredibly useful in revising those topics at home. (FB11, 2011: W3)

I found the summary provided by peer teaching to be helpful at the start of this week's class, and a gentle transition back into all the information and vocabulary we had learnt last week. The class started with a summary given by four of the students in my class. It was a very helpful and interactive summary, with wonderful worksheets etc. (GB11, 2011: W2)

I found it very beneficial to have a recap at the beginning of class, especially as I was worried about not having studied! The worksheet was a lovely way of giving visual cues to jog the memory. It was also good that they went back over the tones again. I definitely do want to use it with my smaller, more frequent classes. Thinking that I might be part of the group that gets asked to teach definitely made me sit up and pay attention during the class! (HO11, 2011: W2)
I found the peer teaching really beneficial this week, particularly as I had been a bit lost last week and really needed the revision today. The activities were basic but effective. I wasn't put off by thinking Oh I don't know this. Worksheets like the match up activity encouraged me to give it a shot and the 'teachers' themselves came around offering encouragement and support which drove me on to make an effort. The Simpsons slide show was a great way of re-teaching last week's content and I felt that it finally clicked with me today. I actually think I learned the family from the peer teaching today as opposed to from last week's lesson! (HO11, 2011: W4)

The handout they produced really stood out. It was their own design, hand drawn (by MA11 I think) and was of the highest standard. I appreciated the personal touch and the fact that it wasn't lifted straight from the textbook. It felt like it was designed with exactly our needs as students in mind (which, of course, it was). As a student I immediately wanted to match what I saw as extra effort put in by the teacher. (KO11, 2011: W2)

I found their handouts useful as they were laid out in such a manner that they could be used as revision notes once completed. The activities were varied with a good mixture of individual, pair and group work. I found the group work (we all stood and walked towards the prompts on the wall that we felt contained the correct answers to their questions) refreshing. This week's peer teaching group had us up out of our seats and moving around the classroom in an activity that involved walking to the correct "station" which was marked by an A4 sized poster on the wall. I really liked being given the opportunity to get up out of my seat and move around the classroom. It broke the session up and more importantly it was fun which made the learning environment fun. The standing up group exercise worked really well as nobody felt isolated and put on the spot. (KO11, 2011: W3)

The peer teaching at the start of the class which revised what we covered last week worked very well and definitely helped me remember more from last week. (JR11, 2011: W2)

(The contents of my peers' teaching) were very clear and I found their recap at the beginning of the lesson very helpful and beneficial. They gave us a worksheet and they went through each exercise carefully, but we were engaged in the recap orally first and then we did the worksheet. They did certain things step by step and in sections which was important. We did the pronouns orally first and then did the exercise on the worksheet. What followed afterwards was phrases which we did orally followed by a matching exercise. The last exercise was being able to draw certain characters. They chose 2 of us at random and one had to show the other how to draw one of the 3 characters. We then had to translate these characters on the worksheet. (KT11, 2011: W2)

(The contents of my peers' teaching) were very clear and I found their recap at the beginning of the lesson very helpful and beneficial. We were given a worksheet. We were split into groups of 4 and we had to ask each other what our names were and where we lived. We had to do the same with working and studying. We then had to write these phrases in speech bubbles on our worksheet. This helped us remember how to actually write it correctly with the right tones. We then had to match certain Chinese phrases to English ones. This very enjoyable. We then had to fill in the blanks and complete the phrases. A picture was beside the phrase so we knew exactly what the teachers were looking for in that particular phrase. We then had to try and draw the characters we learned. There were two that we tricky but we were given a visual aid on the projector and it showed us how to draw them. This was extremely helpful. (KT11, 2011: W3)
(The contents of my peers' teaching) were very clear and I found their recap at the beginning of the lesson very helpful and beneficial. We listened to the group say the numbers in Chinese and we had to repeat them after them. We were then split into groups of two where we were each given a sheet of boxes with numbers in it. We had to ask what was in each box in the target language and the other person would say the number in Chinese. We would then write the number in the box. For revision of the family, we were shown pictures of The Simpsons and were shown the names of family members in Chinese. After looking at this, we then were given a sheet where we had to match the English word with the Chinese word. (KT11, 2011: W4)

The peer teaching was very beneficial. It allowed everyone to revise last week's content in a very thorough way. The teachers were helpful and encouraging and the class was well prepared and executed. The content was effectively condensed and structured and everybody was clear about the tasks involved. There was also a good mix of written and oral work (MB11, 2011: W3)

I think that organising a meaningful context where people are put on the spot to produce relevant vocabulary or phrases is an effective way to ensure that learners engage properly with content. This was the case for the activities included in the peer teaching session. The peer teaching was, as always, very beneficial. It allowed everyone to revise last week's content in a very thorough and structured way. The teachers were positive and encouraging and the class was well prepared and executed. The content was effectively structured and modelled by the teachers themselves and there was again a good mix of written and oral work. The exercises and the tasks were well prepared and also well timed. Especially the task of having us respond with a number to visual prompts, first of all collectively and then individually, was highly engaging and interactive and provided a suitably challenging, yet comfortably achievable goal so as to motivate us. (MB11, 2011: W4)

I found the peer teaching very beneficial today. The group used lots of repetition and were very enthusiastic. I felt confident that they knew what they were talking about. They were aware of the difficulties that we were trying to overcome and therefore could explain them in simple terms that they knew would work. They pitched the lesson at a good pace and we had plenty of time to take notes and ask questions. They had a wide range of activities and kept the interest of the class. It was a very well organised lesson. I would use the peer teaching in my own class in the future, I found that this was very beneficial to both the students who were doing the teaching as well as those who were not. (NE11, 2011: W2)

I found the peer teaching very beneficial today. The group used lots of repetition and examples. The lesson was very visual and the PowerPoint presentation was very helpful to remember the members of the family. The work sheet that we used was also helpful to practice making sentences about the family. The peer teaching was very beneficial as it gave us another chance to revise what we learned in the previous lesson. I found the pair work very helpful also as I could ask my peers to explain anything that I had found difficult and I could practice the sentences. I liked the activity in the peer teaching when we were counting down the rocket for take off. (NE11, 2011: W4)

(PT) was a great way to recap on what we did last week and the structure of the lesson was excellent because we knew exactly what was coming next. It also reinforced our pronunciation of the words covered last week. They each took a tone and had a hand gesture with it. They said it once and then we repeated, they did this once more and then we did it on our own with just them doing the hand gesture and finally they got us to do it but faster. I have found that in the last week in my own classes I have been
much more aware of writing things on the board and repeating the pronunciation of words. Also, having activities in the class has been something I have tried to focus on more especially in relation to speaking and pair work. I will be more aware of writing things on the board more regularly and not taking the information down too quickly. (NF11, 2011: W2)

I have found the peer teaching each week a great way to keep up with what is happening in the class and it helps a lot with my revision as the handouts given during this time help to summarize what has been taught the previous week. (NF11, 2011: W4)

(My peers') teaching was really useful - they worked really well as a team, and did everything at a great pace. It was clear and everyone kept up. When they demonstrated the dialogues in pairs - for example to say “I am Irish”. One of the teachers was really good at pronunciation which showed us that we all can learn Chinese this quickly if we try hard enough to keep up. It gave us a boost in confidence I think. (NJ11, 2011: W2)

It was great to have the opportunity to practice what we had learned last week. Their class was very clear and easy to follow. They modelled the dialogues we were practicing and left the phrases up on the board when we were speaking/writing it down. That really helped! They also got us to repeat some of the words 5 times together which really helped us to remember them. I also like the activity where we got up and walked over to the sentences that matched the words on the board. This reinforced the words like 'study', 'work' and 'live' for us. (NJ11, 2011: W3)

The matching up of unknown vocabulary was great. Nothing was pre-taught, yet between our group, we managed to figure out what was going on. I'll definitely incorporate that in to my class. (NP11, 2011: W2)

The peer-teaching was well done. It was very simplified and clear. We were put in small groups of 4, which was a nice small 'comfort' zone in which to practice our poor Chinese and also to share and confide our struggles with fellow students. The worksheet was very clear and aided learning. It served also to confidence-build as the answers were hinted to on the sheets (cloze test, matching etc). In the peer-teaching lesson, they used repetition – repetition – repetition! And it was so beneficial. That has been the greatest lesson for me. During the peer-teaching session, we saw the benefits of repetition in action – and rhythm also. TA11 was wonderful at the top of the class room. She's always so 'grounded' and "rooted" and "focused". You can't help but pay attention. She has a wonderful teaching manner. Watching our peers in action is really beneficial as it makes us really self-reflect on our presence in the classroom, through comparison! Great authority, great presence. And it caused me to reflect on my own presence within the class. (NP11, 2011: W3)

The peer-teaching was well done. It was very simple and clear. JN11 had amazing presence at the top of the class room and used tonnes of repetition. The pace was nice and slow also. A few weeks back I had heard him say that he felt lost in the class often and found the pace too fast, so I loved the fact that he really slowed down the class. They had great worksheets, a video clip. We were presented with the vocabulary in many different ways. And while we were doing the worksheets, all the necessary vocabulary was displayed clearly on the board or on the computer screen. So if you needed the vocabulary, you could look for it around the room – and if you didn’t need it you could work away yourself. This is a really effective way to cater for differentiated learning. As nobody feels that they 'can't' complete the task and thus switches off and leaves it to a stronger student if doing group work. (NP11, 2011: W4)
It meant I left the class with a really clear idea of what had been covered in the class and what I needed to go over to prepare for the next class. (NZ11, 2011: W1)

The recap conducted by the class was also really helpful as it comprehensively went over all the elements were covered in the last class. There were a lot of different activities some of which involved moving around the room and switching partners which helped me stay focused and kept me interacting with the work. It also meant that there was quite a buzz of activity in the classroom which I felt helped my learning as there were different learning activities one after the other rather than getting used to one and tuning out. (NZ11, 2011: W2)

Today, I felt the revision work was really helpful and it definitely got me in the right frame of mind to learn. I really thought the revision that group 2 was great today; I liked the set up with the chairs and felt it really helped the whole atmosphere of the class when the group work was going on. In addition the idea of swapping seats to the right really spun out the conversation exercises and made them much more fulfilling and interesting as well as the fact that the repetition of the conversations made them much more clear in my head. I really enjoyed the student directed revision part at the start of the class – as in every other class I found it really solidified the previous knowledge that we had and made it much easier to build on it in the class. (NZ11, 2011: W3)

I really thought the handouts that the revision group had prepared were really beneficial. Especially the exercise where we were divided into pairs and each person in the pair was given a different sheet to work from with numbers filled in on different sides. We then had to ask our partner what numbers they had and tell them what numbers we had in order to fill out the entire sheet. (NZ11, 2011: W4)

The idea of a small review lesson at the start of each subsequent lesson is really good. (PT) actively refreshed the content of the previous class. The use of bodily expression and repetition drove home the words and phrases. I like the idea of the peer review and it's something I'll look at for my own classes, probably as a topic review activity. (OM11, 2011: W2)

PT refreshed the topics from the previous week. It touched on all areas and involved some oral work which I think is crucial in this subject. The oral work which was preceded by examples from the teaching group to make it clear to everyone what was happening. (OM11, 2011: W3)

The peer teaching session had some decent activities in it that required some oral work, mostly information gap activities based on numbers and family members. (OM11, 2011: W4)

(The peer teachers) were excellent. It was clear that they had prepared their peer teaching very well. The team covered everything which we had learned last week. We listening to explanations and information, repeated everything after them, a completed exercises and pair-work to practice. I found it to be a very effective revision. It made me feel more confident going forward with the new words and material that was to follow. (TO11, 2011: W2)

(Peer teachers) had prepared good worksheets and activities. I am finding that the time at the beginning of the lesson revising last week's work is crucial for my learning. The quick revision session at the beginning gave me the confidence to be ready for new material, and again, this makes me aware of how important revision and repetition is in language learning. (TO11, 2011: W3)
I feel that I did achieve the objective of practicing and recapping on what we have learned to date, albeit only to a limited extent. I achieved this through the peer teaching element of the class. The peer teaching helped me, as it provided some important revision on last week’s topics. Because there was a clear set of vocabulary and a few corresponding sentences, the material seemed clear and limited, which appealed to me. In my view, this illustrates that as a learner, I respond well to a clear structure and a coherent and limited set of material. I think it is important to remember this in my teaching. When teaching languages, I have found in my classes that quite often, one thing leads to another, that is to say that while I might often begin explaining one limited set of vocabulary or one grammar concept, I can unintentionally end up broadening the volume of material that the students are ultimately exposed to, as a result of both student questioning and my own tendency to focus on detail. As a learner, I now know that too much material can be intimidating and off-putting. This lesson ultimately showed me that as a teacher, I need in my own practice to strike the delicate balance of giving an authentic and comprehensive volume and depth of material, while avoiding burdening and overwhelming students with too much information and detail at once. (TO11, 2011: W4)

I really liked the peer teaching. I didn’t think I would but it was really effective and definitely helped to go over the information from last week and helped to reinforce the pronunciation. I was surprised at how beneficial it was. Especially with a language this difficult it was effective hearing all of the material again coming from someone other than the teacher. I felt like the peer teachers broke everything down into small pieces and what was most important is that they really drilled the pronunciation. This was very helpful. I would like to try this out in my own classes as I think it would lead to my students being more autonomous and taking more control of their learning. (UB11, 2011: W2)

JN11 mentioned today that one of the characters looked like a dog leaning towering over a grave and, although this sounds a bit crazy, this stood out for me and I would now be confident drawing this character. Definitely the Peer teaching helped as I had to focus a lot more on the material in order to be able to teach it. I also found it beneficial to be in the class when my classmates were doing the peer teaching. The peer teaching is something that I would love to try out in my classes, especially in the senior classes as I think the students would really benefit from it. (UB11, 2011: W3)

The peer teaching really helps to review and revise the work and gives extra time for practice which has been hugely beneficial to me as I don’t think I would remember as much as I do without the Peer Teaching, having been on both sides of it. The way JN11 revised the numbers was excellent and I really like the space shuttle countdown that he used. It was a different and exciting way to repeat the numbers and I would’ve liked to repeat it a couple of times. I liked the worksheets too as I could take them away after the class and use them for revision. I think the Peer Teaching is an excellent idea and it is definitely a positive that I will take away from this course. It almost gives you a sense of confidence with the language and you lose your inhibitions and fears of making mistakes as you see your peers who are in the same boat as you making a really great effort and teaching a certain point so it therefore gives you the confidence to do it yourself. The peer teaching really helps to review and revise the work and gives extra time for practice which has been hugely beneficial to me as I don’t think I would remember as much as I do without the Peer Teaching, having been on both sides of it. The way JN11 revised the numbers was excellent and I really like the space shuttle countdown that he used. It was a different and exciting way to repeat the numbers and I would’ve liked to repeat it a couple of times. I liked the worksheets too as I could take them away after the class and use them for revision. (UB11, 2011: W4)
I really like the idea of peer teaching and I would like to try it out in my classes. (ZF11, 2011: W1)

I found PT extremely beneficial. It was an excellent revision class. I felt much more confident after their class as they really helped me to remember what we did the week before. The lesson was interesting and varied. I would definitely use some of their (peer teachers') techniques for my own classes. They elicited a lot of vocabulary by acting and I found this really useful. Their handouts were also really interesting and easy to follow. Five days after the class I feel less anxious about the next Chinese class than I did last week. The peer teaching really helped me to remember anything I'd forgotten from the first week. I feel that this coming week the peer teaching group will also help to remind me of what I learned last week. I feel more positive about the class and my ability to do well in it throughout the course as a result of the peer teaching. (ZF11, 2011: W2)

I've come away from this class with some new ideas for teaching my own class. (ZF11, 2011: W4)

We all experienced an increase of interest and enthusiasm for a new subject the more we learned about it. In terms of interest, engagement and energy, yes we did find the sessions taught by our peers to be very beneficial to our learning. The interest levels were always high as each of the main peer teaching sessions was very engaging and often interactive, hence in the main, very enjoyable. Different peer teachers each week meant that the lessons were fresh and often full of great ideas as well as being particularly learner friendly, often presenting the material and building up understanding in a structured manner. It also cannot be denied that a lot of material was usefully covered by the peer teachers, yet of course it needed to be reinforced by private study. Experiencing the great presentational efforts of our peers definitely inspired and motivated us to deliver a good presentation ourselves. (Group 09.1, 2009)

Every week, I have reflected in the teaching styles and activities used by fellow students. It was a good opportunity to open one's mind to the effectiveness of some language learning activities. As trainee teachers we need this kind of exposure to improve our teaching techniques. Thinking about the teaching styles of my classmates and reflecting upon my own teaching experiences in an informal way was far more helpful for me. (Group 09.3, 2009)

We found that being peer learners proved to be advantageous for our own teaching as we were able to see first-hand good practice, teaching techniques and the imaginative use of resources. We also observed some common mistakes made by the peer teachers. One of the most common mistakes that the peer teachers made was to over ambitiously try and introduce too much content into a single lesson. This overload of vocabulary and phrases was overwhelming and off-putting for the learner. As a result, we are now more conscious not to make these same errors in our own classrooms. For example we now constantly share the learning objectives of the lesson with our students before we begin. As learners we have all experienced the frustration of being unable to understand what is expected of us due to ambiguous and rushed instructions. Therefore, as a result we always ensure that we explain tasks slowly and clearly to our students. In order to provide clarity, we often include role-play, repetition and rephrasing. (Group 09.4, 2009)

I did enjoy learning Chinese and would consider continuing with it at a later stage. It was very pleasurable to be taught by my peers and to see how others approach teaching a second language. I am not so disheartened when they are struggling with a
certain aspect of the language as I have now been given the tools from my peers to help me modify how the target language is presented and practiced. (Group 09.5, 2009)

We had only two hours per week, being taught by fellow beginners most of the time, the progression we have made is both encouraging and enlightening to the depths which can be reached in the right classroom environment. On the whole, it was useful as it showed that if members of our peers could gain mastery over a certain aspect of the language, then there is no reason why we as learners cannot do the same. On the whole, again we would say it was a positive experience, from a motivational and attitudinal perspective; if they can do it, then so can we! Scales/drills, dialogues and especially games were utilised by the peer teachers to engage the students with the language, creating an involving lesson which captured our attention. (Group 09.6, 2009)

They were interesting, particularly the PowerPoint presentations, some of which were quirky and youthful. (Group 09.7, 2009)

We found that the experience of peer teaching created a common bond in the class. Students encouraged their peers while they taught the lesson. The sessions taught by our peers were beneficial to our learning. As alluded to above, the classes were often humorous, fun, relaxing and engaging. It was interesting to see the results of cooperative group work, and to observe how different activities were used and implemented in a learning environment. We all acknowledged that some of the methods used during the Chinese course could be applied to our own teaching experience. These included: the use of repetition as a technique in order for students to become familiar with new vocabulary and new sounds: the use of games to facilitate a fun engagement with the language in an informal way; the use of group work and pair work to encourage peer support and peer learning. We agreed that we learned some useful techniques from the peer-teaching element of this course. Some of the games and activities engaged in during these lessons proved to be enjoyable and educational. They also provided us with some useful teaching ideas that we can now apply to our own teaching experience. It was positive to see that students, while engaging in pair work with their peers, can learn a great deal, and that teaching is not the sole preserve of the teacher. The members of this group believe it is possible to learn a great deal from one's peers, and this has been exemplified during the course. (Group 09.8, 2009)

It allowed for a varied classroom dynamic. It gave us ownership over our language learning. It made our language learning more relaxed and informal. In a broader sense, it was interesting to learn from various teaching styles in terms of our own teaching practice. (Group 10.1, 2010)

We found peer teaching enhanced our learning of Chinese. The Peer Teaching groups summarized each previous lesson in a very 'easy-to-understand' way. Quite often we learnt something during the peer teaching that we had missed during the actual lesson. The peer-teaching session before the introduction of a new topic was the only opportunity in class to look at and repeat the content, of the previous lesson more in-depth. After repeating and studying the new content at home, uncertainties arose and it was mainly in the peer-teaching classes where those were clarified. Due to the hard work of each teaching group, the lessons were always extremely creative and fun. They gave us the opportunity to try out new phrases, test our skills in little games, sing songs, talk to one another in Chinese or solve tasks in small groups (such as decoding the all Chinese menu). Apart from practising Chinese in a really fun way, the peer-teaching lessons gave us inspiration for our own language classes. Peer teaching created an expectation of interactive activities. This motivated us to attend class prepared in order to participate fully. (Group 10.2, 2010)
It was an active task and they felt that as they were producing the language themselves they were more likely to remember it again in the future. Two members of the group also highlighted how they found the game The Price is Right to be very beneficial as it required them to think outside the box and this proved to be very motivating and also that the element of group work assisted their learning as it gave them more confidence that the tasks were manageable. (Group 10.3, 2010)

The peer-teaching part of each lesson provided us with an opportunity to revise and recycle that which we had already learned. Revision and recycling are essential for retention and further understanding. Much of the peer-teaching incorporated activities/tasks that encouraged a deeper understanding of material. Furthermore, we found that our peers were able to relate to our problems and to identify mnemonic devices more easily. Due to their having a basic level in Chinese, they were perhaps better able to explain extremely rudimentary concepts, which a native speaker can sometimes overlook. The use of differentiated methods by different teachers was also very beneficial in terms of maintaining students' engagement with material. All members agreed they have an increased awareness of the different learning strategies employed by others as a result of the course. Being taught by our peers was also very insightful as it made us more aware of the learning strategies they used. Self-imposed purpose can work for some students. One of the most effective methods used was peer teaching. This gave rise to increased levels of motivation among all members of the group. It was also a very effective method of promoting co-operative learning. (Group 10.4, 2010)

The peer teachers used creative materials such as an authentic Chinese menu and Christmas cards that we had to write in Chinese. These were fun and enjoyable and also aided learning... These creative materials consolidated the previously learned material and gave us a chance to use our language skills in a different way. We also learned how to draw Chinese characters on rice paper using ink and the traditional calligraphy brush. We found this very effective as it really captured our attention and increased our motivation. These items were a tangible way of connecting with Chinese culture and we all feel that this improved our motivation to learn the language. Pressure to perform in front of our peers was a motivating factor. This was conducive to our investing a great deal of time and effort into research, preparing adequately, and executing the lesson very well. Dedicated a lot of time to Chinese that particular week resulted in us learning a lot and so this motivated us. We were eager to share our knowledge with the others. It was pleasing to realise that our peers not only learned Chinese from us, but also appreciated our teaching methods and approaches- so much so that they wanted to adopt them themselves. In this sense, peer teaching had a very positive effect on our motivation. (Group 10.5, 2010)

It was motivating as the revision session really helped us all remember what we had previously covered. Also, the fact that we are all in the same boat made us all feel more comfortable, and we wanted all of our peers to do well and thus participated and engaged well in each session. The fact that we all used different techniques to aid our learning was a very interesting topic to share with our peers. It also made MA11 more confident about sharing the techniques she used in class - such as rhymes etc. We believe that all the sessions were well-prepared and very varied in their content and in the approaches of all the teachers. It was interesting to see all of the different personalities and techniques and learn in a different way from each person. (Group 11.1, 2011)

It certainly highlighted to us the benefits of co-operative learning. We noticed that it increased the sense of solidarity between learners and this was found to be motivating by everyone in the group. It may therefore form the basis for developing exercises and
activities in our own classes since those of us who were involved in teaching found the experience to be beneficial for our own learning and assimilation of content. We also noted that the response of our peers during these sessions was extremely cooperative and supportive and so it is worthwhile for us all to bear in mind the potential benefits to students of fostering an atmosphere of mutual support within a classroom. The peer teaching section of the class was a useful and enjoyable element of every class and was the part of the class that we both looked forward to most. This window of time was especially beneficial for learning due in large part to the fact that it provided an opportunity for learners to revise and practice the content covered the previous week, which was rarely integrated into the actual class. For the most part the activities chosen by the peer teachers were practical and well-focussed. As these exercises were designed by fellow learners, they seemed to suit our needs well in that they anticipated our difficulties and the likely gaps in our knowledge. Peer-led sessions also contained an element of novelty and fun, which certainly boosted morale and served as a motivating influence. Similarly we were all eager to help and support each other during this time and these sessions brought us all closer together as a group. (Group 11.2, 2011)

(The sessions taught by our peers) were all really helpful. It was interesting because different groups used different strategies to teach us and it was a great experience to learn from our peers. I found the first group's role-plays really helpful for modelling the target language and they had some really nice hand-outs with great images which helped us to remember the sentences from the previous week. (Group 11.3, 2011)

We believed the sessions taught by our peers were beneficial to our learning for two distinct reasons. The first relates to us as Chinese learners, we felt the revision classes were very beneficial in order to recap the previous lesson, as we have stated in other areas of this reflection, we felt the Chinese classes lacked the time to recap/repeat topics so the peer teaching was a welcomed aspect to the class. It was beneficial to us as students, as the peer teaching groups would come up with different ways to teach what the teacher had already taught us, therefore, bringing in over learning using different methods which we all feel is necessary to help us assimilate information into long term memory. Some examples from Chinese peer teaching groups would be: worksheets designed specifically for our class, youtube videos, PowerPoint presentations, tasks whereby students have to stand up and walk around in order to do them, tasks based on conversation etc. Different groups tried to engage different styles of learning such as visual, kinesthetic and aural. The second reason relates to us as teachers, watching our peers teach we learnt valuable insights into different teaching styles be it through games, written exercises, exercises where we have to physically move around the room etc. There have been times when we looked at a peer groups worksheets/tasks and found ourselves thinking that we want to use this method in our own classes. It was interesting to witness the high standard of teaching within the class even though we were teaching Chinese. We were more motivated, but solely because we wanted to be “good students” for our fellow classmates who were teaching us. Since they had made the effort to come up with a plan for the lesson and made worksheets etc. the student's worked hard in order to show they appreciated “the teacher's” hardwork. MA11 felt that being the teacher did increase her motivation by giving her a tangible goal and reason to learn the Chinese. Therefore, it was more a sense of necessity, responsibility and pressure that drove her to learn the material for her peer teaching. (Group 11.4, 2011)

We found the sessions taught by our peers extremely helpful to our learning as it really reinforced the information we had become comfortable with in the previous class and gave us a concrete base from which to progress to new material in the class. The wide variety of learning types used in the peer teaching sessions effortlessly kept one
engaged and interested for the entire thirty minutes. In particular, the constant use of group and pair-work was extremely beneficial as it forced the class to start using their Chinese rather than simply learning from their notes. Picture association was used when we were learning the vocabulary for foods. While it was a useful method of teaching we found as a group that we were learning quite passively and didn't engage fully with the material. However, once the vocabulary learned was used in conjunction with conversation and writing exercises it became more useful. The use of repetition was extremely useful as it helped reinforce the pronunciations and meanings of the words. The association of words with other words or sounds or our previous knowledge of other languages helped anchor the new vocabulary and grammar that we learned. To a huge extent, there was a sense of camaraderie in the peer teaching scenario, as fellow student teachers one wished them to do well, supported them and the class as a whole, made an extra effort to listen/participate in their activities. With this knowledge of the power of peer teaching in mind, the members of the group would use this tool in a classroom whereas before the module it would have been avoided almost entirely as an activity which gave too much room for bad behaviour. (Group 11.5, 2011)

We all agreed as a group that the sessions taught by our peers were extremely beneficial to our learning. The amount of time dedicated to it each week (half an hour) was appropriate for the amount of material we had to revise and we found our peers always came up with very organized activities for the class. TA11 found that having everything broken down into "smaller pieces" helped her clarify doubts she might have had from the previous week. She also found useful to be able to discuss things amongst peers in order to understand things better. (Group 11.6, 2011)
Appendix 6. Peer learners' negative feedback

[My peers] moved too quickly. I felt quite frustrated after the lesson as I felt it moved very quickly and that I was not keeping up. I seem to have retained less of this lesson than the others. Perhaps because there was so much material that it was hard to remember it all I ended up learning none of it. (BF09, 2009: W3)

I do feel that the peer teaching took up too much of the class. The peer teaching group got us to pronounce the words after them even thought they did not seem to be saying all the words correctly. I would like to see Weiming help peers with their pronunciation. (FI09, 2009: W2)

Despite enjoying the peer teaching, I was disappointed when I realised that Weiming will not be teaching us over the coming weeks. He explained to me that his role has changed considerably since lesson 1 to one that is more supervisory. (FI09, 2009: W3)

They covered all the items in their outline but at times it was quite rushed and we did not have enough time to take in all the words and phrases they used. The peer group lacked confidence and they were reluctant to say the vocabulary and phrases in Chinese aloud. They asked the class to repeat what they had said when they had murmured the words or mispronounced them. This was very disheartening. (FI09, 2009: W4)

Perhaps my Chinese would be better if I was being taught by a native speaker more than a person with the same level of knowledge as me, this level being next to nothing. I would like to be taught more by Wei Ming than by my classmates. As good as they are, I can't help feeling that it would be better to learn the language from a qualified teacher and native speaker. (KF09, 2009: W5)

This peer teaching approach also hinders learning as my peers do not know much more than me about Chinese. It did feel a little bit lacking at times as people who were presenting to the class were unsure of their pronunciation and even if the information they were giving was correct. This made it feel slightly awkward, learning from someone who doesn't know what they are talking about. (KF09, 2009: W6)

A decent amount of new material was covered, but Weiming's teaching part was very short due to time constraints. Attitudinally, my desire to learn the language is still quite high, but has dropped slightly since the end of the first session. (KT09, 2009: W2)

The peer teachers seemed a bit uncertain of their materials, and were looking for constant reassurance from Weiming, which made the lesson move a bit slower than it should have. (KT09, 2009: W4)

I got an overwhelming sense that they had each produced their own ideas for the lesson, which were all good ideas, but had not thought through how to merge these into one cohesive lesson plan. The lesson rang very much in a staccato way, plodding from one to the other, not really sure what was happening next. From a learners' perspective this was a bit confusing, and made the lesson a bit harder to follow. Additionally, it was disappointing to see the peer teachers turning to Weiming immediately for the correct pronunciation rather than trying it themselves. (KT09, 2009: W6)
I found it very hard at times to keep up with what the teachers expected of us and I needed more time to get to terms with the months and the way the numbers 10-31 work. I came out of class feeling quite overwhelmed as I thought there was too much information for me to take in and not enough time to assimilate it all. There was too much information to learn in the given time and this ended up having a negative effect on me and my attitude towards the class content. It seemed that just as I was coming to terms with one part of the material we had to leave it and move onto something else – this happened a few times and each time I found it disheartening and it made me frustrated with myself that I couldn’t assimilate the information quickly enough. This eventually led to me disengage and I noticed I had developed a negative attitude toward the learning of Chinese and I found myself saying on a couple of occasions to my partner “I’m no good at this”. As a teacher, it was a real, first-hand, eye-opening experience to actively feel this way and recognise the reasons why a student could become disengaged during a lesson and develop a negative attitude towards a school subject. I will definitely make provisions in future to not try to cram too much into one lesson and if I see students starting to become disinterested I will change tack or slow down the pace of the class. It is obviously the reaction of an older person to acknowledge that today was a bad day and to hope for the best in the next class. However if I was a student in secondary school I more than likely would not have the insight to give myself these positive pep-talks. It is very easy to see how a student could start believing that they were never going to get it and that they’re no good at the subject. This outlook would clearly also have a negative effect on the student’s attitude going into the next lesson which then has implications on a whole other subject. As teachers, we often forget that students are carrying a lot of the previous classes’ baggage into our lesson. (LZ09, 2009: W3)

I believe the cultural presentations are really important but I would really like if we kept them short as Weiming has requested us to do, because I would like to see what Weiming would teach us if he had some time during the lesson to do so. (LZ09, 2009: W4)

All of the teaching sessions have been excellent but just a tiny critique would be that in some sessions we were given too much information all at once. (MB09, 2009: W4)

I feel there was too much information for very little time. The speed of the class was too fast and in my opinion there was too much content. I thought that it was only me however some of my classmates said that they also found it difficult to understand. Lost after the lesson. (NB09, 2009: W3)

Slides were changed too quickly so I wasn’t able to transcribe all of the words/characters and their meaning until later when I checked with a fellow student. Peer teachers’ pronunciation of language was a hindrance to learning correct pronunciation. It was evident that the peer teachers were not sure about the pronunciation of a lot of the vocabulary and this left me dubious as to whether or not what I was repeating was actually correct. It made me realize how this can impinge on the credibility of a language teacher in the class. (NZ09, 2009: W2)

The only fault that I could find was at times the students teaching were looking for confirmation from Weiming that they were pronouncing this correctly and therefore I felt that they should have been more confident with the presentation. It felt that after the last week’s lesson whereby I was a little disheartened as I came out of the previous lesson very frustrated that I had learnt very little. I’m extremely keen to learn Chinese but I noticed that when I don’t understand a topic that it does in a sense discourage me from learning and I can see where this happens in my own class. The pace of the class is too fast for me. I would prefer to learn fewer words and expressions, and go over
them again and again in order to reinforce them before the end of the class. If I were going to continue to learn Chinese I would prefer that the pace be slowed down considerably. I am more aware of the pace of my classes now. I check regularly with students to assess their understanding of what we are doing in class. If I have to go over something again to reinforce it, then I do so to ensure that they are able to keep up. The motivation which I felt coming in to the class was eroded mainly due to two things: (1) the pace of the class (2) pronunciation of the teachers. I don’t think there is enough reinforcement during class for me to retain it. The pace of the lesson was too fast for me. Slides were changed too quickly, not enough repetition. I also felt that there was too much new vocabulary in such a short space of time. It is overwhelming. I couldn’t get it taken down before the slides were changed, and this was frustrating. I can understand how my students feel when I am rushing to get through something rather than being sensitive to their pacing needs. I have no confidence that the sounds I hear or produce are correct until I hear Weiming pronounce them a few times. It means that I hesitate to repeat what my peers are saying when they are teaching and this affects my confidence and motivation. I’m really not confident that I am consistently reproducing the correct tones. (NZ09, 2009: W4)

The one drawback which I find with the peer teaching is that I have absolutely zero confidence that my peers are using the correct pronunciation of the words. There were times today when the words were blatantly being pronounced incorrectly. I spent much of the time ignoring my teachers to focus on emulating the sounds that Weiming was producing. I don’t think that I have personally mastered the tones either – there are often differences of pronunciation when two different tones come together in a word, and I know that I haven’t a clue about that, as it hasn’t been formally taught. I would prefer a more formal approach to the teaching of tones- particularly over the first few weeks. I don’t think that the sounds I’m producing will necessarily be intelligible to a native speaker, and that is after all, one of my goals for the overall course. (NZ09, 2009: W5)

I also wanted to be able to recall any other vocabulary that might be re-capped by Weiming. The pronunciation of the peer teachers was a problem again, even though they initially deferred to Weiming for correct pronunciation. I find that I actually ignore them and listen to Weiming, or ask UA09 for the correct pronunciation. It has been a real hindrance to my learning in class. Today we had the game of snap, which was competitive. Having failed to win the first two rounds, I just gave up. I didn’t even make an attempt at the final few rounds. During the course I have been acutely aware of how important factors other than the teacher or his/her presentation are in contributing to the learning experience. Tiredness, lack of motivation and frustration had more of an impact on my learning of Chinese than I would ever have imagined possible. This experience has definitely made me more sensitive to how these factors may be impinging upon my students’ ability/desire to engage with what is going on in the classroom. The fact that the peer teachers were themselves beginners was a hindrance in terms of progression in the skill of reading and writing Chinese. Because they were not familiar with the language themselves they had no foundation upon which to build and there was no natural platform from which to develop a building block of vocabulary and phrases. They were therefore unable to provide the scaffolding which is essential for new language learners in order to take them from a place of monosyllabic engagement to being able to produce phrases or sentences in oral and written form. I have a second year French class which is very poor at oral and written language production. The experience in my Chinese course has made me more aware of ensuring that I am providing sufficient modelling and scaffolding in class activities to enable students to improve in this area. I was very aware before I began this course that the failure to be able to pronounce tones properly would have a negative impact on my ability to be understood by a native speaker. Unfortunately I am not at all confident
in my ability to correctly produce the tones of the language. This has cause me to reflect on how de-motivating it must be for students to be in classrooms where they know that the teacher’s pronunciation of a language is incorrect, or where there is no target language used due to the teacher being self-conscious, or dare I say, lazy. (NZ09, 2009: W6)

I feel that all three (UA09, MY09 and HN09) of my classmates had very different styles of teaching, all of which were not fully displayed. I think each person might have been better able to teach using their own style had they not been measuring and positioning themselves alongside their fellow group members. I think it can be restrictive. Also, I spoke with the girls about how long they took to prepare the class. It was a lot of time and effort! People live in different parts of Dublin/outside Dublin and it can be difficult to set aside a few hours to meet and prepare all the material. (OF09, 2009: W3)

I have learned some new vocabulary from this lesson but I am unable to pronounce it properly. More time needs to be devoted to pronunciation. The length of my peers teaching exercise hindered my learning. It was an hour long instead of the usual half hour. I felt it was too long to command everyone’s full attention. (OK09, 2009: W3)

Slightly more teacher input would be appreciated a 50:50 balance of both student and teacher input. The class is too much student lead and would benefit from more teacher input. I noticed that Weiming did a brief recap on last week’s lesson at the beginning of this lesson. I found that very helpful and would encourage him to do this in the future. He also reinforced the new material covered in today’s class by carrying out a repetition exercise with the class towards the end of today’s lesson. This clarified to us what we had learned in the lesson. I felt a sense of achievement leaving the class as I knew I had actually learned something. I also noted that there was much more teacher input in this class which definitely aided my learning of the language in regards to language acquisition and cultural knowledge of China. The presence of a native speaker adds a new dimension to the class. It adds more authenticity to the subject especially when the teacher for example can comment on a cultural aspect of China. It brings the subject to life. (OK09, 2009: W5)

I noticed how important a teacher’s presence is in a classroom and how this impacts upon the students. A weak presence will be noticed immediately and this usually will result in the students taking advantage of the teacher and in some cases losing respect for the teacher involved. This was demonstrated to me in this week’s lesson of Chinese. The peer group involved appeared unenthusiastic about the lesson and took a while to start it. Their body language spoke volumes (looking at each other, appearing unsure looks on faces, voices not loud enough) and was not conducive to an effective learning environment. I have considered how important a teacher’s presence is and have reflected more on my own classroom presence. I do think however that the peer teaching group created an atmosphere conducive to learning. They had a rocky start but they redeemed themselves throughout the course of the lesson. I personally think that it would be more effective from a Chinese learning perspective if the teacher played a more active role in future Chinese lessons. Although I think the peer teaching is a good idea, it would be better if there was a 50.50 split of peer teaching and a qualified teacher of Chinese. The lessons lacked authenticity as they were dominated by our peers who had very little knowledge of Chinese. They were not able to explain certain Chinese customs and pronounce the language properly. The absence of a native speaker was greatly missed here. The lack of enthusiasm demonstrated by the peer teaching group at the beginning of class hindered my learning. I was not very motivated to learn because of this lack of enthusiasm which enveloped me and contributed to my initial lack of motivation. I did not feel interested or engaged in what I was learning. (OK09, 2009: W6)
I feel that the Peer teaching went on for too long and as I did not learn anything from that I did not achieve my goal of increasing my language. The class overall lacked coherence. We moved from forms of transport, to items for travel, to buying something in a shop, to ordering in a restaurant. As a result of the multitude of language I was confronted with I have come away from the class without really knowing or remembering any of the language. They also attempted to cover too much vocabulary and therefore I have left the class with none. (PB09, 2009: W2)

I believe that we learned some things but I don't feel that the lesson was cohesive enough or that there was enough repetition. For at least two of the activities I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing and I felt that I had to figure it out on my own. Everything felt a little rushed and I got the impression that the girls were feeling a little uncomfortable teaching their peers. (PB09, 2009: W4)

(The contents of my peers' teaching) were quite long with very little interaction and at times it felt like information overload. (OL09, 2009: W3)

A little intrigued/doubtful about the second class already being principally peer taught as really don't feel we have enough linguistic skills to teach our fellow students much. (PM09, 2009: W1)

Peer presentations started out initially exposing us to, and teaching us, incorrect pronunciation. I saw little point in being allowed to repeat new words incorrectly. The general aim was to teach through as much of the target language as possible, which I'd entirely agree with in principal when the teacher themselves has the required competence, however being taught by peers who have no better Chinese than oneself seemed quite odd to me, personally. I would love to learn a little more from the expert, Weiming, rather than from ourselves as peers, or certainly a little more balanced approach rather than 80% peer teaching. (PM09, 2009: W2)

An issue that perhaps hindered my learning was the fact that whilst we practiced the new vocabulary a lot there was no time to take a moment to reflect and digest the vocabulary by yourself. I was learning constantly, which was excellent, but perhaps the pace was a little too quick considering the number of new items we learned. It was hard to complete the matching worksheet task without referring to my notes. I like to try and complete such exercises without first referring to notes as a way of assessing my learning, however, for the most part, I just didn’t find that possible during this lesson. (PM09, 2009: W5)

The peer teaching group did have a PowerPoint slide for their objectives but they skipped through that particular slide at huge speed, without commenting on it at all, so we neither got a chance to read it, nor hear about them. I sadly would have relished learning more Chinese along the way, through far less peer teaching! One factor that acted as a hindrance to learning was the notable lack of enthusiasm of the peer teachers at the outset of the class. Their body language and physical presence was neither confident nor enthusiastic and it had a real negative effect on my own enthusiasm. It was interesting to observe how much of an influence this less than enthusiastic presence had on me as a learner. It made me reflect on how important a strong entrance and an upbeat start to the lesson is. That said, the enthusiasm of the peer teachers did pick up through the course of the lesson. (PM09, 2009: W6)

The idea that the student teachers couldn't teach as they did not have the necessary native speaking abilities. The peer tutors did not do enough repetition of the structures and there was far too much information in the lesson. We covered nearly double the amount of material which we covered in the first week. Not having the native speaker
(Weiming) there meant that I did not have confidence that the peer tutors were giving me the correct pronunciation of the words. Not being sure of the correct pronunciation of certain words at home made the home study seem futile as I was unsure whether I was just reinforcing the wrong information. I think what might solve this would be having dictaphone for use in the class to have the correct pronunciation recorded. It bothered me that I had was going to have to go home and reproduce what I learned on my own without the correct sound to back it up. I think recording either my own voice or Weiming’s during the class would give me the confidence that when I practiced the phrase at home, I was producing the correct pronunciation. (UZ09, 2009: W2)

Today, I feel a little frustrated. The classes are fun and enjoyable but I can’t shake the feeling that we are need of a real Chinese teacher to pull a number of disparate strands together. For example, we have been learning different phrases and expressions and there are commonalities running through them all such as where the action word appears every time. But obviously there is no way the peer tutors can discern these things. I think Weiming should step in every now and again to point these commonalities out. (UZ09, 2009: W4)

The peer teachers did not demonstrate confidence teaching the new vocabulary. Students can sense a lack of confidence or conviction. (UN09, 2009: W4)

I think I got very disorientated at the beginning of the lesson as I felt the revision element of the lesson was too complex and introduced too much new information, which did not put me at ease. I felt confused as to the rapid introduction of the symbols even though we had not really covered them the last time and I realized that I got more confused as the symbols were emphasized over the written word. I felt in general the section was too long and drawn out and introduced completely new material far too quickly with an expectation that we ought to be familiar with it, something which I personally was not. I had hoped to concentrate on practising what I already knew but instead I felt overwhelmed by the new material at the start. (BO10, 2010: W4)

Authentic texts and tasks are definitely good learning tools, but on this occasion I felt that the level was too advanced. I did learn a certain amount though by revising for these tasks along with the new material and that helped me in my language skills. Like last week I think the peer teaching was overly complicated and it too lasted well over an hour, which seemed to make the lesson drag on. I think my learning is a somewhat hindered when I feel that the peer teaching have decided to teach something brand new, as it does not allow me to practise the material I am trying to improve on. (BO10, 2010: W5)

The peer teaching went on a little longer than expected. (DB10, 2010: W4)

The peer teaching took so long and they introduced so much new material that I was overwhelmed and my attention/enthusiasm was gone by the time Weiming had to start the class. (DB10, 2010: W5)

Today, I felt that time was in short supply as the peer-teaching seemed to take up half of the class, although I do think it was very enjoyable and useful, so this wasn’t a problem in itself, but I felt a bit stressed for Weiming as I knew that he must have his own lesson (on food) to deliver to us and had obviously planned to do that lesson in a specific amount of time, and now that amount of time was surely shorter than anticipated! (DI10, 2010: W4)
[The peer teaching] took over the class in that it become more of a lesson than a review of what we had done the previous week. It became tiring by the end of it and I therefore lost my concentration. (DI10, 2010: W5)

Peer-teaching I think should be more for the benefit of revision and consolidation, not adding to vocabulary and expecting the students to be at ease with it immediately. (DI10, 2010: W6)

The girls went through the months and days which we had learnt last week. Unfortunately, they used the Chinese characters instead of the Roman alphabet. I found this difficult to grasp as we hadn't done it before. I found it difficult to link the characters with the words and would have preferred if we had revised what we had done last week instead of covering new things. (DM10, 2010: W4)

I have noticed that in the last class and this class, the peer teaching has run on for an hour. I find it odd that we are left with only a 60min class with Weiming and that this same 60 minute class is 'revised' in the following class with a 60 min peer learning session. I prefer revision sessions to be a summary of whatever has been covered previously. I like it to be succinct and neatly laid out. This makes it easier for me to learn. (DM10, 2010: W5)

Personally, for me, I felt the (PT) summary went on too long. I would have preferred a shorter opening summary so that there could have been some form of summary at the end of this week's class on this week's material. (GB11, 2011: W2)

I felt this week that the class moved too fast and we covered too many new things and didn't get to practise each of the new things enough. (JR11, 2011: W2)

I found that having too much information in the one lesson hindered my learning as well as being very tired. (NE11, 2011: W2)

I studied only the pinyin and not the Chinese characters for numbers I could not contribute to the questions they asked as much as I would have liked to. Characters were displayed using Chinese characters only so I could not recognise the numbers without their pinyin translation. I realise the Chinese characters are more important but still expected some pinyin to be used at this level. It has made me more conscious of the need to practice the Chinese characters more in revision. I found the peer teaching hard going because I felt at times I was lost with the numbers. (NN10, 2010: W4)

The class was a short lesson due to the peer teaching lesson which took place beforehand. (NN10, 2010: W6)

I do think that the peer tutors are doing a great job with the teaching. I think maybe the problem is that we all have different learning targets and a different goal for this Chinese learning experience. We are also obviously different types of language learners, and so I am clearly not going to find every peer tutoring session beneficial to my learning needs. (WB10, 2010: W5)

Where we felt the peer teaching sessions were less beneficial was where learning the correct pronunciation from our peers presented a big issue; it was wholly frustrating to repeat new vocabulary then realise we were not learning it correctly. It naturally illustrated the necessity to know your subject prior to teaching. Not only was the mispronunciation a frustrating factor, also the ability to explain something, often the meaning, make up and etymology of a Chinese character or the grammatical and syntactic structure of phrase proved to be understandably beyond the realm of the peer
teachers. All members think it is important to have more teacher input. The teacher
must be seen as the leader of the class i.e. the person who makes the overall
decisions. As regards pronunciation, the peer teachers regularly fumbled through a
lesson often pronouncing words and phrases differently and it was only towards the
end of the course that Weiming took a more active role in correcting bad pronunciation.
(Group 09.1, 2009)

We would have preferred Weiming to teach more of the class. He is the subject-matter
expert when it comes to Chinese. Many if not all of us made lots of pronunciation and
grammatical mistakes in our presentations. This is because we did not already have
sufficient Chinese that enabled us to teach our peers. Peer teaching is an invaluable
source of learning and inspiration, but there must be a time limit, and revision should
be its main purpose. We are of the opinion that Weiming should introduce any new
language, to benefit from native speaker pronunciation and accuracy. (Group 09.2,
2009)

For student NI09 specifically, problem areas she has identified include an overload of
information causing students to lose interest, as well as when something boring or too
repetitive comes up, she can be inclined to switch off, like her pupils. The other issue
student NI09 associated with her experience in Chinese class was that of progressing
too quickly through work and how that disrupts and unsettles her own learning, and
correspondingly that of some of her students too in her own classes. (Group 09.3, 2009)

When we were the learners, we struggled to accept that it was our peers who were
actually teaching us Chinese, given that they too were also beginners. As a
consequence, we were unconvinced that what we were learning was accurate and
correct. We knew that if there was a mistake in the content, that it would go
unrecognised by the peer teachers. If the peer teacher mispronounced a word then it
meant we also learnt to say it incorrectly. This led to us becoming disheartened and
unmotivated throughout many of the lessons. As a means of introducing a new
language we are not convinced that peer teaching is the method that will achieve
optimum learning outcomes. Our experience as ab initio peer-learners has highlighted
the flaws and errors in using this as a way to teach a new language. (Group 09.4, 2009)

The experience of having peer teachers was extremely unsatisfactory as a means of
encountering the phonemes of the language. That our peers were unable to pronounce
the words correctly caused us huge frustration as language learners and resulted in our
having no confidence whatsoever that the sounds emanating from their mouths bore
any resemblance to the correct pronunciation of the words of the language. A
drawback to the effectiveness of the peer teaching approach in the delivery of the
Chinese course was the language level of the peer teachers. They did not have
enough Chinese to conduct the peer teaching lesson through the target language. We
became keenly aware of the negative impact of frustration on learning as we
encountered the same problems with peer teacher pronunciation of the target language
from week to week. (Group 09.7, 2009)

The class understood the difficult (and intensely awkward) situation the peer teachers
found themselves in. The fluidity of the class and the unease with which it was often
delivered were as a result of the restrictions placed upon us by our general lack of
knowledge of the Chinese language. Our inability to pronounce Chinese words was
inextricably linked to this. Consequently, repetition tasks, which we see as an essential
component to language learning, were made very difficult and frustrating. We believe
that more participation from the teacher would have been beneficial, as he was the only
person present in the room that had the means to inspire confidence and learning from
the pupils. We missed having a leader in the class, which we believe is a crucial
addition to the classroom. As a group, we have learnt that it is important to have a leader in the classroom, an expert from whom to be inspired. We would have liked to be taught more by Wei Ming - a proficient Chinese speaker - rather than solely by our peers. (Group 09.8, 2009)

They had the effect of making us feel overwhelmed with a new set of words when we had not had enough time to assimilate the previous set. (Group 10.2, 2010)

A criticism of the peer teaching, which was raised by all members of the group was that it sometimes occurred that too much new material was incorporated and that this proved to be confusing and overwhelming. The distribution of time between class time and peer teaching was also sometimes questionable. (Group 10.3, 2010)

Too much time was spent on peer teaching, some weeks we even spent the entire first hour being taught by the peer teachers. The peer teaching groups also began to introduce a large amount of new vocabulary which we didn't feel was necessary or helpful. During some sessions, it was overwhelming the amount of material each member expected to cover and expected us to concentrate on. (Group 10.5, 2010)

Pronunciation varied hugely from peer-teacher to peer-teacher and this hindered the learning of the tones, which are crucial to the Chinese language. We felt as a group that this took away any confidence that we might have had for guessing how to pronounce the Pinyin that we could read as we had heard too many different pronunciations to know which one was correct. We felt as a group that the repetition was more effective with regard to learning the meaning rather than pronunciation as some of the pronunciations by peer-teachers were not entirely precise in the class. Semantics were very useful in the learning of the meaning of words. (Group 11.5, 2011)

The only negative aspect of the peer teaching was pronunciation; as none of us had significant experience/knowledge of the language we all had different pronunciations for the same words which made it confusing at times. (Group 11.6, 2011)
Appendix 7. Peer teachers/coteachers’ positive feedback

The experience of preparing for class really impinged upon my enthusiasm for learning. Initially I was not looking forward to it particularly with the geographical challenge of our getting together. I felt a huge sense of achievement after the lesson, not just because I’d done my first Powerpoint presentation, but because I felt that our objectives had been achieved. I went around for the rest of the day on Tuesday singing ‘Zhu ni sheng ri kuai le’ – Happy Birthday to you, and realized why the Russian proverb ‘repetition is the mother of learning’ holds true. My retention of vocabulary has increased directly in proportion to my level of enthusiasm. (NZ09, 2009: W3)

Though a lot of my last two weeks went into preparation I am glad to have done it and I realise that nearly anyone can teach a language if they have someone there for guidance. Perhaps I will use this idea in my classroom and get the kids to teach each other in groups. I can still remember quite a lot of the vocab form class and really feel the benefit of having planned a lesson for Chinese. It has also made me more confident in my ability and more creative in my teaching. I will be aiming to do new things in school after this to try to get the students to use as much of the target language as possible. (BF09, 2009: W4)

With the assistance of my fellow peer teachers, I would say that all three of us managed to learn the topic to a relatively high standard before the lesson. Without a doubt, I can say that my teaching enhanced my learning of Mandarin more than any other session has. Previous groups have successively provided the PDE Mod. Lang. class with fun and innovative ways of learning Mandarin, and I felt duty bound to continue the peer teaching to the high standards produced thus far. I feel that peer teaching is a fantastic method for learning a L2, for the peer teachers at least. By far, the vocabulary and verbs I was part of teaching is the section of Mandarin that I am the most comfortable with, and which I can reproduce without looking at my notes. (KT09, 2009: W5)

I wanted to pronounce the Chinese words in our presentation as well as I could. This required a good deal of preparation and time but I felt it necessary if I was to bring a sense of authenticity to the lesson. I wanted my peers to believe that I myself knew what I was teaching them so that a certain trust could be established from the outset and that they would willingly “go along with” the lesson. I wanted to actively engage my peers with the content of our lesson. I wanted to avoid a situation where the students would sit passively watching our roleplay. As a result of doing the group teaching I now know how to look up both English and Chinese words and translate them using online dictionaries. I have learned useful words and phrases for travelling around, going shopping and eating in a restaurant. I have learned more about the structure of sentences in Chinese, as we constructed two full sentences for use in our lesson. I feel more confident now with my pronunciation when I meet a new Chinese word. After seeing how peer teaching works I would definitely be more inclined to introduce it in my own lessons. I can say that from the peer teacher’s point of view, I found that researching and preparing for the class really had a very positive effect on my own learning of Chinese. I wanted to look like I knew what I was talking about in front of my peers and in order to feel confident and not be embarrassed I really had to spend time researching the vocabulary and practising the correct pronunciation. I can see clearly that this methodology really encourages the students whom are to peer teach to be active and autonomous learners. (LZ09, 2009: W2)
I co-taught with KY09 what I believe was an effective lesson. We used props - my Chinese dresses, bags, tickets, chopsticks, a knife and a fork amongst other things which aided the visual aspects of the lesson and made the class a bit more exciting. It is active learning at its best! Having to research the vocab made me conscious of all the words I did know. I was inevitably repeating the words out loud to make sure I could recite them with confidence and be a tool that the rest of the students could use. (MB09, 2009: W2)

Preparing the presentation helped me to learn the material as I was exposed to the vocabulary over and over again. Because I had to make sure that I knew the content before I presented it to the class, so it forced me to learn! I found the whole preparation and teaching experience challenging but very stimulating. I learnt much more than if I hadn’t been teaching, because I knew that I had a responsibility to learn the topic and make the best presentation possible. The experience of preparing for class really impinged upon my enthusiasm for learning. I felt a huge sense of achievement after the lesson, not just because I’d done my first Powerpoint presentation, but because I felt that our objectives had been achieved. (NZ09, 2009: W3)

One thing I have taken on board in advance of the table quiz in next week’s lesson is how myself and JE09 will conduct the quiz. I do not want to come across as unenthusiastic like this week’s peer teaching group did at the beginning of the lesson. To avoid this happening I will attempt to make the table quiz as interesting and fun as possible for all parties involved. (OK09, 2009: W6)

I can now confidently understand, use and reproduce the numbers and months of the year and I could certainly at least join in with others singing happy birthday even if I couldn’t be the one to start singing. Teaching itself secured my own learning of the topic in this instance. The lesson certainly highlighted how important not just subject knowledge is, but how equally essential, if not more so, good preparation, planning and engaging delivery of the lesson are. In terms of being worthwhile it also highlighted how much one can learn through teaching something oneself, I felt confident about having picked up the new vocabulary and expressions so well. Interestingly one of the things that most struck me right after the class was that how well I learnt the topic simply through teaching it myself. My enthusiasm for learning Mandarin had been given a much-needed boost and I had many useful points, above, to take away and to apply to my own teaching. It highlighted how enjoyable and rewarding it is to teach a well-planned, though-out and enjoyable lesson. Teaching itself secured my own learning of the topic in this instance. It did certainly highlight how important not just subject knowledge is, but how equally essential, if not more so, good preparation, planning and engaging delivery of the lesson are. It has allowed me to reflect on ensuring I could always justify why I’m teaching something, why it’s useful for the students and ensure I pick an interesting and relevant activity to support and practice that learning. It showed me again how important it is to bring a subject to life as much as possible. Learning how to sing Happy Birthday was also part of that. I’m honestly sure I will have the opportunity to sing that in Chinese at some point in my life! Whilst it can be time-consuming, it has reminded me how worthwhile it is to invest in creating interesting resources for my lessons and how much the students can get out of them. It reinforced for me how important it is not to plan too much for one lesson as well as ensuring I’ve thought about the delivery of a lesson beforehand so as to know how I’m going to explain things clearly and succinctly the first time, so they are well understood. (PM09, 2009: W3)

As this is my topic for the peer-teaching task, I have really thrown myself into reading up about it, watching videos online and practising my pronunciation. This is the first time that I have found myself retaining information from the Chinese classes, which
leads me to the conclusion that homework tasks and assessment are absolutely essential in motivating the majority of learners. The fact that I am responsible for the peer teaching of this topic next week caused me to engage more with the material and make a greater effort in terms of how I was learning and in turn, how I would go about revising/developing this material. I feel that this pressure had a positive effect on my participation in class and my learning experience. As this is my topic for the peer-teaching task, I have really thrown myself into reading up about it, watching videos online and practising my pronunciation. (BZ10, 2010: W4)

The fact that I was responsible for the peer teaching of this topic this week meant that I prepared a lot I feel that this pressure had a positive effect on my participation in class and my learning experience. This peer-teaching task was definitely the most productive element of the course in my opinion. The knowledge that I had to stand up in front of a group of my peers and demonstrate considerable competence in the topic we had learned the previous week was motivation enough for me to devote a lot of time to studying and as a result of this, I learned a lot more. (BZ10, 2010: W5)

I found a lot of conflicting information on websites and eventually had to make decisions as to what information I was to use. I went through the pronunciation of the horoscopes with the teacher but found that I had soon forgotten so I looked to an internet pronunciation site to practice my pronunciation. I also wanted to find a site that allowed me to manipulate the Chinese number symbols but couldn’t so I ended up writing them out myself. This actually helped me in terms of recognising the numbers and being able to reproduce them. I thought that the research I did gave me a better insight into the culture and the practice that I did helped me to remember the characters. Furthermore the motivation to study was increased knowing that I would have to present my topic to the class. (CO10, 2010: W6)

The first class was still in my mind the past few days because I’m in the first group to do the peer teaching so I’ve been going over it in my head. I’m still happy that I know the material but I’d be concerned about pronunciation and whether I’m still doing it correctly. (DB10, 2010: W1)

I’m also looking forward to peer teaching next week as it will be revision of material covered today and another opportunity to relearn the material from another ‘teacher’. I’m curious about how the peer teaching will go and if they will offer a new presentation of the material covered, I think I’ll enjoy it anyway as it’ll be a good method of recapping the material and seeing how much I took in over the week. (DI10, 2010: W1)

As I am part of the peer-teaching group for the next class and I know I’ll need to be sure of everything we’ve covered in order to teach it. I have contacted the other teachers in the peer-teaching group and proposed to teach numbers and for us to discuss how we can merge our work once we meet up in person. I wanted to be able to be prepared well in advance so I can also ask Weiming about any uncertainties I might have the day before the class. Having gone over the work done I can see how important ‘linking words’ are, and how you can put different vocabulary together in different situations. (DI10, 2010: W2)

I didn’t want to be unprepared! I suppose there was also an element of competition (albeit friendly!), where I was not the only peer-teacher and so I wanted to teach as well as the other two teachers and engage and motivate the class as much as they did. I think this is a positive to peer-teaching, every member of the peer-teaching group simultaneously (and unconsciously) motivates the other members to fully prepare their lesson. I find I’m looking forward to more peer-teaching and learning more Chinese – the next lesson is on food I think! (DI10, 2010: W3)
I probably would not have done any independent research on the characters if I hadn’t had to teach them. I researched three different kinds of characters, found different examples for all of them and had to come up with a simple, clear and effective way of explaining them to the class. The two other girls in my group were presenting the tones and basic, introductory phrases. They used them effectively in class, repeated them many times and there was even a kitkat thrown in for every student to help us remember the Chinese for ‘take a break’! (DM10, 2010: W2)

I felt quite happy about having prepared myself with my flashcards etc. and got a confirmation that I had learnt them when the peer group teaching took place. (LB10, 2010: W4)

To stand in front of a class as a teacher is a situation where you are exposed, nobody wants to make a fool of themselves and this drives many to prepare themselves as best as they can both teachers, and post-graduate students. (LB10, 2010: W5)

I remembered the stuff that I had taught best and didn’t have to revise it. I had put in so much effort into the peer teaching and could therefore easily remember it. (LB10, 2010: W7)

Looking back to Tuesday’s class, I think our peer-teaching approach was successful. It seemed that SA10’s singing the birthday and Christmas songs in Chinese, as well as the writing of birthday and Christmas cards in Chinese was very much appreciated by all. My positive attitude towards the lesson, the fact that I studied for it in great detail and that I attended well rested, highlights the importance of optimal preparation – not only as a student, but also as a teacher. (MZ10, 2010: W4)

Peer teaching was an excellent way for me to get a thorough understanding of the last topic and to encourage further learning. I was eager to present the material in a useful way to students and in doing so I wanted to be 100% sure of the material myself. This meant a lot of work was put into our group teaching to try to deliver an engaging lesson. My experience of participating in the peer teaching was a great motivator to learn the material well and to try come up with different ways to re-teach the material. I find the peer teaching is great as a revision opportunity and I am using this with my class next week. This week the Ss did their end of year exam. The next lesson is to go through the paper and correct it as a group so that Ss can compare against their own answers. The Ss will take an active part in this and working in groups they will take a question each and 1) give the correct answers for the rest of the class to compare their answers against; 2) share any strategies they used to learn the material. It is hoped that this will show a greater effort to learn the material since they are responsible for sharing with the rest of the class. It is also hoped they can learn new strategies from each other. (NN10, 2010: W5)

(The peer teaching) introduced variety in classroom interaction and the Ss are well-placed to hone in on areas where they are weak themselves which will often correlate with other students’ difficulties. It also reminded me that I will some week be doing that (which is a little scary) and has motivated me to stay on top of things. (OB10, 2010: W2)

The peer teaching helped me learn. It was effective in reinforcing what I learnt last week. I am charge of a section of the peer teaching this coming Tuesday so the pressure is on to really know the vocabulary from last week. While I was doing research on the internet I found a song that bunched clothes words that sounded similar together: Xièzǐ (shoes), wazi (socks), kuzi (trousers), qunzi (skirt), maozi (hat). I remember them visually and in order. I prepared a slide with a group of people and I labelled them. I can picture that image and the words now in my head. Using
vocabulary in a meaningful way such as this is a great aid to the memorization process. I need to find out new vocabulary and structures for my presentation for example how to say ‘a red dress’ or ‘or’ and ‘what is this?’ I think it is good to create this desire and impetus to learn in a student. They are likely to own the learning more and recognize its usefulness. I want to do a good presentation, therefore I’ll put an effort in to prepare attractive resources and know the vocabulary well. The experience of preparing an activity for peer-teaching has given me the opportunity to use the target language in a meaningful context. The words ‘gui’ (expensive) ‘pianyi’ (cheap) mean something to me because I now think of them in terms of genuine and knock-off Jimmy Choo’s. The experience also made me more aware of Chinese culture and its presence in Dublin. (OB10, 2010: W5)

Being in charge of an element of the peer-teaching helped my learning a lot. I would definitely get the students working independently and communicating their findings to the class – in other words I would use peer-teaching. The peer-teaching had a huge impact on my learning. It reminded me of Dorothy Heathcote ‘Mantle of the Expert’ approach in Drama-in-Education. By encouraging students to act as experts in a particular field it promotes their independent learning, creates a sense of ownership and responsibility around learning and improves self-esteem. I made a significant jump towards becoming a more autonomous learner during this process. During class preparation I used the Chinese online dictionary for the first time. I had a mental block against using it but when I started using it, I discovered how easy it was. I find, as a student, that I can be intimidated by new processes before finding out how simple they usually are. The peer-teaching did wonders for my motivation. It gave me a real-life context in which to practice my Chinese. It was highly enjoyable to use the Chinese I have in a meaningful context. I enjoyed engaging creatively with the material. It gives you a sense of ownership. The language has something to do with you. It’s not a list of words that someone wants you to learn. (OB10, 2010: W6)

During the presentation, because I was last, I had a chance to look at the faces of the students as the other girls were teaching. It was interesting to read their expressions. For example, I could see that initially some were put off by the fact that the teacher was making a large use of the characters. They actually said: "...But we didn’t do the characters!" – They sounded so much like my students in secondary school. They were put off by what they did not know and they probably thought this was going to be too difficult for them. However, the teacher (the second girl) was prepared for this rejection and just guided them through the explanation by use of lots of repetitions aloud. I thought she was somewhat brave not to be discouraged by the students’ initial rejection. (SA10, 2010: W4)

I noticed that our peers ‘recycled’ most of Weiming’s slides but rearranged them according to a different sequence; in some cases, from one of Weiming’s slide they created 2 or 3 slides. This means that the teacher’s slide felt a bit too condensed and our peers broke it into 2-3 slides to give the content back to us in a ‘slower’ motion. That is probably because, in going over the lesson as students and in preparing the lesson as teachers, they realised there were parts they found confusing or difficult and chose to simplify them. I felt in the same situation when I revised the lesson. During my group’s teaching session, the most beneficial aspect I found as learner was the study and research time involved in the preparation of my teaching material. (SA10, 2010: W6)

I noticed that the each member of my group belonged to a different peer teaching session and that each one of us performed best with those questions based on the same material at the centre of each one’s peer teaching session. (SA10, 2010: W7)
I knew that I needed to know the content very well in the event of questions, pronunciation in particular. What I took from this lesson was the critical importance of pace. If the lesson moves too quickly then students cannot keep up and become frustrated. Similarly, if a lesson moves too slowly students become bored. I imagine that a teacher learns to judge pace with experience. (TD10, 2010: W4)

It was my turn to team teach this week, it affected my learning in a positive way. I think the peer teaching will help us understand better and revise the topic before moving on. I wanted to be prepared to give the presentation & encourage the other students. This meant I had to research & revise a lot more this week. This is something I would consider asking my own students to do- teaching the class a particular topic. It would help them work as a team, get a taste for teaching & presenting- something that there is not much emphasis on in secondary school. I am very pleased with my presentation. Many students and my fellow peer teachers gave me very positive & encouraging feedback. I thought I would be nervous giving a Chinese presentation, but everyone was very cooperative and interested. They said it was really good and helpful. They liked the way I divided up the board into sections: subject, verb, vocabulary, interrogative. I will now use this in my own language teaching as they said they got it instantly. I now know this will facilitate my own students’ language learning. That is one major thing I learned about language learning today. (UB10, 2010: W3)

Although this may involve a little more work & pressure on our part, it would ensure we are actually learning & we could potentially put our knowledge into practice if the opportunity presented itself. I think, like in today’s lesson, a quiz/ team based activity & points system is a great idea- as introducing a competitive element into a learning environment usually proves successful & worthwhile. I was thinking again about particular class activities we did over the past few weeks and I think actually the calligraphy class was a good way of bringing a cultural element to the classroom, but more importantly, everybody was and felt included. Activities such as this and the Christmas/birthday card making are exercises which would cater for all abilities and it is a teaching style that every student would benefit from. This got me thinking about activities I could bring to my own classroom. (UB10, 2010: W6)

It was rewarding to have dedicated a lot of time to study this week as I was able to contribute greatly to my team’s performance. (UB10, 2010: W7)

This week I was involved in the peer tutoring, which I found very helpful. It was good to have a chance to talk with the other students in the class and answer their questions. I also thought the peer teaching was a brilliant experience and something I am considering bringing into my own teaching. I think it is a great way of getting students to take responsibility for their learning. As my group were in charge of leading this revision session for the rest of the class I felt that the learning experience became more of a group thing and we were part of a team with Weiming. It broke down the traditional teacher-student roles and was very effective in focusing my learning/revision. It was interesting to see the different approaches my group took to the peer teaching. We had decided which section we would each cover and had briefly outlined our plan, but it was interesting to see the different approaches taken by my group. One member of the group had a very structured five minutes of teaching, which I learnt a lot from and found very useful. I also thought that preparing for the peer teaching really helped my own revision. I plan to revise in future as if I was planning to lead a revision class. Having the peer teaching in mind while I was revising really focused my revision. Knowing that I would have to stand up in front of the class and talk about the material really focused my revision. It made me write out the words and get a clear structure and pattern for the topic. I made detailed notes which is something I usually wouldn’t have bothered doing because I would have assumed I knew the topic. The peer tutoring went well. I
think we covered everything that we did in the last lesson and the feedback from the other students was very good. I also learned from listening to the other people in my group. I am very happy with the peer teaching and I really think it was a great way to learn and revise at home. I feel more responsible for my own learning now and ready to participate in the class. (WB10, 2010: W3)

It is harder to remember the tones and correct pronunciation as a few days have passed since the lesson and it's not so clear in my head. As we'll be covering this for the sake of our peers, it's important to get it right. (BZ11, 2011: W1)

I found that the pretext of teaching the next lesson significantly enhanced my own motivation and concentration when revising the material because I had to present the material to my peers and was responsible – along with my group – for conducting the revision in a clear and interesting way. (BZ11, 2011: W2)

Peer teaching today helped me because it pushed me to do a lot more revision. (FB11, 2011: W4)

(PT) was clear and concise, with interesting material! I found it beneficial and enjoyable, especially considering my own extra private study last week. (GB11, 2011: W4)

(PT) forced me to understand the topic more fully so that I could teach it. I believe strongly however that teaching is one of the best ways of learning. I felt under pressure to do well in the peer teaching as I would be teaching fellow student teachers. I would describe this pressure as positive though, as it motivated me. I was very pleased with the short video I found, after much searching, of a Chinese rocket launch, complete with the numbers countdown in the TL. I felt this added another dimension to the lesson which may have been a little static with just the worksheet. Finally, I would like to address some of my thoughts about teaching as a form of learning. I think teaching somebody how to do something is probably the best way of learning, in the truest sense of the word, how to do something. You cannot teach something that you only "half-know". (KO11, 2011: W4)

My involvement in the peer teaching this week really helped me revise what we did last week. PT helped as I had to think about a way to teach it which the class would understand - so I had to first be confident that I knew it. We used a lot of different activities to allow the class to practice and repeat what we had covered last week to ensure everyone was confident with it. (JR11, 2011: W3)

I practiced the content and the delivery of the class a few times and the motivation to succeed in the task was an obvious factor in assimilating the material quickly and effectively. I've been made aware many times that the best way to properly learn anything is to teach it as it involves breaking down content in such a way as to make it as clear and accessible as possible. If I hadn't had the task of teaching in the class I wouldn't have been motivated to spend even half as much time going over the content. On top of that, revising content for a specific purpose - in this case having to clearly articulate it for others - is a much more effective way of assimilating content than silently looking through notes without really feeling under pressure to properly use the content. (MB11, 2011: W2)

Having to teach the material gives you an extra responsibility and I felt like I had to know the material well in order to teach my peers, therefore I made sure to know it very well! Being in the peer teaching class I felt motivated to recap/re teach the material in a way that I feel the students (my peers) will be able to follow better and therefore understand and learn the material quicker. I really enjoyed doing the peer teaching
because it gave me extra motivation to learn the material from the first class but also gave me a sense of responsibility as I was teaching my peers. After doing the Chinese peer teaching I brought peer teaching into my classroom. Even though I just have first years I feel they too can benefit from taking the responsibility to learn what I have taught them and then teach it to their peers. The outcome was incredible and I felt really proud of my students, they came up with creative ways to teach the points and one group had even written out a sort of lesson plan! (MA11, 2011: W2)

The topic I feel I know the best is the one I had to teach. I learnt this material because I was being “tested/assessed” in a way. (MA11, 2011: W3)

Being involved in the peer teaching helped my learning this week as I was more motivated to out in the work before the lesson. The teaching of the class definitely helped my own learning. I knew that would be in front of the class demonstrating sentences and pronunciation so I had a motivation to spend time working on the work from the previous lesson. In an effort to find a way to help others learn I also learned myself. (NE11, 2011: W3)

I revised more than I had the 1st week and so went into the class today with a greater understanding and confidence in my own ability. It has encouraged me to study before next week’s class as well so that I can continue to keep up with the classes and enjoy them. The worksheet provided by one of the members of my peer teaching group was extremely helpful in summarising what was covered in the class last week and will be an excellent revision tool. The fact that I had participated in the peer teaching this week and had done revision helped my confidence and comprehension of what we were learning today, as we built on the vocab and sentences we had studied last week. (NF11, 2011: W3)

I had to make sure I learned everything that was being taught as we were all helping each other to teach. For example we did numbers and family members and characters and a dialogue with questions. Also in practicing the class we learned a lot more, as we practiced the numbers activity together a few times and also the dialogue. I believe we did a good job. It was definitely beneficial for me as I had to sit down and learn and practice the content. I also learned a lot about how to construct a dialogue between two people. (NJ11, 2011: W4)

The preparation for the peer-teaching activity gave me confidence in a way, as it helped me to organise what we had to learn in a way that suited me. It was great to be able to split up the work in 4. We had a very logical, organised view on how to organise the teaching. And by focusing on what we were going to teach, it meant that we could lessen the load! We HAD to learn it in order to teach it well. In order to teach something, you have to strip it down to a minimum and keep it very organised and very clear. So accumulating what we had learned and organising it on the page, helped me to structure what we had learnt the week before. (NP11, 2011: W2)

I found it very useful last week when we had to peer teach also. Because you are teaching it, you have to know your stuff. (NP11, 2011: W3)

I actually enjoyed teaching the class and it was beneficial to my own learning as I had to do a lot more revision of the topic and practice of the pronunciation. I did find it very beneficial to do the peer teaching, it really helped me focus my learning. (UB11, 2011: W3)

I was a little bit apprehensive about teaching my classmates so this actually made me a lot more motivated to learn this week. It definitely enhanced my own learning.
so motivated to get everything right in the class that I put a lot more time and effort into my learning this week over previous weeks. I learned from the activities that my teammates in the peer teaching group. I liked one activity for learning the numbers in which the class counted down from ten and a rocket lifted off. I also liked modelling a short role-play with another teammate and I'd like to do more of this in my own classes. After the lesson I was tired because of the peer teaching but I was happy with how it had gone so I did feel more positive about the language. (ZF11, 2011: W4)

We all experienced an enhancement in learning whilst researching, discovering and planning new material oneself prior to peer presentations. It was definitely a case of learning through teaching! In addition, it is also the vocabulary which student RL09 taught that day which she has most successfully retained in her longer term memory. (TY09 and NI09) found, through their experience of teaching the culture presentations, that simply being more involved in the lesson than perhaps typical in a classroom situation enhanced their learning. Thanks to the peer teaching element, we were all much more motivated as we had to actively participate in, and be responsible for, our own learning as well as that of others. Experiencing the great presentational efforts of our peers definitely inspired and motivated us to deliver a good presentation ourselves. We all felt some underlying pressure not to let the side down and deliver a below-par presentation in relation to our peers' efforts. (Group 09.1, 2009)

Seeing the wonderful artistic productions of some of the groups was genuinely inspiring and made us more interested in playing their matching games. This matching game was combined with a listening exercise on one occasion, during our 'weather class'. As the teachers called out the various weather conditions we had to race our partner to 'snap' our hand down on the appropriate picture. This was very fun and effective. (Group 09.2, 2009)

We found the experience of teaching our peers an equally-unknown language to be a satisfying one. The rationale behind the peer teaching became clear to us as soon as we began the process. It was exciting and motivational. Once the class had chosen the topic to be taught, we were given total freedom to structure our lesson in any way we deemed appropriate. It was an autonomous process because the peer teaching group, independent of Weiming, chose the content they wished include, the materials they wanted to use and methodologies that were going to employ. The peer teaching experience definitely enhanced our learning of Chinese in many ways. Firstly, the research process gave us a better understanding of, and insight into, China and Chinese culture. Secondly, it gave us the opportunity to explore the language more profoundly. While preparing for our lessons our pronunciation improved as we were quite concerned and eager to say the words correctly in order to gain our peers' confidence in our teaching abilities. We found the peer teaching process to be very motivational and, generally-speaking; we enjoyed and gained a lot from doing it. As it was our peers and friends that we were teaching there was an added incentive to ensure the lesson was well prepared and well executed. We knew that our peers would be observing our techniques closely and evaluating our methods of teaching critically. This proved to be a motivating factor in itself. Hence in order to appear as authentic and knowledgeable as possible, we invested a great deal of time and effort into the research, preparation and presentation of our topic. We have also become aware of the importance of autonomy and taking ownership of our work. The week that we had to teach the class, we had to research the content and plan the lesson independently of our teacher, Weiming. We believe that we learned more in this week than any other week. This is due to the responsibility that was given to us and the resulting autonomy. (Group 09.4, 2009)
My teaching of Chinese did enhance my learning in that I now have a stronger understanding and use of tense / language chunks / sentences. This is as a result of having to engage with the language on a communicative basis for the first time. (Group 09.5, 2009)

We cannot emphasise enough the value of peer teaching in enhancing our own individual learning of Mandarin. The sense of achievement gained from the experience is very beneficial; in our own experience, while it was still very time consuming, when we finally pressed save and emailed off the group’s lesson plan to Weiming, there was an enormous sense of achievement. AE09 particularly felt very proud of the dialogue she prepared entirely by herself, which was grammatically sound and illustrative of the lesson’s objective. This pride in the work we had produced carried through to the next day when we presented a lesson that ran on time, and which we hope, and believe, was well received by our peers. As such, our attitude towards learning Mandarin received a massive boost, and it was with renewed and fervent interest that we attended the subsequent sessions. On the whole, we believe the process has been very productive for our self-confidence as a teacher and language learner. The positive effect peer teaching has had on our classroom practice is a sense of recognition that our lesson plans are in line with other contemporary language educators and that our methods and creativity in the classroom have been well received by our classmates, boosting our self-confidence. We have gained a greater insight into the inter-pupil relationship, learning that co-operative learning is important for building self-confidence, a greater sense of camaraderie and promoting learning with your peers, and this has been reflected in our teaching practice exercises. (Group 09.6, 2009)

A member of the group with prior knowledge of Chinese did feel that her Chinese improved as a result of her peer teaching experience as she was already familiar with the language in the first place. The experience of teaching Chinese enhanced the learning of the ab initio learner. We were very aware of the need to ensure that we pronounced the words correctly so members of our peer teaching group spent a couple of hours rehearsing correct pronunciation of key phrases using the sound files from the www.nciku.com website. This helped instil confidence in us as we went through our presentation. We did, of course, defer to Weiming, to confirm that our pronunciation was correct. In fact, he complimented us on our pronunciation, which was very gratifying. The ab initio learner was exhilarated after the experience of peer teaching. This was due in part to a huge feeling of achievement having put together her first ever PowerPoint presentation. As a result her motivation to learn Chinese surged dramatically over the next week, during which she regularly used the online dictionary www.nciku.com not just to re-cap previously learned material, but for autonomous learning of ad hoc phrases. By planning a lesson together, deliberating over class objectives and accompanying learning strategies to deliver these objectives successfully, the peer teachers are reflecting on their practice, sharing teaching ideas and engaging with the learning process from the bottom up. The shoe is quite literally on the other foot. Role relationships developed as students were grouped together for the task of teaching the language. These were based on perceived and actual competencies of the individuals which comprised each group. A sense of community and shared responsibility developed on the basis of working together in small groups towards a designated goal. (Group 09.7, 2009)

We found that teaching our peers did enhance our learning of the Chinese language, for that week. This was due to the amount of time spent on translating words using the online dictionary, and preparing slides and worksheets. When one has to research something for oneself one tends to remember it more. This point will be useful to bear in mind when we ask our own students to conduct independent research. Due to the pressures involved in teaching a group of people something you know a limited amount
about, peer teaching does motivate you to ensure that you do enough research and work in order to present a good lesson to the class. The last thing you want to do is to disappoint your classmates or to look foolish in front of them. Therefore, there was a great deal of motivation in this respect. We found that there were positives to be drawn from the preparation of our weekly topics, as these gave rise to independent learning and to (a degree of) increased motivation. (Group 09.8, 2009)

It definitely helped, particularly in terms of teaching our peers, as it forced us to spend some time preparing. Learning from our peers also affected our motivation as we felt empathy with them and engaged more fully in the class in order to help them. We all felt that peer teaching enhanced our learning a good deal. It created an impetus to master the language so that we wouldn't appear foolish in front of our peers. Having to teach other people made (one of our members) think how she would best facilitate learning. This in turn helped her learn. She felt that the exercise boosted her confidence in speaking Chinese. To be able to address the class in Chinese (no matter how minimal) and answer questions on a particular topic was hugely empowering. It encourages ownership of learning and a sense of responsibility around it. (Group 10.1, 2010)

The peer-teaching experience did enhance our learning of Chinese significantly. We made much more of an effort to study individual words, phrases, pronunciation and writing accurately. We paid more attention to detail during class and at home. The preparation for our teaching session certainly reinforced our knowledge of the topic, as we spent quite an amount of time doing private research to expand our understanding. One of our main motivations was that we wanted to understand the content perfectly, before passing it on to fellow students. Hence, the peer-teaching team is partly responsible for the success of each topic. (Group 10.2, 2010)

The peer teaching did help to enhance our learning of Chinese. One reason we all said was that we felt there was a pressure there to understand the material and to be able to explain it clearly to the rest of the class, something which made us revise it thoroughly. We felt that our experience of peer teaching was most certainly a positive one and increased our motivation. We felt it was very important to really know the material we were going to teach and to come up with effective ways of transferring our knowledge to our classmates. This forced us to conduct our own independent research, to collate our information, condense it into key points and present it in a simple yet effective manner. Working as part of a group certainly increased our motivation as we didn't want to let the others down. We felt pressure to deliver a quality lesson. With regard to the peer learning experience it was motivational to see how our classmates, who started at the same time as us and at the same level, could be so knowledgeable of a certain topic after only one week of research. (Group 10.3, 2010)

There is a unanimous feeling among group members that their best progress in Chinese was made when they prepared for the peer-teaching topic. Motivation comes with purpose. We were most motivated to learn when preparing for the peer-teaching and the assessment. Peer-teaching was regarded as invaluable in terms of its motivating effect on all members of the group. We didn't want to lose face in front of our peers and for this reason, we worked very hard to acquire a certain level of understanding before teaching the class. Teaching something to someone else is evidently a very effective way of consolidating your knowledge of material. It was interesting to see how each peer teaching group tackled the material. Some teachers demonstrated a very clear emphasis on the written form while others took a more communicative approach. This diversity among the peer teachers gave a great insight into the different teaching styles and methods that we may not think to use but which may be beneficial in our own classrooms for certain learners. Different personalities
brought a different slant to their teaching, so even if the methods were similar, their personalities had an effect on the teaching. Peer teaching was also an opportunity for us to observe how our peers taught a particular topic and how it compared to how we ourselves would have delivered it. It made us critically reflect on our own performance as a teacher by recognising strengths and weaknesses in each of our peers teaching. (Group 10.4, 2010)

Since we took on the teacher's role, we ensured we were prepared to give the presentation and wanted to encourage the other students. This meant we had to research and revise a lot more in preparation for the third lesson, which is when we taught the class. Teaching our peers definitely enhanced our learning of Chinese. We all agree that the material we prepared and presented is the material we retained the best. What was extremely motivating, satisfying and rewarding was positive feedback from our peers regarding our teaching methods, techniques used and presentation skills. (Group 10.5, 2010)

It made us learn the vocabulary and phrases properly from the previous lesson. This is because in order to be able to teach something, you have to know it very well. So M11, for example, says she had to learn all of the numbers and the family members in order to be comfortable in teaching the class. Also, the fact that we were teaching in groups, we felt that we had a duty to the other three in our peer-teaching team to be well prepared. We had to know our topics very well in order to teach them, so it motivated us to work harder. And knowing our own topics very well gave us a sense of achievement and a confidence also. It proved to be an extremely positive and informative activity. Many different personalities taught each other so, as well as pooling resources, teaching and learning techniques were pooled. It created a cooperative approach to teaching and was good for the group dynamic. One felt a sense of responsibility towards one’s peers and the element of having to perform encouraged preparation and hard work. (Group 11.1, 2011)

Peer teaching/assessment, in one way was daunting, but proved extremely beneficial and highlighted for us the need for a clear impetus for students to study outside of the classroom. We both took the time to research internet resources for this to make sure that the output we were producing was as accurate as possible. I (LA11) found that being involved in peer teaching was the most motivating and productive aspect of the class. It provided first and foremost a real impetus to work outside of the class. I've had the opportunity to discover in the past that the best way to learn anything is to teach it and this was no exception. Along with the other teachers in my group this exercise allowed us to organise the content of the lesson, to break it down and apply structure and to make it accessible. This made us familiar with the content and effectively organised it in our own minds. Practicing the delivery of content made us eager to perfect, as much as possible, our spelling and pronunciation and so we took the time to research Internet resources. This level of engagement with the content along with our attention to detail meant that we were extremely familiar with the content and comfortable in using it. Delivering the class was also an enjoyable experience and I, along with the others, was encouraged by the positive reaction of the class to our teaching, both in their participation in the class and in the comments that they made to us afterwards. It is certainly rewarding to receive positive feedback after dedicating an appropriate amount of time and effort to something and so from all perspectives this was a positive and useful experience. The motivation in preparing and delivering the content was more centred around performing well in front of our classmates and in contributing to their learning, as opposed to perfecting our own level of Chinese. It was also motivational to see members of our class groups well-practiced in the Chinese content we had learned and coping so well with the new words and sounds. The input that peer-teachers had put into achieving this level so as to be able to successfully
present and impart the content was evident and this was encouraging to peer-learners. (Group 11.2, 2011)

We realised that in general people will put much more effort into the revision when they have to stand in front of their peers to teach the material. This would provide excellent motivation for our students as well. Our experiences of teaching our peers definitely did enhance our learning of Chinese. It was an opportunity to really use the Chinese we had learned in a meaningful manner. It was a really effective way of learning as we all had to learn each other's parts for the class. YE11 found that the vocabulary she needed to learn for my presentation is the vocabulary she still remember the best. MD11 also felt that the Chinese she remembered the most was from her part of the Peer Teaching presentation. (Group 11.3, 2011)

MA11 felt that the peer teaching gave her a reason or motivation to learn the material as she felt a sense of responsibility to inform herself and learn the material well in order to be able to teach her peers. She also enjoyed thinking of better/ more effective ways of teaching the topic in order to help her peers to learn more efficiently. (Group 11.4, 2011)

The experience of teaching our peers and learning from our peers affected our motivation to learn Chinese for different reasons. CA11 thought that the standard of the first session was very high which made her feel like she wanted to match the same standard when her turn came. TA11 found they were motivating and challenging as watching her peers been able to master something meant she could too. The peer teaching definitely enhanced TA11’s learning of Chinese as she had to dedicate extra time to individual study in order to be able to teach. (Group 11.6, 2011)

We all agreed that (peer teaching) positively impacted our learning because: 1) Our classmates had had the same learning experience as ourselves so they approached the revision from the same perspective. For instance, where items were not clear they tried to clarify them through their revision and also provided more time and activities for practice ; 2) The materials provided also acted as a good revision tool and were varied and creative; 3) This put us on a sound footing for the class ahead as we were more confident in our ability in the language. In a way, this helped undo some of the apprehension and/or negativity we may have felt upon entering the class; 4) It took the pressure off us to revise individually before class; this could be viewed as a positive or a negative depending on your perspective; 5) It fostered a sense of camaraderie within the peer teaching group as we had to work together to prepare, practice and deliver the class. It also fostered a collective spirit within the class itself, as each group felt that they were contributing to everyone's learning. We all concurred that the peer teaching was the best form of revision for everyone. This is because: 1) We all had to commit time for private study as well as class preparation, which involved revision and testing ourselves on our own knowledge; 2) The added responsibility of peer teaching also enhanced our concentration in these tasks because of the pressure to perform effectively in front of our peers; 3) The three members of the group can recall much more of the topic they taught compared to the rest of the course content. In the preparation of peer teaching, we inevitably shared each other's approaches and techniques that we use in our own classes. Therefore, we all benefitted from exposure to new ideas. This exposure highlighted that in general there was no substantial differences in what we perceived to be effective and non-effective methods of teaching. Furthermore, this experience gave us a taste for how co-operative teaching/learning could be applied in practice, and highlighted its benefits. By sharing our experiences, we made connections in our learning which will hopefully aid our practice as teachers. (Group 11.7, 2011)
Appendix 8. Peer teachers/coteachers' negative feedback

I constantly feel pressurized to prepare presentations for this class and study vocab etc when I really don't have the time. This leads to a cycle of stress, frustration, and in the end disinterest in the class as I don't have time to do the appropriate level of work, therefore I don't do it, then I fall behind, and ultimately I lose interest and put it on, "The back Burner" so to speak. (KF09, 2009: W5)

Personally, having spoken to the group who had carried out the peer teaching of the session prior to my own, I was somewhat worried about the amount of time the preparation would entail. While it was quite time consuming (I would estimate a combined total of approximately 9 hours for a 40 minute teaching session), I did not feel under any unmanageable pressure. This is probably due to the additional week that my group received due to the cancellation of our originally scheduled lesson because of the industrial disputes going on nationwide. However, I would encourage the teacher and course organizer, if they are to continue with this peer teacher section of the lesson in subsequent years, to tell the peer teaching groups two weeks in advance, instead of the one week we have habitually been told. This week makes a massive difference as you have time to formulate individual ideas and you have a guaranteed opportunity to see your co peer-teachers during the lectures in the intervening week. (KT09, 2009: W5)

Some of this poor time-management can certainly be put down to the fact that we weren't able to meet up as a whole group in person to work on the lesson plan and delivery, nor did we get a chance to do a run through. (PM09, 2009: W3)

Not outside the class. I was a little disillusioned by the lack of support shown by some of my peers while I was peer-teaching. A few of the students in the class have quite competitive natures and this can occasionally override the feeling of solidarity and support that classmates should offer each other. There was a comment made right before I started peer-teaching that definitely affected my view of the class and as a result I had little desire to engage with the material for the remainder of the class. As a class, students should have been offering each other support rather than indulging their competitive tendencies. (BZ10, 2010: W5)

I deliberately wanted our presentations to be divided clearly into individually specific areas as my time is very limited and I cannot meet extensively with the group. We agreed on our topics and each would work on them until the second time. Our teaching styles were very different and I found one of my peers taking on too much new stuff. She included most of her presentation. I felt a bit disappointed that I could not include my exercise, but I let it go. Pity I had prepared it quite well. (LB10, 2010: W5)

I found that my concentration for this lesson was focused mainly on the first part of the lesson when we were peer teaching. For the rest of the lesson I was not as focused or concentrated. (BZ11, 2011: W2)

My goal was 100% to do a good job of presenting the peer taught lesson. I gave little thought to the main lesson which followed, until that lesson actually began. (KO11, 2011: W4)

I was peer teaching this week so I was quite stressed about that, as I was very aware that everyone would be looking to my group to review everything we had done the week before - and that everything needed to be right. (JR11, 2011: W3)
I am feeling quite apprehensive about the lesson tomorrow as I will be taking part in the peer teaching activity. I feel that I don't know the pronunciation of the sentences or words well enough to be able to demonstrate them to a class. I think that pronunciation is a very important aspect of learning a language and for this reason I get very frustrated with myself when I find it difficult to pronounce the words with a correct Chinese accent. (NE11, 2011: W2)

I spent a lot longer working on Chinese this week due to the fact that I was involved in the team teaching at the beginning of the lesson. In total I spent about 2 and a half to 3 hours studying and preparing this topic. I was hoping to improve my Chinese accent and get a better grasp of the pronunciation of the words. (NE11, 2011: W3)

Nothing other than the fact that we had our peer teaching just before it so I was a little hyped up! (NJ11, 2011: W4)

Being completely honest, I'm worried this week. I don't feel as if I'm ready to peer teach last week's Chinese class tomorrow. This is for a number of reasons. Firstly, I didn't feel that I learned a lot last week in class. It was very fast for me and I got frustrated when we moved on to something new before I felt that I had grasped the previous concept. Secondly, I'm not at all confident with the pronunciation of what was introduced last week. (UB11, 2011: W2)

I participated in the peer teaching last week so in a way I was so relieved when that was over, I switched off a little once it was done. (UB11, 2011: W3)

I still feel fairly positive about the last lesson we had in Chinese but I am slightly stressed about the Peer Teaching task as I feel like I haven't had as much time as I'd like to prepare. I am trying to study for my own peer teaching group this week. (ZF11, 2011: W3)
Appendix 9. General impact of the Chinese course

Peer teaching creates an environment where students take more responsibility for their own learning and become self-regulated learners, which is critical to the development of life-long learning skills. (Group 09.2, 2009)

From observing Weiming, one group member felt his attitude in the classroom was very refreshing. His positive, friendly attitude was present every week and this certainly had an effect on the classes learning. It was an enjoyable experience attending Chinese classes every week. He made the class feel at ease and never apprehensive to ask a question. The group member has a similar approach to Weiming in to creating a welcoming atmosphere for students where posing questions to the teacher is always encouraged. A second group member praises Weiming for creating a healthy learning environment for the class. His attitude and tone towards the Modlang class remained consistently friendly throughout the course. By creating a positive and democratic environment where questions were welcomed and encouraged, a mutual respectful relationship was established. The group agree that a similar caring ethos to Weiming’s teaching approach should be adopted by all language teachers. A teacher should be seen by students as approachable and supportive, giving students the chance to voice opinions. Creating such a healthy environment will help broaden students’ knowledge and encourage more effective learning. Teachers should seek to provide students with the necessary tools/skills to take control of their own learning. Methods such as self-assessment reviews/can-do worksheets, multimedia lessons, group presentations and online materials for autonomous learners would all play a vital role in moving away from some of the more traditional learning constraints. The end goal would be for students to be able to function outside of the sheltered classroom environment without the aid of the teacher, thus making students autonomous learners who know why they are motivated to learn. (Group 09.3, 2009)

The experience made us aware of the different strategies people use in learning languages. The experience taught us how beneficial it is to be aware of the strategies you use in order to manage your learning better. This feeds into the importance of developing learner autonomy. When we felt responsible for our own learning it motivated us to work harder. This was evident in keeping track of our progress in the learning journal and preparing peer teaching. HN10 felt that it certainly encouraged her to use the dictionary and become a more autonomous learner. She enjoyed working on her presentation for the peer teaching, as it provided her with the opportunity to expand her knowledge on vocabulary related to clothing. She also researched current clothing trends in China and this provided her with a fascinating cultural insight into current fashions in China. She also felt that she became more confident in the use of the language as the presentation provided her with the opportunity to put her language into practice. (Group 10.1, 2010)

All three group members agreed on the importance of a practical engaging activity being properly structured, e.g., have students design greeting cards for their parents. This can motivate students to ask for additional vocabulary not already provided. (Group 10.2, 2010)

The peer-teaching element was also essential to building learner autonomy, as it ensured that as learners and then as teachers we were responsible not only for our own learning but also that of others. Another example of this is how we were encouraged to figure out for ourselves the symbol of the year in which we were born. This made remembering the year easier, as we had to find out this information
ourselves and this is an example of an activity where we were encouraged to be autonomous learners. We also felt as a group that peer teaching was a method we could introduce in to our own classes as we think it is a good strategy for producing autonomous language learners and allowing our students to take responsibility for their own learning. Pass-fail system. This showed us that "removing the fear of a lower grade-point average gives students greater freedom to select their learning experiences" (Linn & Miller, 2004, p.370). This is important for learner autonomy, which is a very important strategy for language learning. (Group 10.3, 2010)

All members consulted audio-visual online material, online dictionaries and Chinese learning websites, although these strategies were mostly employed in preparation for the class in which we were responsible for peer-teaching. Time for autonomous learning, doing homework tasks and studying outside of class is of the essence. The peer teaching task encouraged autonomous learning at home in order to attain a thorough understanding of the topic. In being eager to revise material in a meaningful and helpful way, we had to fully come to terms with the topic ourselves firstly. As trainee teachers and due to respect and admiration for many members of our class, we were determined to learn the material to the best of our ability and to come up with interesting ways to prompt words/phrases. Thinking about ways to elicit material, and considering ways in which students' relationship with this material could be moved further away from recall and closer to understanding, greatly improved our own awareness of the topic. Learner autonomy increased as the course progressed. In the first lesson the teacher asked each student individually to give their name. Each student responded to the teacher directly. As the classes progressed the teacher became less involved and pair-work and group work became the focus for communicative practice. Exercises and activities progressed, from those where students asked each other a question and received a simple repetitive response, to more autonomous tasks where students became more active learners and discovered new material for themselves. An example of this progression can be seen if we take one of the earlier lessons where we learned the vocabulary to describe the different nationalities of the class. Students asked each other what nationality they were and each response was grammatically the same with the only change being one word that described their nationality. The final lesson on the topic of the Family gave students an opportunity, for the first time, to actively seek out the material they needed themselves. Unlike the other classes where vocabulary was introduced before any task or activity, students in this lesson were given the necessary resources to discover the vocabulary for themselves. This increased learner autonomy and promoted co-operative learning as students worked within their immediate group to discover the new language and then worked with other groups to find out the words they were missing in order to talk about their families. (In the last lesson) learners became more autonomous and needed to find for themselves the necessary vocabulary to describe their family. This learning experience has enriched our education, made us more autonomous and creative as learners and provided us with a challenge to transfer that into our own classes. As an exercise of versatile and creative education it has hopefully made better and more open minded human beings of us. Ideally it will help to influence us to become and develop as unique and engaged teachers. (Group 10.4, 2010)

For our students and for us, it (peer teaching) was a refreshing alternative teaching method and it promoted autonomous learning. To some degree, we believe that this course was partly aimed at building learner autonomy. For example, we were sometimes asked to research particular topics in advance of the upcoming class, such as the signification of certain colours and the importance of horoscopes in China. (Group 10.5, 2010)
We all agree that peer learning/teaching can be motivating for the students, as they can understand each other and feel a sense of camaraderie, as well as a sense of achievement when they work together on a united goal. It should hopefully promote a degree of learner autonomy and self-directed study in order to prepare properly for the topic for review. (Group 11.1, 2011)

having us independently source the meaning of target vocabulary, using images and books, was motivating and was certainly engaging and provided us with a challenge within a specified time frame. The amount of time required to engage in this task helped us to retain the vocabulary afterwards. These activities also stand out as moments in the class when we felt that the pace was conducive to the learning objective. (Group 11.2, 2011)

We discussed the importance of autonomous learning especially when it comes to the skills of a good language learner. Language learners need to be, in a large sense, self-motivated and committed individuals as language learning is based on continually expanding your “pool of vocabulary, culture and knowledge” and this can only be truly achieved if the learner takes responsibility for their learning. Teachers play a role in helping student's become autonomous learners. They can discuss learning strategies in class, demonstrate/teach learning strategies, thereby, making students aware of how they learn as well as what they learn. Language learners cannot rely on being spoon-fed if they wish to reach a high level of proficiency. Therefore, it is safe to say that in general, people who have learnt a few languages tend to be good autonomous learner's and we would go as far as saying that they also tend to be self-motivated and committed individuals. The Chinese class really highlighted the importance of autonomous learning, since we covered a lot of material in such a short space of time, it was really up to each individual student what they wanted to do with this new information; revise it a few times before the next class? Revise it just the night before the next class? Or not look at it at all? We are sure that if we asked the class there would be a variety of answers along this spectrum. The need to encourage autonomous learning: this point stood out for all of us as we realise that this is a skill that is necessary for language learners. We need our students to take responsibility for their own learning and to see the benefit in doing so. We hope as teachers that if we say "'revise the new vocabulary for homework'" that our students will do so without us having to add "'as I will test it tomorrow'". We almost automatically know the students who are autonomous learners and will revise the new vocabulary because they want to expand their "'pool of knowledge'"; however, we also know the students who can't see the benefit in autonomous learning or who don't know how to do it. The Chinese classes highlighted that teachers should promote autonomous learning within their classes but also help students to find the necessary resources. Weiming showed us different online resources we could look at if we wanted to. (Group 11.4, 2011)

I still failed to invest time in private study, in spite of realizing I much I missed from the previous lesson and my lack of inclination to follow up on a missed lesson of my own volition. Without Second Life being on it was all too easy not to revisit what I had learned this week at all and not invest my own time in my learning. This underlines how important it is for a language teacher to provide structured opportunity for private study in between lessons, by setting clear, structured and meaningful and/or challenging homework. Even the most theoretically motivated students may need a push to revise and refresh and I feel it is the responsibility of me as a teacher to do all I can to encourage and offer an opportunity to carry out meaningful private study. (PM09, 2009: W5)

The Chinese lesson has really brought to fore for me the questions (1) ‘how much can you expect a person to learn?’, and (2) ‘how do you keep learners at different levels
motivated'. I observed that many students struggled with the amount of language introduced; and others, who had a certain level became disengaged during parts of the lesson. (UN09, 2009: W4)

In picking topics I was (surprised) some students were very assertive outlining exactly what they wanted which seemed very important to them. Personally I was very happy to let the teacher choose and kept fairly quiet at this stage. It seemed pertinent that students reacted in such a different way to me and that for some, an outline of the course and control of the topics was so important. This type of giving ownership of the lessons to students, could be something that I may have overlooked in my own classes and something that I should incorporate into my lessons. (CO10, 2010: W1)

I had a good think about my language learning this week and I realized that there are certain controllable elements which make language learning easier but, at the same time, there are certain uncontrollable elements which can make it much harder. For instance, mood. I have realized that my mood has a huge effect on how well I learn. If I am in a good mood and not worrying about anything I am much more open to the learning process. However, this works in the opposite way also. As I mentioned above, I had a difficult week last week with my teaching practice and was feeling pretty down and unmotivated after it. I didn't bother to look over my Chinese notes at the weekend as I had a bad day on Friday. However, when my Monday morning classes went well I was in a really good mood and keen to learn new things. I also find that I look forward to being a 'language student' once a week as this is obviously something I find very interesting. This made me think about my own students. I work in a boarding school. Many of the students have been sent away to school because of various problems at home such as separation, divorce, fighting, alcoholism etc. There is a high percentage of students in the school with broken families or with a deceased parent. In this kind of environment it is important to be aware that certain students may be upset, angry or sensitive at certain times. They will often be dealing with worry caused by serious circumstances. I think it is important for me to deal appropriately with these issues. The students need to be encouraged constantly in the classroom, I must try to ensure that all students participate and, more importantly, are not afraid to participate. In some cases, however, students may just want to be left alone without too much hassle, I think I need to learn that this is ok. (DM10, 2010: W2)

I realize, after this week's class that, the physical state of the student has a huge effect on learning. As I was very awake in this class, I was more enthusiastic and keen to learn. This means that if I am teaching a class first thing in the morning I must be prepared to create an enthusiastic atmosphere in the classroom. This also means I should reserve more interactive activities for classes later in the day when the students are more awake. (DM10, 2010: W5)

I realized that if a student is missing from a class for even justs one lesson it can throw them off course. It is vital to stress to students how important it is not to miss a class. I also realize that there is a big difference between me missing this class and my own student's missing a class of mine. I have chosen to do this course myself. I am far more mature and am eager to learn. I was worried about missing this class and the subsequent catching up. I think, in secondary schools, many students are delighted if they get an excuse to miss class, they probably wouldn't try to catch up unless told to do so and wouldn't be prepared to put in their own time to do the necessary work. This means that it is my duty, as a teacher, to tell students that they MUST catch up any class they miss. However, I think it's also important to lay out to the whole class HOW exactly to do this. (DM10, 2010: W6)
I feel that the Chinese course has helped me understand how my own learning strategies and teaching strategies differ from those of Weiming and my classmates. This also made me think of my students and their various learning strategies. I have learnt that I need to ensure my classes are: 1) Interactive. I feel most people are more inclined to learn by doing or saying. 2) Interesting. It is very important to cover interesting topics in order to command the attention of young people. 3) Continually assessed. Most students like to know how they are getting on and most students need to be given a goal or target to aim for when it comes to learning. Continual assessment also allows the teacher to keep a detailed record of student’s progress. In addition, good marks often encourage students to keep trying. It is my responsibility to tailor assessment so that all students have an equal chance of doing well. (DM10, 2010: W7)

I think learning Chinese has proven that you can make any topic even the most difficult, accessible to students. (LB10, 2010: W7)

From the class, I can see that some people prefer to have words written on the board before they practice saying them. This is something I will take into account in my own teaching. I will try as much as possible to adapt my lessons to fit all the different types of learners in the classroom. (WB10, 2010: W1)

The speed at which people learn languages can be very different and this is an aspect I should always take into consideration in my own classes in order to allow the students their own learning time without putting pressure on them. (FB11, 2011: W1)

It is essential that students are left an adequate amount of time to approach the new information and start working with it. I think this is an issue I face myself during my lessons. Whenever I set a task for the class to do individually or in pairs there are always students that finish very early and students that take a long time. I feel this is something that affects me as a teacher as I struggle to be consistent with homework revision and feedback and it’s something I always have to remind myself of. I think I will use this personal experience with Chinese to remind myself of the importance of following up on homework from now on. (FB11, 2011: W4)

In terms of putting myself in my students’ shoes I definitely achieved this goal! There were times where I could not follow the class or when I would fall behind and consequently switch off for a bit etc. (MA11, 2011: W1)

We now know/remember how it feels to be lost in class, to not be able to follow the board, to have trouble pronouncing words, and to become frustrated with the teacher. In this way we can now somewhat empathise with our students, and use this empathy to tailor our classes so that they are productive and conducive to all of our students’ learning to the best of our ability. (NJ11, 2011: W4)

Having done this course I would definitely be motivated to take up Chinese in the future, maybe when I have more time to dedicate to it. Before doing the course I viewed Chinese as one of those languages that I would never be able to learn, that it was just too difficult. But I think I have changed my mind on this now. (UB11, 2011: W4)

Five days after the last Chinese class I am still feeling positive about it. I feel like the Chinese course has given me a huge insight into how my own students perceive learning Spanish and the experience has been invaluable. I can now really understand the difficulties my own students’ face in a way I never could before. It has really made me rethink ways to motivate my students and appreciate that not all of them are going to enjoy or be interested in learning Spanish but I would still like them to have a
positive experience with the language even if they don't want to continue studying it after school. (ZF11, 2011: W4)

Due to our experience in the lesson, we are much more aware of what works and does not work as teachers. We would go so far as to say that studying Chinese has made us better teachers. (Group 09.1, 2009)

Student NI09 has adopted role-play into some of her lessons after experiencing the benefit of it in the Chinese class. We, as a group, feel that our participation in these teaching tasks and our observation and learning from the other peer groups has had an influence on our own classroom practice in each of our respective classes. As learners, it has been tremendously helpful to occupy the shoes of the learner while we were teaching in schools ourselves. (Group 09.1, 2009)

The course has had three specific consequences on the classroom practice of all members of the group. They are as follows: 1. Reflection on pace of lessons in school. After reflecting on the Chinese lessons, the group deemed this to have been an important point that they could apply to their junior cycle classes. 2. More cultural contributions included in lessons. It was fascinating to listen to the groups teach contrasting cultural topics revolving around China's charm. The group considers it important to engage with the cultural bearings that surround a language and predominantly. 3. We have noted that throughout our learning, if we did not directly ask the teacher to confirm the meaning of new material, we would often turn to fellow-students. We have become more mindful that some students may not wish to directly ask the teacher (to avoid interrupting the class or drawing the attention of the class to the fact that they do not understand, etc.), but prefer to seek clarification from their peers. A notable consequence on one group member's classroom practice- owing to peer teaching- was the layout of her board work and an increased effort to categorise words into word types. This was done by this particular member of the group because her peer teaching was met with enthusiasm by students for its clarity. We no longer feel that staunchly following the material set out in textbooks is a good idea- it is best to ensure it is pertinent to the students' lives and is presented in a motivating and engaging manner. Finally, we previously believed that pressurising students and introducing competition into the classroom could be destructive to their progress. However, on reflection of our course, we feel that a certain amount of pressure, relative to the student and their ability and aptitude for the language, could be conducive to progress and set them up for success, provided that their work is monitored, encouraged and built upon. We believe that this experience of becoming reflective learners has allowed us to empathise with our own students as we can now understand the frustrations they feel and the obstacles they face. (Group 09.2, 2009)

Prior to the Chinese course we had believed that teaching should principally be the domain of the teacher. However, due to our positive experiences of peer teaching we decided to try it within our own classes. We were apprehensive, wondering if it would work to the same extent as in our Chinese class. We recognise that we are an academic, enthusiastic class, and our own students are not all similar! However, our fears were abated as, when we introduced the concept of peer teaching, it was largely met with enthusiasm by the students. They paid attention to their peers in the classroom, seemingly enjoying the novelty that one of their peers was teaching and indeed asked questions of them. This allowed the teacher to move around the classroom to observe. (Group 09.2, 2009)

Taking part in the peer teaching, and learning from them, has been invaluable in giving us all many more resource ideas to take away and use in our own teaching. The benefit of being exposed to so much peer- teaching was that it made us reflect upon

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our own approaches to teaching foreign languages. Both our thinking and our practises were challenged as a result of experiencing the different games and activities that took place each week of this module. If we are not constantly reflecting on our classes, looking for feedback from our peers, colleagues and even management, then we cannot improve as language teachers. If we are not reflecting and learning as teachers, then our enthusiasm for our subjects and our students' learning will eventually wane. None of us want this to happen. Therefore continuing this pattern of reflection seems to be the best way for each of us to progress as language teachers. This has been the most important learning that each of us has taken from our Chinese course. (Group 09.3, 2009)

We found it enjoyable when Chinese was spoken for the majority of the lesson as it gave us a huge sense of satisfaction that we were able to comprehend some of what was being said, so soon after starting the language learning process. We are now more conscious and aware that our students throughout our lessons are completely surrounded by the target language. When the target language is used exclusively, not only are they surrounded by it but they become immersed in it. We found that the communicative approach is the most practical because generally speaking, the majority of students learn by doing. It brings the topic to life as it roots it in the real world and allows students to link their outside experiences and previous knowledge to the classroom activity. This is something that we aim to achieve in our classrooms on an on-going basis. We now strive to incorporate the positives experienced in Chinese class into our own teaching and the experience has been a catalyst in a process that has allowed us to develop and adapt in order to become a more effective teachers. (Group 09.4, 2009)

We would definitely introduce the concept of peer teaching to our own classes. It is an ideal method for the revision of a topic especially for the students who are teaching the lesson. We have begun to use visuals to a greater extent than we would have prior to doing the Chinese course. Having experienced the beneficial outcomes and the positive reaction that the employment of visuals provoked; we were encouraged to incorporate this tool for learning in our own classrooms. Furthermore, we feel that visuals are an invaluable asset in our attempt to use 100% target language as without them the students seek English translations. Whereas before we may have demanded silence, we have become more tolerant of a certain noise level while students do work. We realise that a student who is talking may just be seeking clarification or reassurance from a classmate. This was something that we often did ourselves during Chinese lessons. Having experienced the effectiveness of the communicative approach we all agree that we now take a less didactic approach to our teaching. While this makes the preparation more time consuming for the teacher it is a more rewarding experience for the learners. (Group 09.4, 2009)

Being put into the situation of being a beginner language learner again for the first time in a long time did help me to empathise with my students and the fear and discomfort that accompany being a beginner language learner. My experience has hugely affected the way I teach my classes. I have introduced a lot more group work, brought in competition between students and groups of students. I have a lot more confidence in what I'm doing having seen my peers use similar techniques. Fundamental to my classroom practice is the use of the target language in the classroom which at the beginning of the year I did not think possible. I have learned the importance of drilling and repetition for retaining vocabulary and pronunciation. I have expanded my use of material in class. I work a lot more with visuals in the form of flashcards, game cards, picture exercises etc. As it is I have been inspired by my peers' use and variety of material and most importantly they have given me the confidence to use different techniques and activities for teaching a second language that before I would never
have thought possible. The end result of the Chinese course is that I am now a better
and stronger teacher. (Group 09.5, 2009)

Having completed the Mandarin lessons, we believe that we have gained a greater
insight and empathy for our own language students. We have been given a nod to slow
down and pace our lessons appropriately, as well as a pleasant reminder of the fun of
learning new languages; this is the first time in approximately a decade that either of us
have engaged in the learning process of a new language. This is something which we
enjoy, derive great enjoyment from and has been a formative part in our decisions to
become language teachers. On the whole, we found the learning of Mandarin to be a
very time-consuming exercise, but one which was rewarding on personal and
professional levels, allowing us to acknowledge the problems encountered by pupils
when approaching a new language, but at the same time, enabling us to see the
confidence building qualities that learning a language can encourage inside and
outside of the classroom. The implementation of co-operative learning strategies and
exercises was also something we implemented into our practice as a result of seeing it
in use in the Mandarin classroom. (Group 09.6, 2009)

(A member of the group), who has been out of the education system for twenty five
years, did not appreciate the importance of visual stimuli for second language
acquisition until she began the Chinese course. Since then she has made a concerted
effort to provide visual stimuli in class in the form of PowerPoint presentations,
gestures and mimes, picture worksheets etc. As a result she has noticed more
engagement by students in the lessons and a greater retention of vocabulary from one
lesson to the next. As a result of the experience we have a greater appreciation of
target language use in the classroom and we have minimized our use of L1 as a
consequence. We also understand the necessity to use authentic materials in the
lessons. Access to these materials should be the starting point of a lesson and should
influence the methodological choices of the teacher. (Group 09.7, 2009)

After taking part in the peer teaching and learning of Chinese together as a group, we
have gained insight into certain inter-pupil relationships. It has been made clear to us
throughout this course that students learn a great deal from each other. When students
ask each other questions, when they listen to each other's opinions, and when they do
group work together, they are learning from one another. Inter-pupil relationships may
be seen as equally important as teacher-pupil relationships, especially when it comes
to creating a positive learning environment. (Group 09.8, 2009)

When one has to research something for oneself one tends to remember it more. This
point will be useful to bear in mind when we ask our own students to conduct
independent research. We all acknowledged that some of the methods used during the
Chinese course could be applied to our own teaching experience. These included: the
use of repetition as a technique in order for students to become familiar with new
vocabulary and new sounds; the use of games to facilitate a fun engagement with the
language in an informal way; the use of group work and pair work to encourage peer
support and peer learning. (Group 09.8, 2009)

Creative and fun activities such as painting or making cards were hugely beneficial to
the process. Writing or painting a character several times helped memorization. This
experience prompted us all to incorporate creative and active teaching techniques into
our classes. Examples include: cutting out letters from the newspapers to make verb
posters, colouring in letters and using magnetic letters on the board to form words. It is
our intention to encourage students to become reflective of their own learning and
progress. (Group 10.1, 2010)
One member of our group felt that peer teaching had taught her the importance of explaining something as simply as possible. If a student misses understanding one of the basic elements of a language they will continue with that 'gap' in their knowledge/understanding. A second member of our group believed that peer teaching taught her to engage her pupils more frequently and establish peer-teaching groups in her language classes. She experienced becoming more engaged in a particular topic and more responsible in respect of her fellow students. Overall it gave her language learning a great boost. She believes giving her students the experience of peer teaching will improve their ability to work in groups while also give them more confidence in the language they are learning. We understood we should always make an effort to detect and anticipate possible hidden difficulties. This allows us to shape our lessons in a clear way. Furthermore, we would be in a position to provide students with strategies or advice to break down complex structures or concepts into smaller elements. As a result, students would be confident that every topic is within their reach. Students are individuals and therefore teachers cannot oblige them to follow a preferred or prescribed educational pattern. Rather, we should help students to find their own personal learning path. (Group 10.2, 2010)

The most salient finding was that every student learns in a very different and distinctive way. As implied above, students' learning styles range from aural, visual, kinaesthetic and reading/writing. We had never before been so aware of all the different needs that must be catered for when teaching a group of students. This is something we have taken from learning Chinese, brought into our own classroom and consider on a daily basis when planning our classes and devising creative approaches. The Chinese course has undoubtedly been a great source for practical reflection for us both as teachers and students. It has provided us with valuable and insightful material, which we all agree has enabled us to gain a deeper understanding of students and of the roles that their emotions, motivations, frustrations and achievements can play in their language learning. We now feel that we have greater empathy towards and awareness of the potential mix of students that may be present in our classes. All three group members feel more capable of empathising with the student who may have particular outside factors interfering with their learning that very day, week or month; with the student who, despite having tried, is unable to recall material studied but is trying their best; with the student who is perhaps more focused on other school subjects, as they may be more mathematically inclined or more interested in Physical Education, for example. As a result, we now endeavour to incorporate a wide variety of methods and techniques in our teaching in order to appeal to the extensive mix of students in our classes. We note that we must remain conscious of the fact that we cannot appeal to every student in every lesson, but become more aware of what interests particular students and why. We then aim to build upon that information in order to create lessons that appeal to as many students as possible at any given time. In addition, this information allows us to use differentiation within the classroom when we are aware that particular methods may not be suitable for particular students. (Group 10.5, 2010)

Previously BN10 had felt that getting fifth years to participate in creative art combined with language would be met with apathy, but after this class he was encouraged to try some new approaches and was pleased with the enthusiasm of his students. (Group 10.1, 2010)

The image of the role of a teacher we had at the beginning of the course was one of 'dispenser of knowledge'. We now realize that there is nothing inappropriate. In creating a class environment that is not only based on knowledge, learning and personal development, but also on fun, creativity, introspection and enthusiasm. One of us particularly stressed how the course affected her awareness of the importance of pacing the lessons to suit the students' level and learning needs. Another member
acknowledged that she had not taken this aspect into enough consideration. (Group 10.2, 2010)

Until beginning our Chinese course, one member's feeling towards students' use of new material was that students should aim to use it perfectly. However, on reflection of how the course focused on, encouraged and praised communicative competence, and the consequential motivation gained from this, this group member has changed her classroom practice. She now feels that even if a learner's language production is not entirely grammatically and structurally correct, it is vital to encourage efforts made in the language, because in time, this learner, having previously been content with communicative competence, will strive for a greater command of the language. Prior to the course, it was felt by all members (to different degrees) that highlighting similarities and differences between the target language and English, or Irish, could impact negatively on students' learning and add confusion between languages. Yet having recalled Chinese words or characters, thanks to how they sound like words in English, or share a particular structure, or indeed are starkly different, we have been compelled to rethink our beliefs. We now believe that drawing attention to such overlaps or contrasts in languages can actually aid language learning. Even if the transfer is negative, it can aid a language learner in recalling the information, as sometimes it is that stark difference between meaning, structure or pronunciation that makes the material so memorable, and indeed sometimes amusing. (Group 10.5, 2010)

It has had very positive consequences for all of us. For MI11 it has made her more aware of the differences between language learners, and their learner styles. It is also now clear that it is difficult to appeal to every student at all times. Another point to remember is that, as a teacher, we are not trying to get them to leave our class knowing absolutely everything we have taught off by heart. So we need not get stressed if the students forget a word or get something wrong. It is our job to guide their learning to the best of our ability in the time we have in the classroom, and it is not realistic to think they will learn everything straight away. All of us now recognise how important setting a good pace is - if we go too fast in class, a lot of students will get frustrated and feel lost. This could affect their opinion of the subject, which in turn could be disastrous for their learning. We also believe now that clear presentation is paramount - to explain things clearly, and to write it up on the board so that it is comprehensible to others. (Group 11.1, 2011)

Both of us are agreed that encouraging co-operative learning in the classroom is something we should develop more and more in the future and that allowing students to take more responsibility for themselves and for others is both a useful and an ethical approach to take towards teaching. (Group 11.2, 2011)

The Chinese class really helped to pinpoint these very important aspects of learning a language from a student's perspective. This point is vital and maybe one of the most relevant for us as we all feel the Chinese classes served the purpose of putting us in our students' shoes and realising just how alien it is to learn a foreign language. It has been many years since any of us have had to learn a language totally from scratch (bar GN11 who has taken up Irish this year) so it is hard to relate to our students without thinking hard on our experience as language learners. Observing methods which Weiming and our peer-teachers used was a useful exercise in considering how we ourselves come across in class. There were two sides to this. On the one-hand there were things which we saw as negative or ineffective which we had also been doing ourselves in class. On the other hand, reflecting on our observation of the classroom practice of others, also had a more positive impact. Oftentimes we found that when we did notice less effective or appropriate approaches, that these were things that we never did or that we had much better ways of going about these things. Other times,
we found that when we noticed something that had really encouraged or helped us to learn, that these were methods which we were already employing in our own teaching. We found these instances very encouraging and took them as signs that we were doing things right in our own classes. (Group 11.4, 2011)

It became evident during this module that if the student has a personal motivation to learn the language they are more likely to be proactive in their learning. This creates a self-directed learning environment, which is a helpful element of language learning, rather than passively waiting for the teacher to deposit information. Learning languages is most engaging and productive when there are a wide variety of materials and activities used, both educational and enjoyable. (Group 11.5, 2011)

We enjoyed this Chinese course and could identify its relevance to Modern Language Teachers. It was interesting to sit in our student's shoes and feel how they feel, whether it be riveted and motivated to learn about Chinese culture or lost and terrified at the prospect of speaking in front of the group. (Group 11.6, 2011)

Both positive and negative qualities which we were able to identify in our teacher, we could subsequently identify within ourselves. This brought to bear aspects of ourselves that we could try to change or enhance. (Group 11.7, 2011)

It certainly highlighted to us the benefits of co-operative learning. We noticed that it increased the sense of solidarity between learners and this was found to be motivating by everyone in the group. It may therefore form the basis for developing exercises and activities in our own classes since those of us who were involved in teaching found the experience to be beneficial for our own learning and assimilation of content. We also noted that the response of our peers during these sessions was extremely cooperative and supportive and so it is worthwhile for us all to bear in mind the potential benefits to students of fostering an atmosphere of mutual support within a classroom. (Group 11.2, 2011)

MA11 also uses peer teaching in her own classes, after witnessing it in Trinity and believes like JN11, there are very positive outcomes. After seeing the technique in action within the Chinese class GN11 felt enabled and encouraged to implement peer teaching with her own students. During a recent revision class for their Christmas test GN11 paired her 1st year students and set them the task of devising strategies to help them revise their gender and case tables and then demonstrate/share with the class. The activity got a great response from the students and GN11 is now working with her transition year students on expanding this concept allowing them to teach a 'taster' German session to 6th class children in her school's feeder junior school. So in this instance, although GN11's actual experience of the peer teaching in the Chinese course did not influence her practice directly, the discussion which it sparked and the experience of her peers in the Chinese course did have consequences for how she viewed her own teaching approach, inspiring her to consider more student led practice. (Group 11.4, 2011)

The experience of peer teaching proved extremely beneficial to all of us. It has had a consequence on our teaching practice in that we hope to introduce it as a teaching methodology. (Group 11.6, 2011)

The overall experience was extremely beneficial to us and to the other members of our original group in terms of our professional development. Being put into the experience of beginner language learners and having the opportunity to reflect on the challenges that this presented us with will most likely have a lasting influence on our continued professional practice. (Group 11.2, 2011)
Due to our experience in the lesson, we are much more aware of what works and does not work as teachers. We would go so far as to say that studying Chinese has made us better teachers. (Group 09.1, 2009)

I wouldn't be able to remember the exact phrases we did in class if I didn't take note of them. Equally secondary school students must learn how to take charge of their own learning and take note of what they doing in class. Junior classes need a lot of help with this. I find writing up the new important phrases/vocabulary found in comprehensions into an outlined section on the board (which students have to put into a special copy) is a great reference guide for them. It's almost like they are writing up their own mini dictionaries. (MB09, 2009: W4)

Weiming was also very encouraging to us during our presentation and this helped my confidence as the lesson progressed. Last week I had been concerned that I was actually learning the wrong pronunciation from the girls, so when he commended our pronunciation, I felt a lot more confident when doing the oral repetition work. This confidence also extended to when I was helping the students with their task work. (NZ09, 2009: W3)

This week I started to associate words of similar sound and similar verbs with each other. I find when repeating these words together in a chant it helps me to remember them. This is a strategy which I find effective and would like to employ in my own classes. (OK09, 2009: W4)

Using the numbers, or vocabulary, to create groups for an activity. This is a nice way of linking the language into something practical. Groups are formed by designating everyone with a number, colour etc. (PB09, 2009: W1)

In the days immediately following the lesson although without reinforcing that learning with private study or revisiting the work covered, some knowledge would slip away. It highlights to me how important homework/revision exercises are to support what has been learnt and to be sure to commit it to one's longer-term memory. (PM09, 2009: W3)

We feel that, in order to learn a foreign language in a successful, fulfilling manner, a few considerations need to be taken into account. First and foremost as we've said before, we all agree on the paramount importance of repetition. Throughout the Chinese course we experienced first-hand the need to repeat new words as much as possible in order to memorize them. Another aspect we greatly value is the importance of follow-up activities, especially in the classroom. We also find that a variety of approaches makes for a good language class. As we are all different learners we all benefit from different techniques and strategies. Another important factor in language learning are the objectives. EA11 and CA11 in particular found extremely helpful to know exactly what the objectives were in order to feel on top of what was going on in the class. To write the objectives in our notes or to read them before class helped us to convey our attention to a specific range of vocabulary/context so that, even when slightly lost, we knew what the general content of the lesson was. Furthermore, to be able to check whether we had actually met the objectives or not was a source of interest and an incentive. A final remark on language learning involves the atmosphere that the teacher creates in the class. This aspect is particularly important in language learning where students often feel intimidated or embarrassed to speak or read in front of the class. (Group 11.6, 2011)

We felt the teacher used realia, really, really well in the classroom. He brought in authentic materials too so that by the end of the course we had used chopsticks, played with Chinese toys and used simple children's textbooks as part of our learning
experience. The guest lecturer, Peter Maguire, also highlighted the importance of and benefit of using authentic material and realia in the classroom. The three of us are in agreement that we are not yet using enough realia and authentic texts in our lessons but are really keen to do so. It may be difficult to source some materials but it will be worth the effort. We highlight that there are a lot of factors that come into play when learning a language, especially in a classroom setting with mixed ability. (Group 11.4, 2011)

We've learned that language learning can feel quite unnatural at times and a massive amount of scaffolding is needed to keep students motivated. We both found that writing things down over and over again helped us to memorise new vocabulary but this can be boring. YE11 found writing the words out phonetically really helped her to learn new words whereas MD11 found repetition useful for her to remember new words. We were both in agreement that organised notes and an organised board were imperative in order for students to be able to take notes accurately which are necessary for revision. (Group 11.3, 2011)
Appendix 10. List of the teacher researcher’s academic activities

During the process of conducting his PhD project, the PhD candidate has published a number of articles and presented several conference papers. All his academic activities were associated with his research study and represented his formative contributions to the broad fields of language teaching education and Chinese language teaching. Below are the details of his academic activities.

Published articles:


Conference papers:


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